

THE AMBASSADOR'S QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

The Courtroom of the Gospel of Christ

Condensed Trigger Edition · The Seven Volition Testing Points of Romans 1:18 – 3:28

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us." — 2 Corinthians 5:20

A companion to the Romans Outline II.B — Preaching of the Gospel of Christ for Our Establishment



The Gospel of Christ
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— The Foundation — We Have the Facts and the Truth on Our Side

The whole case is already won before you open your mouth. Paul functions through this section like a prosecuting attorney, and God has already left every man without excuse. You do not manufacture conviction; you call out what God has put there, and you leave the man to answer God.

Before You Enter the Courtroom

The light of God-consciousness is already in the person you are speaking to, whether he admits it or not. God Himself put it there, and God Himself declares it is there. He may deny it, and he may have buried it under years of unrighteousness, but it is there, because God says it is. You are not creating the light in him — ***you are calling out the light God has already given. Take God at His word on that, and walk in sure of it.***

¹⁹ Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed *it* unto them.

— Romans 1:19

And that same word must first be effectually working in you, the ambassador. Before you ever enter the conversation, take God at His word and believe what He has said — you lean not on your own persuasion, but on the word of God itself, received not as the word of men, but as the word of God, which does its own work in everyone who believes it.

¹³ For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it* not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

— 1 Thessalonians 2:13

When He Says, “It’s Just Another Book”

The light does not wait on the Bible. God gives the knowledge of Himself to every man through the creation itself — His eternal power and Godhead clearly seen by the things that are made. It is not delivered by a book or a missionary; God Himself puts it there.

So when a man deflects — “Why should I give any credence to the Bible? It’s only another book!” — do not take the bait and turn the conversation into a defense of the Bible. That is the question behind the question: usually one more way of holding the truth in unrighteousness, dodging the light he already has.

You do not need the Bible to establish that God is — he already knows it, from creation, and in his heart of hearts he knows it. Hold him to that light. The same holds when you press that the Lord Jesus Christ is God Himself: His deity is part of God’s own testimony, which a man weighs once he owns the God he already knows — not before. First the light, then the Book.

Two Things Never Change — At Every Testing Point

THE GOOD NEWS you offer the moment a man concedes — the same at every point:

"²⁴ Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; ²⁵ whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood... ²⁶ that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (Romans 3:24–26)

THE ONE CONDITION — never more than this:

¹ "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Romans 5:1) — To believe in the Lord Jesus Christ is to depend completely upon what He has done, and not in any way upon yourself.

The Case at a Glance

The prosecution moves in order. At every point the man is stopped, and at every point the same free gift is offered — Romans 3:24–26, received by faith alone (Romans 5:1).

VTP	The plea / response you meet	Where you move him
1	"There is no God."	To the light God already gave through creation — without excuse (Rom 1:18–20).
1-S	"How can God allow such suffering?"	Off God, onto the adversary's course and man's turning; creation still proves God (Rom 1:20).
2	"My religion is right / I'm not that bad."	To seeing he deserves the wrath of God (Rom 1:18, 29–32).
3	"I'm better than others / give me a fair deal."	Off other men, onto God's perfect righteousness (Rom 3:23; 2:3–4).
4	"It's not my fault" — ignorance or privilege.	No respect of persons; without excuse (Rom 2:11–29).
5	Scorn, ridicule, or blaming God.	Every charge dismissed; his damnation just (Rom 3:8).
6	Nothing left to say.	Guilty as charged; every mouth stopped (Rom 3:9–20).
7	"Too good to be true / what about these verses?"	The free gift, rightly divided; believe (Rom 3:21–28).

About This Guide

This Quick Reference Guide follows the gospel presentation taught by Keith R. Blades — the seven major Volition Testing Points encountered in the Gospel of Christ (Romans 1:16–3:26).

It is based on his 40-page booklet, *Enjoy The Bible Ministries® Gospel Tracts — A Guide to the 7 Major Volition Testing Points in the Gospel of Christ*.

Booklet, tracts & teaching: enjoythebible.org/enjoy-the-bible-ministries-gospel-tracts

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VTP 1

God Consciousness

Romans 1:18–20

THE PERSON YOU WILL MEET — The man who tells you there is no God. He says modern science has settled the matter, that evolution is true, that his life is the chance product of cosmic matter over millions of years, and that when he dies he will simply pass out of existence.

YOUR ANSWER — AT A GLANCE

- ▶ **The wrath of God is being revealed right now — deserved, held back in grace, and declared every time the gospel is preached. Not executed yet, but real and coming.**
- ▶ **Don't argue science — the issue was never ignorance; it is the truth held down.**
- ▶ **God has revealed Himself — His eternal power and Godhead are clearly seen in the creation; creation demands a Creator.**
 - *An archaeologist who digs up pottery or an arrowhead never says it shaped itself out of the dirt — the more design we see, the more certain someone designed it.*
- ▶ **He holds the truth in unrighteousness — he knows, but he suppresses it, rationalizes it, or flatly denies it. He is without excuse.**
- ▶ **Pull the trigger to the gospel** — ask him, “What is going to happen to you when you die?” His answer shows how he holds the truth down:
 - *“I just live a good life” = suppressing · “church, more good than bad” = rationalizing · “dead is dead” = denying.*
- ▶ **To the one who denies it — “But what if you're wrong?” He cannot afford to be wrong about this one thing.**
 - *He cannot prove God does not exist — neither can any scientist or philosopher; at best he has chosen to believe it. Hold him to the one thing he cannot afford to be wrong about, and rest the case on the light God has already given.*

THE ANCHOR PASSAGE

- 18** For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;
- 19** Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed *it* unto them.
- 20** For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

— Romans 1:18–20

WHAT THIS TRAINS YOU TO DO

Do not take the bait of debating science. Hold him to the one thing he cannot afford to be wrong about, and rest your case on the light God has already given through creation. You are not trying to win an argument — you are setting the light of God-consciousness in front of him once more, and leaving him to answer God.

SUPPLEMENT TO VTP 1 · A COMMON OBJECTION

“How Can I Believe in a God Who Allows Such Suffering?”

Romans 1:20

A Word Before You Begin

This is not one of the seven testing points. It is a supplement, drawn from Keith's teaching, to help meet a question many people raise at the very first point — how a good God could allow so much suffering.

THE PERSON YOU WILL MEET — He points to the evil in the world — war, disease, children starving, evil everywhere you turn — and asks how he is supposed to believe in a God who just sits back and allows all of that. If God is real and good, he says, He would not let it happen.

YOUR ANSWER — AT A GLANCE

- ▶ Do not brush past the suffering — it is real and terrible.
- ▶ Move it off God's doorstep, and onto its real source — in the beginning, God saw everything He made was VERY GOOD. It's the adversary's course of this world, and man's turning from God, causing the suffering.
- ▶ Sin and death — and all this suffering — entered through one man's fall, by Adam, not from God's hand (Romans 5:12).
- ▶ A broken world proves the Bible right, not wrong — God foretold this world's evil and corruption in His word long before it ever came to pass.
- ▶ God will end the evil — and has already sent His own Son into it.
- ▶ Suffering is not his real reason — the proof of God still stands in creation.

THE ANCHOR PASSAGE

²⁷ So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them... ³¹ And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, *it was very good.*

— Genesis 1:27, 31

²⁰ For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead.

— Romans 1:20

²¹ Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

— Romans 1:21

² Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.

— Ephesians 2:2

WHAT THIS TRAINS YOU TO DO

Do not argue the suffering away, and do not pretend it is small. Move it off of God, where he has laid it, and back onto its real source — the adversary's course of this world and man's own turning from God, just as Romans 1 describes. Show that a broken world confirms God's word rather than overturning it, that God has both promised to end the evil and already acted in His own Son, and that the light of God-consciousness is still plainly there in the creation. Then leave him with the honest question: whether the suffering is truly his reason, or only his cover.

VTP 2 Wrath Consciousness

Romans 1:18-32

THE PERSON YOU WILL MEET — A different person — not an atheist. He believes in a god (perhaps one of long tradition and many followers) and is sure he is not worshipping the wrong one. Or he is simply a decent, moral man who assumes that when he stands before God all will be well, because he is “not really that bad.”

YOUR ANSWER — AT A GLANCE

- ▶ **Could you be worshipping the wrong God? Age and numbers do not make a religion true.**
- ▶ **The Lord Jesus Christ Himself claims to be that one and only God — in the form of God, equal with God.**
- ▶ **Let God describe the human heart — he qualifies for the wrath of God.**
- ▶ **He cannot make himself righteous — no works, rites, or ceremonies.**
- ▶ **Then give the good news — a free way of escape.**

THE ANCHOR PASSAGE

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness.

— Romans 1:18

⁶ Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I *am* the first, and I *am* the last; and beside me *there is* no God.

— Isaiah 44:6

⁶ Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

— Philippians 2:6

¹⁶ Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom *be* honour and power everlasting. Amen.

— 1 Timothy 6:16

ROMANS 1:29-31 — God names each charge against man: (it only takes one to be guilty)

unrighteousness	fornication	wickedness	covetousness
maliciousness	envy	murder	debate
deceit	malignity	whisperers	backbiters
haters of God	despiteful	proud	boasters
inventors of evil things	disobedient to parents	without understanding	covenantbreakers
without natural affection	implacable	unmerciful	

³² ...who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

— Romans 1:32

WHAT THIS TRAINS YOU TO DO

Do two things, in order. First, do not let a man hide — not behind his religion, and not behind his relative goodness. Hold the mirror of God's own word in front of him until he admits the wrath of God is justly against him. Then, the moment he sees it, do not leave him there — set before him the escape God freely provided in His Son, and ask him to believe.

VTP 3

The Self-Defense Plea of Relative Righteousness

Romans 2:1–11

THE PERSON YOU WILL MEET — His pride rises and he reaches for his first and most common defense: “I am better than they are.” One says he is not perfect but is a good person on the whole. Another wants a “fair deal,” to be weighed against how others have lived. Another says he has made his peace by turning over a new leaf. Every one is the plea of relative righteousness.

YOUR ANSWER — AT A GLANCE

- ▶ Not whether he is good — but whether he is perfectly righteous.
- ▶ A fair deal would condemn him — the standard is God's own perfect righteousness.
- ▶ Judged “according to his deeds”? Then the standard is patient continuance in well doing — perfect and unbroken.
- ▶ He cannot make his own peace — no new leaf undoes past sin.
- ▶ The perfect righteousness he needs, God gives freely.

THE ANCHOR PASSAGE

³ And thinkest thou this, O man... that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?... ⁴ not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

— Romans 2:3–4

⁶ Who will render to every man according to his deeds: ⁷ to them who by **patient continuance** in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: ⁸ but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, ⁹ tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil... ¹⁰ but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good... ¹¹ For there is no respect of persons with God.

— Romans 2:6–11

¹⁹ that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

— Romans 3:19

²³ all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

— Romans 3:23

WHAT THIS TRAINS YOU TO DO

Take away the first and most natural hiding place a man has — the comparison of himself with other men. Move the standard off of other people and onto God Himself, until he sees that even his best righteousness falls short of perfect. The moment he sees it, set before him the perfect righteousness God gives freely in His Son, and ask him to believe.

VTP 4

The Self-Defense Plea of Extenuating Circumstances

Romans 2:12–29

THE PERSON YOU WILL MEET — He looks for some circumstance unique to himself that he hopes will excuse him, or lessen his guilt. It comes in two opposite forms: the plea of ignorance (“I did not know; no one taught me God’s law; I was not brought up Christian”) — the ignorant Gentile; and the plea of privilege (“I have been a good churchgoer; I have a Christian heritage; I am no idolatrous heathen”) — the favored Jew. Often it comes out simply as: “It is not my fault.”

YOUR ANSWER — AT A GLANCE

- ▶ **God judges without respect of persons.**
- ▶ **The ignorant Gentile pleads, “I didn’t know — no one ever taught me God’s law.” But the work of the law is written in his heart; his own conscience bears witness against him, and he is judged by that very law.**
- ▶ **The favored Jew pleads his privilege — “I have the law, the heritage, the church; I am no idolatrous heathen.” But the doers of the law, not the hearers, are justified, and the true Jew is one inwardly.**
- ▶ **He is without excuse — no one to blame but himself.**
- ▶ **But the charge itself can be dropped — not lessened or excused, but removed altogether, because Christ bore the guilt and penalty in his place.**

THE ANCHOR PASSAGE

- 11 For there is no respect of persons with God.
- 12 For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law;
- 13 (For not the hearers of the law *are* just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.
- 14 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:
- 15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)

— Romans 2:11–15

WHAT THIS TRAINS YOU TO DO

Close off the next hiding place — the excuse. Do not argue with his circumstances. Show him that God judges without respect of persons, so neither his ignorance nor his privilege can stand, and he is left without excuse. The moment he stops making excuses, tell him the very guilt he cannot excuse, God is able to remove — freely, in His Son — and ask him to believe.

VTP 5 Stubborn Negative Responses

Romans 3:1–8

THE PERSON YOU WILL MEET — By now the man is backed into a corner, and his responses turn stubborn and even desperate. Some grow hard and scornful — they scoff at what God says, ridicule it, slander it, or turn away in indifference and apathy. Some grow bold enough to turn the charge back on God Himself, suggesting God would be unrighteous or unfair to judge them at all.

YOUR ANSWER — AT A GLANCE

- ▶ Don't match his scorn or argue God's fairness — the pleas now turn desperate, even charging God as unrighteous to judge.
- ▶ Let God be true, but every man a liar — every charge against His justice is a trumped-up lie (Romans 3:4; Psalm 51:4).
- ▶ The charges turn stupid, then blasphemous — “my sin only helps God's glory... let us do evil, that good may come.”
- ▶ Whose damnation is just — and the honest response is David's: own the sin, and justify the Judge.
- ▶ But the door is still open — God is willing to save him now.

THE ANCHOR PASSAGE

4 Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done *this* evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, *and* be clear when thou judgest.

— Psalm 51:4

IN PLAIN TERMS

The justification here is God's, not the sinner's — David owns his sin and agrees with the verdict, declaring God right and true in all He says. It is the very response the desperate questioner refuses to make.

7 For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner?

8 And not *rather*, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just.

— Romans 3:7–8

IN PLAIN TERMS

This is about the people who hear God's word and only scoff at it, twist it, and sneer it away. And Paul says that for people like that, who keep refusing the truth, their condemnation is just. It is deserved.

8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

— 2 Thessalonians 1:8–9

IN PLAIN TERMS

To obey the gospel is simply to believe it, to trust what the Lord Jesus Christ did for you. So the ones who obey not the gospel are the ones who will not believe it.

WHAT THIS TRAINS YOU TO DO

For the moment a man turns stubborn and even turns on God: do not match his scorn, and do not take up the quarrel about whether God is fair. Simply show him, from God's own word, that every such charge is dismissed and his damnation would be just. Then, while the door still stands open, tell him the very God he has been resisting is at this moment willing to save him — and ask him to believe.

VTP 6**Full Prosecution — Under Sin and Guilty Before God**

Romans 3:9–20

THE PERSON YOU WILL MEET — Every plea has been met and answered. He could not plead his goodness, his ignorance, any extenuating circumstance, and his desperate charges against God were every one dismissed. There is nothing left for him to say. Paul, who has functioned through this whole section like a prosecuting attorney, now rests his case and reads the verdict.

YOUR ANSWER — AT A GLANCE

- ▶ **Let the verdict stand — all under sin: not all equally vile, but all under the same master, worthy of the same wrath.**
- ▶ **Read it from Israel's own scriptures — none righteous, no, not one; no fear of God before their eyes. The Jew can't object; it's his own oracles.**
- ▶ **Every mouth stopped — every plea has failed; nothing he could say has any standing left to be said.**
- ▶ **By the law is the knowledge of sin — it confirms the condemnation; by its deeds no flesh is justified.**
- ▶ **No hope from himself — unless God provides a way. Then give the good news his silence has prepared him to hear.**

THE ANCHOR PASSAGE

9 What then? are we better *than they*? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;

10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

— Romans 3:9–11, 19

23 For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

— Romans 6:23

WHAT THIS TRAINS YOU TO DO

For the moment a man has nothing left to say: do not gloat over a stopped mouth, and do not press the verdict like an enemy. Let it stand exactly as God reads it — all the world guilty before God, no escape for anyone. Then, at the very point of his deepest need, give him the good news his silence has prepared him to hear, and ask him to believe.

VTP 7

The Good News — The Redemption That Is
in Christ Jesus

Romans 3:21–26

THE PERSON YOU WILL MEET — Now his mouth is stopped, and he stands guilty before God with no defense and no escape of his own. It is exactly here, and only here, that the gospel becomes good news to him. Until a man knows he deserves wrath and cannot save himself, he will not think he needs this. But now he is ready — so give it to him plainly.

YOUR ANSWER — AT A GLANCE

- ▶ **But now** — instead of the sentence falling, the righteousness of God without the law is manifested and offered as a free gift.
- ▶ **By faith of Jesus Christ** — He did it all as our substitute redeemer; it rests on His work, not ours, unto all who believe.
- ▶ **Redemption paid the price, His blood the propitiation that satisfied God's justice** — the empty tomb proves it: raised for our justification. So God is just AND the justifier.
- ▶ **The whole debit paid in full, His perfect righteousness credited the moment you believe** — nothing can be added; just believe.

THE ANCHOR PASSAGE

21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

22 Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

25 Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

26 To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

27 Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.

28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

— Romans 3:21–28

IN PLAIN TERMS**What About Those Other Verses?**

Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Matthew 24:13 belong to Israel's kingdom program — not to us today.

The salvation in view is a physical deliverance through the judgments of the day of wrath, and baptism marks out the ones to be delivered. God tells you how you are justified today. He speaks through Paul, in Romans, where the gospel of Christ is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Romans 1:16). It is faith alone, in Christ alone, with nothing added.

WHAT THIS TRAINS YOU TO DO

Do two things together. Give the good news freely and fully, holding nothing back, for the man is now ready to hear it. And guard it — refusing to let any work be added, whether his own notion that it is too simple to be true, or a verse pulled out of Israel's program and laid upon him today. Set the Lord Jesus Christ before him as the One who did it all, and ask him to believe.