

The **Book of Romans** is perhaps the greatest presentation of the principles of God's kingdom on earth as taught by the early church. This book embodies the teachings of Jesus to His disciples and includes most—if not all—the New Testament themes essential for believers to know and practice. While **Romans 12: 1 & 2** has long been one of my favorite NT passages, in recent years I have noticed seven Spiritual laws in **chapters 12 through 16**. We may call them spiritual laws or kingdom laws, but they are the basic guidelines for Christian conduct in every generation. Evangelists have termed a soul-winning pattern found in the Book of Romans *The Roman Road to Salvation* so I call this study *The Christian Law in Romans*. The first 7 laws I noticed were highlighted by some Bible publishers:

1	The Law of Transformation.	12:1 & 2
2	The Law of Civil Obedience	13:1
3	The Law of Love	13:8 +
4	The Law of Liberty	14:1-16
5	The Law of the Kingdom	14:17
6	The Law of Service	15:1 + (with 12:3—21)
7	The Law of Discernment	16:17—20

**My first outline** of *The Christian law in Romans* was confined to **chapters 12 through 16**. In later studies I went back to **chapter one** and, including the seven laws already mentioned, I now can list **43—a virtual blueprint of how a believer should live here on earth**. These laws are reconfirmed throughout the entire Bible, but it is amazing that they all can be found in the **Book of Romans**. As you study this exciting foundational Book of the Bible you may find additional laws because the Word of God is alive and inexhaustible—and I may have missed one or more. My prayer and hope is that you will discover these and other laws, live by them, and share them on life's pathway.

**What do I mean the Word of God is alive?** Let me share a few personal experiences to show the Holy Bible has been alive and powerful in giving me guidance through the years.

**In 1948** when I was twenty years old I set chokers on logs to pay for college tuition and one day a log rolled on my body and I couldn't breath. Two men nearby rolled the log off (five men couldn't budge the log the next day) and I began to breath again. My face turned black and my belly burned like fire. I couldn't move a finger or toe or open my eyes. I was in the woods thirty minutes from paved roads and forty miles from the nearest hospital. As I wondered if I would live long enough to get to the hospital (and I was not ready to meet God)" a Scripture from Sunday School came to mind: "*If you will confess Me before men, I will confess you before God; but if you deny me before men I will deny you before God*" (**Matt. 10: 32, 33**). I tried to speak to those two men but could not even whisper, so I silently said to God: "*If I live I will serve you all of my life.*" There are more details, but I lived because **a verse from the Bible came alive** in my spirit when I was facing death. I was converted on the mountain when I made a vow, and God alerted my mother to pray for me; and He gave supernatural strength to my co-workers who rolled the log off of my body. I walked out of the hospital eleven days later, went to a Pentecostal church the next Sunday and was baptized in the Columbia River the next Saturday—and God has taken me all over the world.

**Stop and go back!** Five years later I was married with a fifteen month old son. As I drove through downtown Portland, OR in pursuit of a teaching position, I passed a church and the neon name caught my attention. My mother had been on her death bed before I finished college. She heard the pastor of this church pray for the sick and share healing testimonies. She wrote a letter requesting prayer and God healed her. As I drove past the church I thought: "*So this is **Wings of Healing**, the church that prayed for my mother.*" A few blocks further the thought came to me: "stop and go back." I needed a job and drove on. The thought came a second time and I wondered what this was all about—but drove on. The third time the thought was so powerful I was literally afraid not to stop. I drove back and went in and looked the large auditorium over. When I turned to leave I saw a large poster that said: "**calling 500 recruits for missionary training**". Something moved in my

spirit and in the next several weeks all teaching positions closed and I enlisted in the mission training program—which led to a 53 year world-wide ministry. This had been the God of the Bible speaking a **rhema word** to me, to prepare me for the next **living Bible experience** which follows.

**Romans 16: 17-20** When I finished missionary training I was asked to come on staff and a year later became mission secretary for this national radio and missionary ministry. In 1956 we received disturbing news from missionaries in West Africa, but no one would say what the trouble was. I decided to fast a few days asking God to reveal the problem, and who we could send to investigate. I got up on Saturday morning and began to walk the floor and pray. The idea came that I should open my Bible and read where I opened it. It was **Romans 16: 17-20** and it said that *God would bruise Satan* (the universal trouble maker) *under my feet shortly*, and I felt the Holy Spirit touch the top of my head. I was on a plane for West Africa 6 days later. There is more to this story but I will only say that God used Bible verses three more times to help me understand the trouble and bruise Satan's head. I am convinced that **the Bible is a living Book**.

**Psalms 82: 1** More recently I was invited to visit Nigeria in 2005 for a national pastor's conference and to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Rev. Godwin's wedding anniversary. He was a young man I met in Nigeria in 1957, and helped get started on a virtual financial shoestring. His faith in God and persistent church planting established over 3000 churches and an estimated 2 or 3 million souls. Near the close of the conference I observed that Godwin's health was in decline and he seemed troubled in his spirit, but he did not discuss anything with me. Thinking I would not be speaking again, I awoke and began to praise the Lord. I thought perhaps Godwin was aware of division among his senior pastors, perhaps about who would succeed him; perhaps the organization would be divided. Suddenly, and without premeditation, I prayed: *“God, arise and stand among the church leadership; and don't let any ambitious pastors splinter the unity of the churches.*

I finished my prayers, took a shower and started the hot water for coffee. Then I picked up my Bible and began my daily reading in the Psalms (5 chapters daily). The 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter was **Psalms 82** and the 1<sup>st</sup> verse said: *“God stands in the congregation of the mighty; He judges among the gods (rulers).* Wow! I could hardly believe this verse (a **rhema word**) and my early prayer were almost word for word. Later that morning Godwin informed me I was to speak one more time and I had the message: *“God stands among the pastors and judges them”*. Whatever their concerns were, God had fashioned a unity of churches and ministers and He would be severe in judgment if there was any division. God was in control and He would approve or disapprove of the churches' leadership. There had been silence while I spoke, a pin dropping would have been heard, but when I finished there was an immediate and loud approval by voice and with vigorous hand clapping. God speaks to us in different ways—through dreams, circumstances, sermons, and godly counsel. He can bring powerful thoughts into our minds, a friend can drop a hint, a minister can give advise or a word of wisdom or prophecy; we can hear something on the radio or TV or something in writing may fall into our hands. But I was talking about the **Bible being a living and life-giving book** and shared these personal experiences. In the next lesson we return to the Book of Romans. When I was a young Christian this Book was difficult for me to clearly understand; some who take this study may also find it difficult. I hope the break-down of 43 Christian principles will help you adapt these foundational truths to speed your growth and empower your ministry whatever it may be.

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