

- Joseph: Glorified—over 100 ways a type of Christ! (See our appendix to our *Commentary on Genesis* or our book, *Cosmic Codes...*)

Next Session

Fate vs. Free Will: If things are prophesied (predestined), do we really have any choice? Can a Christian lose his/her salvation?

This will focus on two critical doctrines: *Eternal Security and the Perseverance of the Saints*. Memorize Romans 8:28-39: What seven questions are answered?

The Book of Romans Session 11 Romans 8: Part 3—Our Eternal Security

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free [set me free] from the law of sin and death.

Romans 8:2

This verse summarizes Romans 7 (Cf. Rom 7:23). While the law of sin and death will be with us as long as we are in this body, it doesn't necessarily have dominion. We have a *choice* (abiding in Him: *organic union*; Jn 15:1-5). "The law of the Spirit of life": genitive case = "The law [principle] of the *Life-giving* Spirit."

Romans 8:28-39

Verses:

- 28-30 "Boot Camp" for Heaven?
31-39 Eternal Security; Predestination vs. Free Will?

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

Romans 8:16-17

This is a *conditional* reward. Many may arrive in heaven *sorely disappointed!*

- 28] And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

- 29] For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.
30] Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.
31] What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?
32] He that [even] spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?
33] Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth.
34] Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.
35] Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?
36] As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.
37] Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.
38] For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,
39] nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature [created thing], Shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

* * *

- 28] And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

Sanctification, from its beginning in regeneration to its completion in glorification, is ultimately God's work, appropriated by faith (Phil 1:6).

"...all things work together...": "He works together" *συνεργέω synergeo*, active voice present tense of the verb *synergei*. This emphasizes that this is a *continuing* activity of God. It takes *continual* external inputs to coordinate the process. (As every cell division in the human zygote: having the complete coding in each cell—DNA—is not enough: what is needed is conflict resolution logic to form specific tissue, organs, etc.)

"...called": *κλητός kletos* means to be summoned to, divinely selected and appointed (Rom 1:6; 8:30). Example: The saga of Joseph (Gen 50:20).

Eternal Security

Can a man lose his salvation? Yes! If it depends on him:

- The Arminian denies that the true child of God is eternally secure.
- The Calvinist insists that, if he does not persevere in holiness, he

was never regenerate in the first place. After 400 years of doctrinal disputes, with outstanding scholars on both sides of this issue, appear to be the result of a failure to adequately distinguish between *justification* and the possibility of *several different inheritances*.

The Partaker, *metachoi*, as a true child of God, is “obligated” to persevere (Paul’s word, Rom 8:12). But he might not. If he does not, he does not forfeit salvation, but faces divine discipline in time, and the loss of reward at the judgment seat of Christ.

All three persons of the Godhead have a share in preserving to fruition that which God has determined. We will attempt to interweave their individual commitment with this review of Romans 8.

The Basis of our Eternal Security

1) Upon His Sovereign Purpose

Eternal purpose declared: Eph 1:11-12. This eternal purpose is anchored within the veil, confirmed by an oath: Heb 6:17-20.

2) Upon His Solemn Promise

Our salvation depends upon His promise, and not our faithfulness: Rom 4:16: *Therefore it is of faith* [nothing on man’s part], *that it might be by grace* [everything on God’s part]; *to the end the promise might be sure...*

If it depended at any point upon human ability to continue to believe, then the promise could not be secure. The promise that those who believe will be saved is confirmed everywhere: Gen 15:6; Jn 3:16; Acts 16:33; Rom 4:23-24, et al.)

3) Upon His Infinite Power

He is free to save us. Christ’s death has rendered God free to save us in spite of moral imperfection. Our eternal security does not depend upon our moral worthiness. Christ is the propitiation for our sins (1 Jn 2:2).

(To assume that there is some sin which is sufficiently serious to cause us to forfeit our salvation is to assume that we were less worthy of

salvation after having committed this sin than before, and it reduces salvation down to human ability to merit it.)

He has purposed to keep us saved:

All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 6:37-40

And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand.

John 10:28, 29

“Shall never” is a *double negative* in the Greek, a form which is especially emphatic.

Note: There are two hands involved! I have searched the original texts; I cannot find “Whoops!” (no one has ever called God “Butterfingers”).

Some suggest that we, ourselves, can yet snatch ourselves out of the Father’s hand. What kind of security is it that offers no security against our own weaknesses? (Jn 5:24).

4) Upon His “Much More” Love

His intent is love based: Cf. Rom 5:6-10. God knew when He saved us that we were totally depraved, and therefore any new manifestation of sin in our lives after our conversion cannot be any motivation to God to change His mind and withdraw His grace and His salvation. Cf. Rom 11:29; Rom 8:32, 38-39.

He saved us for reasons *independent of us* and outside of us. He was motivated by His *electing* love, and not by observation of good in the sinner. We will explore that in our next session we review, Romans 9:10-13.

5) Upon His Answer to the Prayer of His Son

We, as believers, are called many things in Scripture: saints, believers, elect, sheep, partakers, etc. But the title most dear to the heart of Christ is repeated *seven* times in His high priestly prayer (Jn 17): “those whom thou hast given me.” (Cf. Jn 17:11-12). Jesus prays that we will be kept from hell (17:15); and will be with Him in heaven (17:20, 24). [This keeping is from *perishing*, not necessarily all forms of inheritance.]

I believe that the Father always answers the prayers of the Son (Jn 11:42).

A Chain of Five Links: Romans 8:29-30

God’s sovereign purpose is exemplified in these two verses:

- 29] For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.
30] Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

This eternal choice and foreknowledge involves more than establishing a relationship between God and believers—it involves the *certainty of our sanctification!* Those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son (Rom 8:29).

1) Foreknow: prior choice, as well as advance knowledge (Amos 3:2): a personal, loving, and intimate prior choice. The process starts with foreknowledge. The entire group is brought into God’s eternal plan by divine foreknowledge and choice is predestined, “predetermined.”

2) Predestinate: simply planned in advance. Eph 1:4-6 adds insight...

3) Called: referred to here is the efficacious call to come to Him. Jesus said, “My sheep hear my voice and they follow Me” (Jn 10:27-30). This is an effectual calling: all that are **justified** will be **glorified** (Rom 8:23).

4) Justified: declared righteous (Rom 5:1; Cf. Rom 3:24, 28; 4:2; 5:1, 9).

5) Glorified: “Glorified” is another way of saying that God’s children will be “conformed” to His Son; and that is God’s ultimate “purpose.” No longer will they “fall short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:23). In the process not a single person is lost.

These are five *unbreakable links*: “Those...he also”: This is a clear statement of the eternal security of the saints.

The resurrected and glorified Lord Jesus Christ will become the Head of a new race of humanity, purified from all contact with sin and prepared to live eternally in His presence: cf. 1 Cor 15:42-49 (which precedes the rapture passage!).

Between the start and finish of God’s plan are indispensable steps:

- 1) being **called** (cf. Rom 1:6; 8:28),
- 2) being **justified** (cf. Rom 3:24, 28; 4:2; 5:1, 9), and
- 3) being **glorified** (cf. Rom 8:17; Col 1:27; 3:4).

...and in the process *not a single person is lost*. God completes His plan without any slippage or shrinkage of inventory! Precisely the same number of men are called, justified, and glorified.

The Basis of our Eternal Security

It depends Upon *God the Father*

It is astounding to realize that God’s plan of salvation for people is a program that reaches from eternity past to eternity future which God will carry out perfectly.

Recognizing this, we now encounter...

Seven Questions

Seven questions which specifically raise the question of the believer’s eternal security in this magnificent conclusion to Romans 8:

1, 2) Can opposition defeat the Christian? Rom 8:31

31] What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?

“If”: First class conditional = “since.”

Obviously, Satan and his demonic hosts are against believers (cf. Eph 6:11-13; 1 Pet 5:8), but they cannot ultimately prevail and triumph over

believers. God is the self-existent One and the sovereign Creator and, since He is for believers, no one can oppose believers successfully.

3) Will we have the resources? Rom 8:32

32] He that [even] spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

(The KJV and RV failed to translate the little Greek particle γε, *ge*, “even,” which gives this passage a peculiar emphasis.)

The word “spare” (ἐφείσατό *epheisato*, from φείδομαι *pheidomai*) is the same word used in the Septuagint in Genesis 22:12, translated “withheld.” God said to Abraham, “You have not withheld your son.” Then God directed Abraham to spare Isaac and to offer a ram as a substitute (Gen 22:2-14), whereas God offered His own Son, on that very spot, as the Sacrifice for sin (Jn 1:29).

Since God gave the greatest Sacrifice of all, His own Son, He will certainly not hesitate to give believers all other things pertaining to and leading to their ultimate sanctification (cf. 2 Peter 1:3). Answered: Rom 5:6-10. The next two questions are forensic (legal) in nature:

4) Will our failures reverse our justification? Rom 8:33

33] Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? *It is* God that justifieth.

“Charge”: ἐγκαλέσει, *enkalesei*, “make a formal accusation in court; press charges” (cf. Acts 19:40; 23:29; 26:2).

Satan is identified as “the accuser” of God’s people (Rev 12:10; cf. Zech 3:1). His accusations are valid, because they are based on the believer’s sinfulness and defilement. But Satan’s accusations will be thrown out of court, because it is God who justifies. The Judge Himself declares the accused person righteous on the basis of his faith in Jesus Christ (Rom 3:24; 5:1). As a result all accusations are dismissed and no one can bring an accusation that will stand (cf. Rom 8:1!).

5) Can anyone condemn us for any reason? Rom 8:34

34] Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

Jesus is God’s appointed Judge (Jn 5:22, 27; Acts 17:31), so Paul answered this question by stating, Christ Jesus. But Jesus is the very One whom the believer has trusted for salvation. Furthermore, He is the One who died—more than that (lit., “but more”), who was raised to life—who is at the right hand of God (cf. Lk 22:69; Acts 2:33; 5:31; Eph 1:20; Col 3:1; Heb 1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; 1 Pet 3:22) and is also interceding for us. The Lord Jesus Christ is indeed the Judge, but He is also the One with whom each believer is identified by faith.

As a result He is a believer’s Sacrifice for sin (cf. Rom 5:8; 8:32), his new life (a believer shares in Christ’s resurrection life; 6:4, 8, 11; Eph 2:5-6; Col 2:13), his Intercessor (cf. Heb 7:25; also the Holy Spirit intercedes, Rom 8:26-27) and his Defense (1 Jn 2:1).

Certainly the Judge will not condemn His own who are in Him by faith! (Again, cf. Rom 8:1.)

It Depends Upon God the Son

Thus, if God has *already justified* the man who believes in Jesus (Rom 8:26, 30), how can He lay anything to the charge of His justified one?

His justification comes from the imputed righteousness of Christ and *is legally ours!* It is not a subject of merit, and its loss cannot be the subject of demerit. Like a father, God can and does correct His earthly sons, but *they always remain sons.* (Cf. the Prodigal Son, Lk 15:24.)

God, having justified the ungodly (Rom 4:5), will not and cannot contradict Himself by charging them with evil. “Who is he that condemneth?” (Rom 8:34) Paul gives four answers, each of which are taught elsewhere in Scripture, but are gathered here to underscore the unconditional security of the believer:

- 1) Christ died;
- 2) He is risen;
- 3) He advocates; and
- 4) He intercedes.

1) Upon His Substitutionary Death Rom 5:8, 8:34

Who can condemn us if the penalty has already been paid? The greatest proof of eternal security is justification by faith. (Justification refers to

how God sees us, not how others—or even we ourselves—see us. It is entirely a forensic (legal) matter: Col 2:14: our “Certificate of Debt” has been “paid in full”: *tetelstai!* (Jn 19:30).

[Example: 5 sins/day x 365 days/year x 70 years = 127, 750 sins... each!] Each paid for individually, for each of us as individuals. No discount for volume; no “package deal.” See *The Agony of Love* briefing package.] This redemption was eternal (Heb 9:12); once and for all (Heb 10:12, 14).

2) Upon His Substitutionary Life

Rom 5:9-10, 19; 10:4; Col 2:10, et al.

3) Upon His Present Session: Advocate and Intercessor

Legal Advocate (1 Jn 2:1-2). [The Arminians fear that this doctrine will tend toward sin; John says here that it is a motivation *not to sin*.] And priestly Intercessor (Heb 7:23-25; 9:24). “Saves to the uttermost” sounds pretty good to me.

It Depends Upon God the Holy Spirit

- 1) Upon His Ministry of Regeneration (Titus 3:5; 2 Cor 5:17; Eph 2:10).
- 2) Upon His Baptizing Ministry (Rom 6:3, 8-11; 1 Cor 12:13).
- 3) Upon His Sealing Ministry (2 Cor 1:22; Eph 1:13-14; Eph 4:30).

Pledge: ἀρραβών *arrabon*: a legal concept: a first installment, with which a man secures a legal claim upon a thing as yet unconsummated; a down payment; deposit; pledge; an evidence of good faith; obligating the party to consummate the commitment involved. (A pledge as in Gen 38:17ff). In Rom 8:23, the Holy Spirit is designated as a down payment, a “first fruits,” to be followed by more. *We are sealed unto that day*.

Sealing Ministry: *If one person who was born again in Christ ever fails to enter into heaven when he dies, then God has broken His pledge.* No conditions are mentioned. It is a work of God and depends upon Him alone.

Sealing: σφραγίζω *sphragizo*: to set a seal was a mark of protection (Cf. Mt 27:66, on the tomb of Christ) and ownership. It was also the term

for a boundary marker. When the Holy Spirit seals, it is with the signet ring of the Father on hearts of wax. He leaves the mark of ownership. A broken seal is an indication that the protection wasn’t adequate. Can *you* break the seal? Can Satan?

That still leaves some issues of grave importance: what different kinds of *inheritance* are there? To “enter” is not equivalent to “ownership.” (We will be exploring this in Chapter 9 and following...)

Seven Questions

- 1,2) Can opposition defeat the Christian? (Romans 8:31)
- 3) Will we have the resources? (Romans 8:32)
- 4) Will our failures reverse our justification? (Romans 8:33)
- 5) Can anyone condemn us for any reason? (Romans 8:34)

6,7) What kind of assurance can we have of victory? Rom 8:35

- 35] Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

The apostle suggested **seven things** a believer might experience (Paul experienced all of them; 2 Cor 11:23-28) that some might think could come between a believer and Christ’s love:

- **Tribulation** (θλίψις *thilpsis*) “pressure or distress”; mentioned frequently by Paul in 2 Corinthians;
- **Distress** (στενοχωρία *stenochoria*), lit., “narrowness,” i.e., being pressed in, hemmed in, crowded;
- **Persecution** (διωγμός *diogmos*) 10X in NT, always in reference to the gospel.
- **Famine** (λιμός *limos*) 12X in NT; The God of Elijah looks after His own.
- **Nakedness** (γυμνότης *gumnotes*); 1 Cor 4:11.
- **Peril** [jeopardy, danger] (κίνδυνος *kindunos*) 8X in one verse, 2 Cor 11:26. Cf. 1 Cor 15:30.
- **Sword**. The world *hates* the saints.

These things—stated in increasing intensity—do not separate Christians from Christ; instead they are part of the “all things” (Rom 8:28) God uses to bring them to conformity to His Son.

36] As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

Paul then quotes Psalm 44:22 to remind his readers that in this life the people of God must face much affliction (cf. Jn 16:33), including even martyrdom for some. In the early days of the church one or more Christians were martyred every day, or faced the possibility of it. Their persecutors valued Christians' lives as nothing more than animals to be butchered.

37] Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

In all these adversities (cf. "all things" in Rom 8:28 and "all things" in v. 32 with all these things in v. 37), rather than being separated from Christ's love, believers are more than conquerors (present tense, "keep on being conquerors to a greater degree" or "keep on winning a glorious victory") through Him who loved us. Jesus Christ and His love for believers enable them to triumph (cf. 2 Cor 2:14).

His Final Guarantee

38] For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,
39] nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature [created thing], Shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Wow—Angels! Principalities [demons]! Powers [of "darkness"!]. What else is there? What else, in the entire universe, matters? This should *really* re-prioritize our entire outlook on *everything*!

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

1 John 3:2

There is some very provocative physics implied in this: when He shall appear we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him *as He is*. Not a 3-dimensional representation of an "n-dimensional" being—but as He really is *since* we will be *like* Him! Wow!!

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Our Coming King

—inspired by Pastor S.D. Lockridge

He is:

King of the Jews (*racial*);
King of Israel (*national*);
King of all the Ages;
King of Heaven;
King of Glory;
King of Kings;
..and Lord of Lords. [Do you know Him? *Do you really?*]

A prophet before Moses;
A priest after Melchizedek;
A champion like Joshua;
An offering in place of Isaac;
A king from the line of David;
A wise counselor above Solomon;
A beloved/rejected/exalted son like Joseph.
And yet far more...

The Heavens declare His glory...
and the firmament shows His handiwork..

He who **is**, who **was**, and who always **will be**;

The first and the last
He is the Alpha and the Omega
the Aleph and the Tau
the A and the Z;
He is the first fruits of them that slept.

He is the $\epsilon\gamma\omega\ \epsilon\iota\mu\mu$
the אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה
the "I AM that I AM" [*the Voice of the Burning Bush!*]
He is the Captain of the Lord's Host
He was the conqueror of Jericho

He is enduringly strong;
He is entirely sincere;
He is eternally steadfast;

He is immortally graceful;
He is imperially powerful;
He is impartially merciful;

In Him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily;
The very God of very God.
He is our Kinsman-Redeemer
and He is our Avenger of Blood;

He is our City of Refuge;
our Performing High Priest,
our Personal Prophet,
our Reigning King.

He's the Loftiest idea in Literature;
He's the highest Personality in Philosophy;
He's the Fundamental Doctrine of Theology;
He's the Supreme Problem in "higher criticism"!
He's the Miracle of the Ages
the Superlative of everything good

We are the beneficiaries of a Love Letter:
It was written in blood,
on a wooden cross
erected in Judea
2,000 years ago.

*He was crucified on a cross of wood,
yet He made the hill on which it stood.*

By Him were all things made that were made;
without Him was not anything made that was made;
By Him are all things held together!

What held Him to that cross? *It wasn't the nails!*
(At any time He could have declared, "I'm out of here!")
It was His love for you and me.

He was born of a woman
so that we could be born of God;
He humbled Himself
so that we could be lifted up;

He became a servant
so that we could be made co-heirs;
He suffered rejection
so that we could become His friends;
He denied Himself
so that we could freely receive all things;
He gave Himself
so that He could bless us in every way.

He is
*Available to the tempted and the tried;
Blesses the young;
Cleanses the lepers;
Defends the feeble;
Delivers the captives;
Discharges the debtors;
Forgives the sinners;
Franchises the meek;
Guards the besieged;
Heals the sick;
Provides strength to the weak;
Regards the aged;
Rewards the diligent;
Serves the unfortunate;
Sympathizes and He saves!*

His Offices are manifold;
His Reign is righteous;
His Promises are sure;
His Goodness is limitless;
His Light is matchless;
His Grace is sufficient;
His Love never changes;
His Mercy is everlasting;
His Word is enough;
His Yoke is easy and
His Burden is light!

He's indescribable;
He's incomprehensible;
He's irresistible;
He's invincible!

The Heaven of heavens cannot *contain* Him;
Man cannot *explain* Him

The Pharisees couldn't *stand* Him
and learned that they couldn't *stop* Him;
Pilate couldn't *find any fault* with Him;
the witnesses couldn't *agree against* Him.
Herod couldn't *kill* Him
death couldn't *handle* Him
the grave couldn't *hold* Him!

He *has always been and always will be*;
He had no predecessor and
will have no successor;
You can't impeach Him and
he isn't going to resign!

His name is above every name;
That at the name of Yeshua
Every knee shall bow
Every tongue shall confess
That Jesus Christ is Lord!

His is the kingdom, the power, and the glory... for ever, and ever.
...Amen!

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Coming Up!

The next three chapters focus on Israel: Chapter 9 - Israel Past; Chapter 10 - Israel Present; and Chapter 11 - Israel Future. Does God keep His promises? Who are the *metachoi*? What different kinds of inheritance are there?

The Book of Romans Session 12 The Covenants: Romans 9:1-5

Romans 9 Introduction

This session begins one of the most important “trilogies” in the Scripture: Romans 9, 10, 11: Chapter 9 - Israel Past; Chapter 10 - Israel Present; and Chapter 11 - Israel Future. Other “trilogies” include:

- Sermon on the Mount: Matthew 5, 6, 7
- Spiritual Gifts: 1 Corinthians 12, 13, 14
- Second Coming: Zechariah 12, 13, 14

From Genesis 12 to Acts 2, it's all about Israel...and that God keeps His promises! We need a *doctrinal* as well as *devotional* understanding of the Word of God...

Romans 8 opened with “no *condemnation...*” and closed with assurance there is no *separation*. If God is so faithful to His Word that none He has justified can be condemned, and that none in Him can be separated, then why have the Israelites, who were sovereignly chosen by God and also given unconditional promises, completely failed and then been rejected?

This issue was picked up from Romans 3:1-3:

What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?

How are the Gentiles to relate to the Jews? If circumcision is of no value without faith, then what advantage has the Jew? What is the benefit of circumcision?

This same question was underlying Acts 15 and will be answered in Chapters 9, 10, and 11. *The issue behind all of this is a demonstration by God to the world that He keeps His promises!*

- 1] I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,
- 2] That I have great heaviness and continual [unceasing] sorrow in my heart.

Paul is pouring his heart out—he is talking passionately. This is not an academic or intellectual issue; he is totally involved with this issue.

- 3] For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:

“I could wish”: imperfect tense (continuous action in past time), optative mood (rarely used in NT); the optative mood of a verb is expressive of a wish that implies a contrary-to-fact subjunctive; something you wish but know is impossible. The grammar implies it is an absolute impossibility. (*Thus, another absolute testimony to eternal security!*)