

Romans Chapter 5 as Hinge

Before we get started, for some, I need to define a “hinge.” Per the Cambridge Dictionary, “a piece of metal that fastens the edge of a door, window, lid, etc. to something else and allows it to open or close¹” It serves two functions: a) it connects two things and b) it allows one of them to move with respect to the other. It is usually smaller than either of the two things that it connects. If, as we will say, Romans chapter 5 is a hinge connecting chapter 4 (Salvation/Justification) to chapter 6 (Sanctification/Spirituality) then chapter 5 will connect Justification of the unbeliever to the Spirituality/Sanctification of the believer. Indeed, there is no spirituality apart from salvation. This is perhaps obvious to many. But to others being a Christian is being a moral person and going to church. A true Christian is a person who has trusted Jesus Christ for his/her salvation.

Let us backtrack a bit and get an overview of Romans chapter 5 and how it fits into the Epistle of Romans.

The book of Romans is about the gospel. The gospel is the message of salvation. Remember that there are three tenses of salvation (The following illustration is per R.C Ward, October 2005; adapted from a chart by Ronald C. Merryman and found on Robby Dean’s website)² It requires that I post the associated copyright information:

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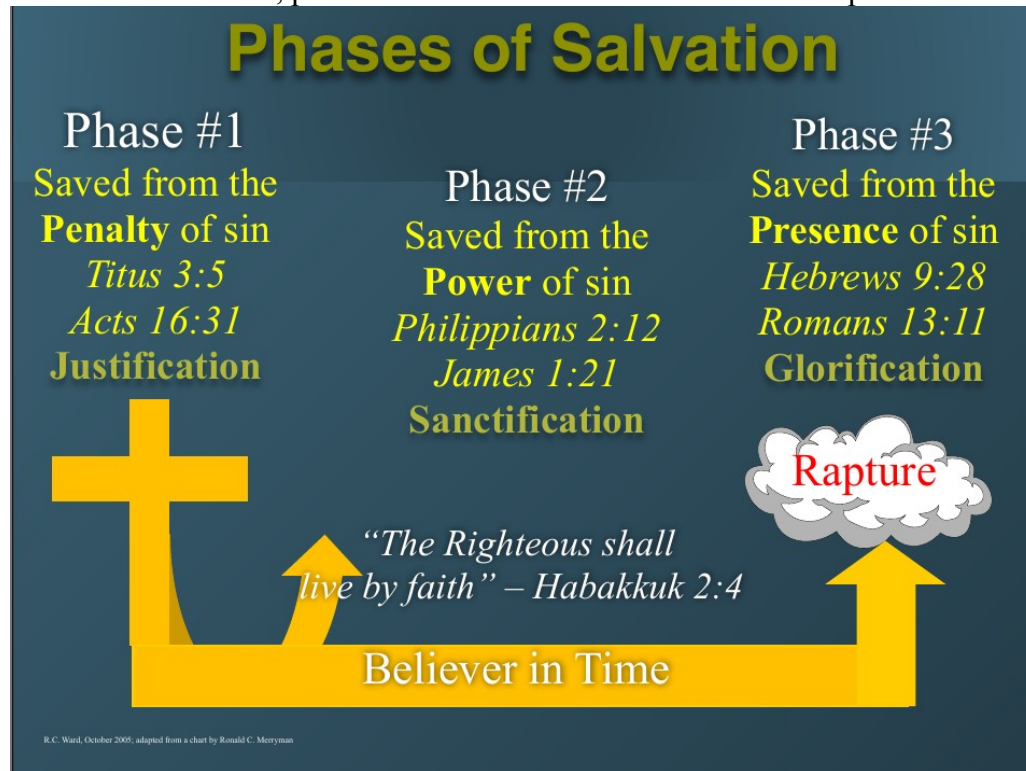
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1 https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/hinge#google_vignette

2 <https://deanbible.org/dbmfiles/slides/2016-DM2-Romans1-8-003.pdf>

Romans Chapter 5 as Hinge Romans Chapter 5

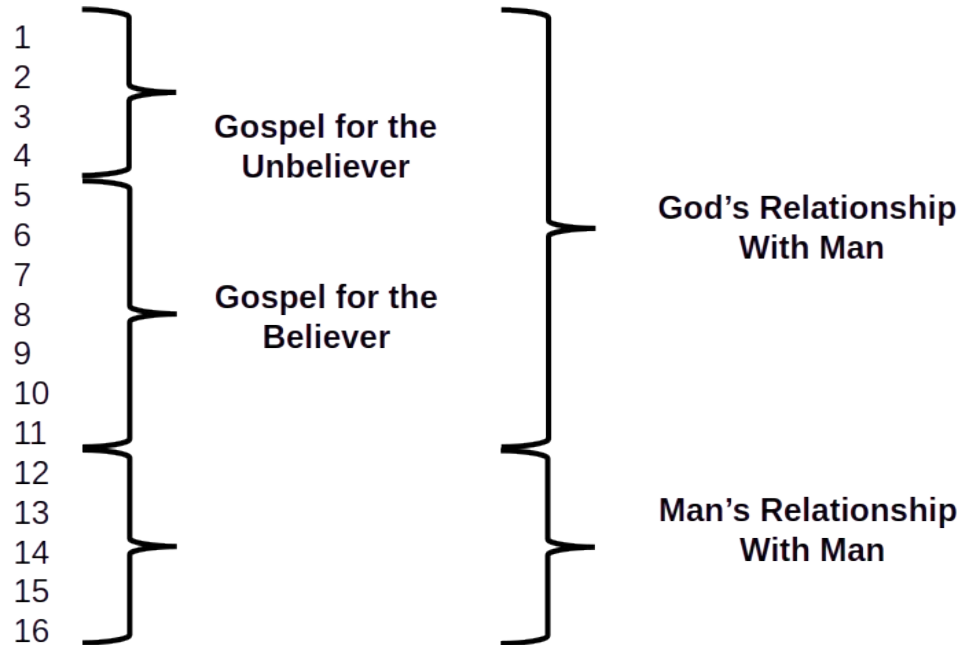
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Romans chapters 1-4 deal with Justification. Romans chapters 6-8 deal with Sanctification (i.e. spirituality).

Here is a visual outline of the book based upon Herman Mattox's outline:

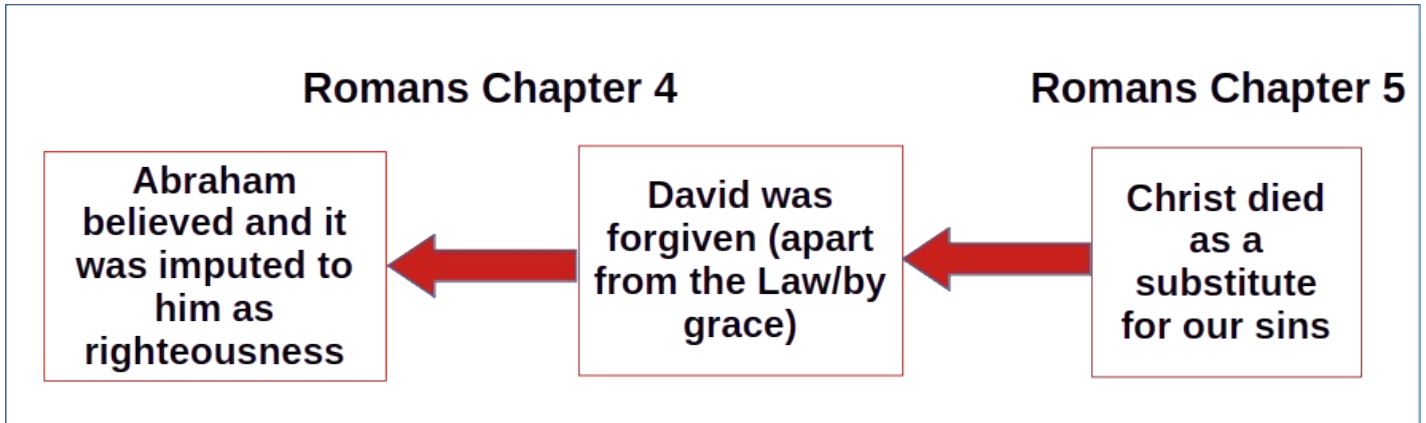
Romans Chapter 5 as Hinge Romans Chapter 5



Note that chapter 5 is on the boundary between Gospel for the Unbeliever and the Gospel for the Believer. Chapter 5 is very much related to chapter 4. It supports the argument of Abraham's faith. How is it that Abraham could "just" believe and be imputed righteousness? How is it that David was forgiven apart from the Law? It was because of "grace." To use R.B. Thieme Jr.'s definition, grace is all that God can do based upon the work of Jesus on the cross. That work is explained in chapter 5.

As I explained then, the argument in chapter 4 may seem backwards to us. Paul gives us the result, Abraham believed and it was imputed to him as righteousness. Same with David. He acknowledged his sin and it was forgiven. The basis of both of those is the work of Jesus on the cross which is explained in Romans chapter 5.

Romans Chapter 5 as Hinge Romans Chapter 5



But Romans chapter 5 also looks forward to chapters 6-8 and the Christian spiritual life. To use Robby Dean's terminology, chapter 5 is a "hinge" chapter connecting the gospel to the unbeliever that Paul calls justification, to the gospel to the believer called sanctification. As such Paul is declaring implicitly that the Christian life is based upon salvation. Living a moral life does not make you a Christian. Living a spirit-filled life with the production of the "divine nine" or the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)

For some, this is a profound statement: an unbeliever cannot live the Christian life. He may try to fake the life. He may appear to be living a moral Christian life. He may live as an impostor. But without the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, without a human spirit, without the many assets God provides at salvation, it is impossible to live the Christian life as God demands. Now, it is true that many believers live lives that mimic the unbeliever. But the Christian has the power of the Holy Spirit available simply by faith dependence on Him.



Romans Chapter 5 as Hinge

Romans Chapter 5

Let us read through this chapter labeling each verse as primarily Phase 1 salvation (justification) or Phase 2 salvation (sanctification). This may help us understand what Paul is doing in this chapter.

Romans 5:1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Paul is connecting Phase 1 salvation (having been justified) to our current status in Phase 2 (we have peace with God). Here in verse 1, Paul has set justification as the basis for our peace with God. That is our status quo in phase 2 of the Christian. At this point, Paul could continue into chapter 6 and the spiritual life. And for a few verses it may seem like he is.

Romans 5:2 through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

Paul is taking us deeper into the life of the Christian. We “exult.” That means we rejoice greatly.

Romans 5:3 And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance;

Romans 5:4 and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope;

Paul says the Christian life should be one of great rejoicing even in the pressures of life. In the Greek, the word for “tribulations” means

Romans Chapter 5 as Hinge

Romans Chapter 5

pressures. Remember James 1:2, “Count it all joy when you encounter various trials...”

As a side note here, Job suffered to teach him various topics ranging from the Angelic Conflict, undeserved suffering but eventual doubling of blessing. If someone is suffering, the first thing to ask is, “Am I in status quo sin?” If not then that person might ask, “What is different before the suffering and now in the midst of suffering.” A person in suffering sometimes has a different perspective in life. What is really important? With a different perspective, is there a lesson to be learned. Paul suffered a “thorn in the flesh” to keep him from becoming arrogant because of his vast knowledge of the Bible and his many spiritual gifts. How are others benefited in spite of the suffering?

Romans 5:5 and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

Hope as a product of our faith reliance on God is a blessing. Keep reminding yourself that Biblical hope is “confident expectation.”

Romans 5:6 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

Uh Oh! We are now back at the cross. Salvation/Justification. Paul says that Christ didn't die for nice people. He died for the ungodly. We were called the enemy of God. Yet Christ died for us. For all. Note the description of the unbeliever in this verse: **ungodly**. I hear R.B. Thieme Jr.'s words ringing in my ears: helpless, hopeless, useless. It pains me when I hear of someone who is convinced they are going to “Hell” (the Lake of Fire) because they are “so bad.” Christ paid the penalty for all sins. Sin is not the issue. Faith is.

Romans Chapter 5 as Hinge
Romans Chapter 5

Romans 5:7 For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die.

Paul gives an illustration from human viewpoint. Yet, as stated last week, the unbeliever is spiritually dead and cannot die spiritually for anyone. He is already dead himself. So there has to be a person who is not spiritually dead to die on behalf or in substitution of the “all.”

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Here is Paul’s version of John 3:16. But on what basis can God do this? Remember the preposition “huper” which means on behalf of, or in substitution for. Read on...

Note: another description of the unbeliever: **sinners**.

Romans 5:9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.

What is the wrath here? Are we talking about the Lake of Fire? Some would say that. But it is actually a reference to divine discipline. Robby Dean has an expanded explanation of why this refers to time rather than eternity. Also of interest is the fact that Paul often uses “saved” for Phase 2. I will quote Robby Dean on that. I think it provides some insight into Paul’s use of the word.

“But it is interesting: “we who have now been justified shall be [future tense] saved.” How many times have we talked to somebody and asked, “Are you saved?” Well according to the way Paul uses the term “saved” here “saved” is in the future, not in the past. We need to be very careful

Romans Chapter 5 as Hinge

Romans Chapter 5

how we read the word “saved” in Scripture. In Romans Paul never uses the word SOZO to describe what we call phase one justification, he always uses the word to refer to primarily phase two salvation, i.e. being saved from the power of sin, and a few times he uses it for phase three salvation, our future glorification where we are saved from the presence of sin when we are absent from the body and face to face with the Lord.³”

Romans 5:10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Note: yet another description of unbelievers – **enemies**. And now Paul is bringing in the concept of reconciliation, not just justification. Reconciliation means that the barrier between a believer and God has been removed. God is satisfied (propitiated). As a result we have a very intimate family relationship with God.

Romans 5:11 And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

Reconciliation is received at the point of salvation, phase 1. But what we receive is more than just reconciliation. Three times in two verses Paul uses “reconciliation.” Why? He is leading us toward chapter 6-8, spirituality. And this answers the question even before we ask, “How is it that I can live the Christian life after salvation?” Because we have been reconciled to God. As I said last week, our reconciliation is not just that we are no longer enemies of God. No. We are not just friends of God. No. We are now in God’s family. We are “IN” Christ Jesus. This is the

³ <https://deanbibleministries.org/new-testament-menuitem/romans-menuitem/message/2010-romans-058b/read>

Romans Chapter 5 as Hinge
Romans Chapter 5

result of reconciliation. Reconciliation is followed by the Baptism of the Spirit. We are placed positionally in Jesus Christ. This is not mentioned here but he is setting us up for chapter 6. So here is chapter 5, Paul is identifying the implications of salvation phase 1.

Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned—

Romans 5:13 for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

The need for salvation. We use the term “salvation” whereas Paul has used “justification” and now “reconciliation.”

Romans 5:14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.

Salvation phase 1.

Romans 5:15 But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many.

Salvation phase 1.

Romans Chapter 5 as Hinge
Romans Chapter 5

Romans 5:16 The gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification.

Salvation phase 1.

Romans 5:17 For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

Salvation 1, the gift of righteousness. But now we will reign in life.
Salvation 2?

Romans 5:18 So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men.

Salvation phase 1.

Romans 5:19 For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.

Salvation phase 1.

Romans Chapter 5 as Hinge
Romans Chapter 5

Romans 5:20 The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,

Salvation phase 1.

Romans 5:21 so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Salvation phase 1.

Romans Chapter 5 as Hinge Romans Chapter 5

Verse	Salvation Phase (Justification/Sanctification/Glorification)
1	Justification → Sanctification
2	Sanctification
3	Sanctification
4	Sanctification
5	Sanctification
6	Justification
7	Justification
8	Justification
9	Sanctification → Sanctification
10	Sanctification → Sanctification
11	Justification & Sanctification
12	Justification
13	Justification
14	Justification
15	Justification
16	Justification
17	Justification → Sanctification
18	Justification
19	Justification
20	Justification
21	Justification

Romans Chapter 5 as Hinge

Romans Chapter 5

There are some important points to take away from this exercise:

1. What Christ did on the cross is very important for a believer to understand and appreciate. God did this for humanity. He did it for you. We were called ungodly/weak, sinners and enemies of God (Romans 5:6-10). And still He did this.
2. Paul's arguments in Romans factor into support for the doctrine of eternal security. What God did cannot be undone. Our condemnation is first based upon imputation of Adam's sin (Romans 5:16). That is why we say we are born with a sin nature. We are condemned because "For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one... (i.e. Adam, Romans 5:12)."
3. The Christian life is based upon the work of Jesus Christ on the cross. As Romans 5:1 says "Having been justified we have peace with God." And in Romans 5:18 "So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men."
4. There is much material here to support evangelism. As we saw, Romans 5:8 is similar to John 3:16.

Romans Chapter 5 as Hinge Romans Chapter 5

Here is a very nice chart/outline of Romans on Robby Dean's website⁴:

THE GOSPEL OF GRACE	THE THREE TYPES OF SINNERS	THE THREE TENSES OF SALVATION		THE NATION OF ISRAEL	THE CHRISTIAN LIFE
		JUSTIFICATION	SANCTIFICATION GLORIFICATION		
1:1-17	1:18-3:20	3:21-5:21	6-8	9-11	12-16
Accountable for the Gospel 1:1-5	The Immoral Sinner 1:18-32	Justification Explained 3:21-31	Sanctification Positional 6:1-10	Past: Chosen 9:1-33	Serving the Church 12:1-21
Addressees The Romans 1:6-7	The Moral Sinner 2:1-16	Justification Exemplified 4:1-25	Sanctification Practical 6:11-8:17	Present: Sidelined 10:1-21	Serving the Society 13:1-14
Aspirations in the Gospel 1:8-15	The Religious Sinner 2:17-3:8	Justification's End Results 5:1-11	Glorification 8:18-39	Future: Reinstated 11:1-32	Serving the Weak 14:1-23
					Service through Christ 15:1-33
Acclamation of the Gospel: <i>Salvation to all who believe</i> 1:16-17	Conclusion: <i>All Are Sinners</i> 3:9-20	Identification: <i>In Adam All Die</i> <i>In Christ All Live</i> 5:11-21	Jubilation: <i>we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us</i> 8:37	Doxology: <i>To God Be The Glory</i> 11:33-36	Warm Greetings Serious Warnings Special Mentions 16:1-27

⁴ <https://deanbible.org/dbmfiles/slides/2016-DM2-Romans1-8-001.pdf>