

ROOKIE CHRISTIAN | FACT SHEET

Clarifying the Good News

A person doesn't have to have a PhD in the Bible in order to become a Christian, but the more clearly we understand the gospel, the more confident we are in our faith. This Fact Sheet reviews selected highlights from the first eight chapters in the book of Romans, which was written for the purpose of clarifying the Gospel. *Reference numbers shown in bold are all taken from the book of Romans; only relevant parts of the verses are used. The first number is the chapter and the second number, after the colon, is the verse number.*

The Gospel

1:1 “The gospel of God.” The word Gospel means “good news,” “a joyful proclamation.” This good news is from God, who intervened on our behalf when we were unable to help ourselves!

1:16 “I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes...” Though some criticize the Christian message, it has life-changing power and we shouldn't be embarrassed to take our stand on it.

God Reveals Himself, But We Suppress the Truth

1:18-19 “The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them.” It's appropriate for the Creator to be angry with people who replace him in their affections with things he created! It's not that people don't have access to the truth, but that they suppress the truth. It's like holding a beach ball under water; you can do it for a while, but it keeps popping up! We have lived *ungodly* lives — living our lives without reference to God.

Judging Others Proves We Know How We're Supposed to Live

2:1 “You have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because



you, the judge, practice the very same things.” This would include hypocrites in the church... and those who judge hypocrites in the church. How could we look down on others for doing wrong if we didn't know it was wrong?

Even Those Without the Bible Have a Conscience

2:15 “They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them.” We have the evidence of creation, the commandments in the Bible, and our conscience within us. We all know enough truth to be held accountable.

Everyone is a Sinner

3:23 “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Those with a religious background, who have the Bible, *and* those without a religious background, are all sinners. Even at our very best, we fall short of God's perfect, righteous standard.

How God Gives Us the Righteousness We Need

4:3-5 “For what does the Scripture say? ‘Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.’ ...And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness” Imagine a refrigerator repairman owing a small business

Scripture quotations taken from The Holy Bible: English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Used by permission.

some money on his account. So the store's owner barter with the refrigerator repairman and offers to accept a refrigerator repair job as payment. Upon completion, the customer's account is considered paid in full. That's what God has done for us, except we had nothing to offer him in exchange for our salvation. God credits our faith — faith in Christ alone — as righteousness. He gave it to Abraham in the Old Testament days and he gives it to believers today — “The free gift of righteousness” (5:17)!



ther, we too might walk in newness of life.” Since we're saved by grace, we can sin to our heart's delight, then, right? Well, not if you've had a change of heart! Salvation brings new life, new desires, and a new power to live in a new way.

Declared Right with God

5:1 “Since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” *Justified* is a legal term. It means to be declared not guilty in a court of law. God does this, not on the basis our good deeds, but on the basis of faith—that is, trusting Jesus Christ. The war we were waging against God is over; his anger over our rebellion has ceased. We are at peace with God.

Christ Died for Us

5:6, 8 “While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly... God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” The cross is the key to the Gospel! It's like the fire alarm going off and you're in bed with a bad case of the flu. You are so weak you can't get up, much less, crawl out to escape the house. We were helpless to save ourselves, but Jesus took our punishment — for sins we committed — on the cross! The gospel isn't about something we do for the Lord. The gospel is about what he, in his great love, has done for us!

Christians Experience a Spiritual Resurrection

6:4 “We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Fa-

Expect a Struggle

7:22-23 “I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am!” Many who become Christians are surprised to discover the internal struggle they have in living a godly life. They may wonder if they were even saved. However, the struggle is evidence of salvation.

7:23-24 “Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!” In spite of the struggle, Jesus is at work to deliver us! Which brings us to some of the sweetest words you will ever hear...

8:1 “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

The Holy Spirit Empowers Believers

8:4, 9 Believers “walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit... if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.” By *flesh*, it means “me minus God,” our natural, rebellious condition, apart from a supernatural work of God. However, each Christian is indwelt by the Holy Spirit (9). We aren't left to do the best we can in our own power. The Spirit guides us in our choices, empowers us for Christian living (14), assures us of our new relationship with the Father (15-17), and helps us as we pray (26-27). “God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us” (5:5). Our responsibility now is to keep in step with the Spirit.