



GRACE AND THE STRUGGLE AGAINST SIN

Legal declaration • weakness of the flesh • life by the Spirit • Christ's intercession

*“being justified freely
by His grace”*

ROMANS 3:24 • RVR1960 — ENGLISH TRANSLATION

REINA-VALERA 1960
AND FRANCISCO LACUEVA'S GREEK INTERLINEAR

Prepared for
RUPERTO BRAVO BENAVENTE (R.B.B.)

Buenos Aires, Argentina • 2026

ACCORDING TO THE HOLY SCRIPTURES ALONE



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CONCISE BIBLICAL STUDY

Reina-Valera 1960 and New Testament Greek analysis
guided by Francisco Lacueva's Interlinear

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Romans 3:24 (RV1960 — English translation)

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Revised editorial edition for study and free distribution

Editorial Note and Scope

This concise book brings together a broad body of passages that support four related affirmations: justification by grace as God’s legal declaration; righteousness received in union with Christ rather than earned by merit; the persistence of a real struggle against sin while the believer lives in a weak body; and the constant intercession of Jesus Christ when the believer fails. Its purpose is to provide a focused, pastoral, and verifiable study without turning a doctrinal synthesis into a supposed verbatim statement of Scripture.

The expression “God does not see us on the basis of our merits, but clothed with the righteousness of Christ” is used here as a theological summary. Scripture communicates this truth through several images and affirmations: God justifies the ungodly person who believes, credits righteousness apart from works, makes the believer the righteousness of God “in Him,” enables the believer to put on Christ, and accepts the believer in the Beloved. For the sake of precision, this study distinguishes between what a passage states directly and doctrinal conclusions reached by bringing several passages together.

Scope criterion: Within the requested limit of 20 to 40 pages, “all texts” means all primary passages and the complementary passages most directly related to the four affirmations. This summary does not reproduce every biblical occurrence of the words grace, sin, flesh, or righteousness; doing so would require a complete concordance and would exceed the format of a concise book.

Short biblical quotations are identified as Reina-Valera 1960 (RVR1960). The Greek consultation follows the interlinear method associated with Francisco Lacueva’s work: close attention to word order, literal equivalents, verbal forms, and key vocabulary. No pages or extended glosses from the interlinear are reproduced; independent lexical observations are provided and should be checked against the printed edition.

Primary sources: the Holy Bible, Reina-Valera 1960; Francisco Lacueva, *Nuevo Testamento Interlineal Griego-Español*, Editorial CLIE. Web references are listed at the end as research tools, not as substitutes for reading the biblical passages in full.

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1. Central Thesis and Doctrinal Map

*“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus”
Romans 8:1 (RVR1960 — English translation)*

Biblical teaching holds together two realities that may initially seem difficult to reconcile. On the one hand, God receives the believer on the basis of Christ’s finished work: the believer has been justified, reconciled, and placed in a new standing. On the other hand, the believer still experiences temptation, weakness, and conflict. The biblical solution is not to deny either reality, but to place each one in its proper relationship.

Justification answers the question: On what basis can a sinner be declared righteous before God? The apostolic answer is clear: not by works, discipline, religion, or moral perfection, but freely by grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus and received by faith. This is a judicial declaration based on Christ’s work on our behalf, not a reward for our own performance.

Practical sanctification answers a different question: How does a person now live after being received in Christ? The answer is not passivity. Saving grace trains, the Spirit guides, the Word renews the mind, prayer guards against temptation, and the community restores the person who stumbles. The struggle does not purchase acceptance; it flows from acceptance already granted and seeks to bring daily life into harmony with the believer’s new identity.

Christ’s intercession completes the picture. The same Lord who died and rose again is at the right hand of God and intercedes for His own. When John calls Christ our “Advocate,” he does not present a defense based on the believer’s innocence, but on Christ’s own righteousness and propitiation. Grace does not minimize sin: sin was judged at the cross, and grace provides a defense resting on that one sufficient sacrifice.

Doctrinal map: JUSTIFICATION — secure legal standing. • SANCTIFICATION — growth and daily struggle. • INTERCESSION — Christ’s present ministry. • GLORIFICATION — final freedom from the presence of sin.

1.1 Four Affirmations That Must Remain Together

- God justifies by grace the person who believes, apart from works of the law (Romans 3:24-28; 4:5-8).
- The believer is received “in Christ”; his or her righteousness is not a personal credential (2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 3:9).
- The flesh remains weak, and fleshly desires wage war against the soul (Matthew 26:41; Romans 7:18; 1 Peter 2:11).
- Christ lives to intercede and is our Advocate with the Father when the believer sins (Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2).

Separating these affirmations produces error. Justification without practical holiness becomes presumption. A struggle against sin without justification becomes bondage, guilt, and self-justification. A doctrine of weakness without the Spirit’s power leads to fatalism. And teaching about intercession that forgets the cross reduces Christ to a merely sentimental defender. Apostolic teaching preserves the whole: grace that declares, grace that trains, the Spirit who empowers, and Christ who intercedes.

2. The Legal Declaration: Justification by Grace

*“Therefore we conclude that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law”
Romans 3:28 (RV1960 — English translation)*

In Paul’s usage, to justify does not primarily mean to make a person morally perfect, but to declare that person to be in a right relationship with God. The Greek verb δικαιόω (dikaioō) belongs to the legal sphere: a judge issues a favorable verdict. The sinner has no sufficient merit to present; God acts “freely by His grace” because Christ provided redemption.

Romans 3 joins three inseparable elements. First, all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Second, justification is free: it cannot be wages earned by works. Third, its objective foundation is Christ Jesus, presented as the propitiation through faith in His blood. God remains just and, at the same time, justifies the person who has faith in Jesus. Grace does not evade justice; it satisfies justice at the cross.

2.1 Credited Righteousness

Romans 4 develops the verb λογίζομαι (logizomai), meaning “to count, credit, or reckon.” Abraham believed God, and his faith was counted to him as righteousness. David describes the blessedness of the person to whom God credits righteousness apart from works and against whom He does not count sin. The passage does not make faith a meritorious work; it contrasts faith with the wages owed to a worker. Faith receives; it does not purchase.

This language explains why the believer’s assurance rests outside the self. Conscience may identify real failures, but the verdict of justification rests on Christ’s obedience and sacrifice. Faith does not look to the quality of one’s own performance in order to gain acceptance; it looks to the complete sufficiency of Christ’s work.

2.2 Peace, Access, and Hope

Romans 5 presents the results: having been justified by faith, we have peace with God and access into this grace. Peace is more than a feeling; it is the end of judicial hostility. Access does not depend on daily spiritual performance. Hope does not rest on a person’s ability to maintain a flawless record, but on the love demonstrated in Christ’s death while we were still sinners.

The same logic appears in Titus 3: salvation is not by works of righteousness that we have done, but according to mercy; having been justified by His grace, we become heirs. In Philippians 3, Paul abandons confidence in a righteousness of his own derived from the law and longs to be found in Christ with the righteousness that comes from God by faith.

Legal conclusion: The believer is not accepted because practical sinlessness has been achieved. The believer is accepted because he or she is in Christ and because God has issued a favorable verdict based on Christ’s redemption. Good works are the fruit and evidence of new life, not the price of justification.

3. “Clothed with the Righteousness of Christ”: Meaning and Precision

*“that we might become the righteousness of God in Him”
2 Corinthians 5:21 (RVR1960 — English translation)*

The exact phrase “clothed with the righteousness of Christ” does not appear in a single verse. It is a synthesis that joins several biblical lines of teaching. Isaiah speaks of garments of salvation and a robe of righteousness. Zechariah presents the accused person in filthy garments that are replaced with clean ceremonial clothing. Paul teaches that those baptized into Christ have “put on Christ,” and that the believer is to put on the Lord Jesus Christ. These images are complemented by the legal language of Romans 4 and by the union “in Him” described in 2 Corinthians 5:21.

Precision matters. This teaching does not imply that God deceives Himself or ceases to know the believer’s actual condition. God fully knows both each child’s standing in Christ and that child’s practical state. The expression means that the basis of acceptance is not personal merit, but the righteousness provided in Christ. At the same time, the Father disciplines, corrects, and transforms those whom He has received as children.

3.1 The Great Exchange

In 2 Corinthians 5:21, the One who knew no sin was made sin for us so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. This does not teach that Christ became morally sinful. It teaches that He representatively bore the burden and condemnation of sin. In the same way, the believer does not automatically become sinless in daily experience; the believer receives a righteous standing in union with Christ.

The Greek expression “ἐν αὐτῷ” — “in Him” — guards the center of the passage. Righteousness is not an independent possession that a believer may display apart from Christ. It exists in union with Him. Therefore all boasting is excluded. Christ has become for us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; the one who boasts must boast in the Lord.

3.2 Standing and Practice

Hebrews 10 declares that by one offering Christ has perfected forever those who are being sanctified, while at the same time describing them as people in an ongoing process of sanctification. Their standing is complete because of the sacrifice; their experience continues under God’s transforming work. These are not two salvations, but two dimensions of the same grace: definitive acceptance and progressive transformation.

This distinction guards against two extremes. Perfectionism claims that the presence of sin has already been removed; Romans 7, Galatians 5, and 1 John 1 contradict that claim. License claims that conduct is irrelevant because the believer’s standing is secure; Romans 6, Titus 2, and 1 John 3 deny that conclusion. A secure standing encourages holy practice, and imperfect practice never replaces the foundation of that standing.

4. Grace Is Not a License to Sin

*“Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not!”
Romans 6:1-2 (RVRI960 — English translation)*

Paul anticipates the objection commonly raised against grace: if justification is free and secure, why not continue in sin? His answer does not reduce the freeness of the gospel; instead, it points to union with Christ. The person united with Christ’s death and resurrection has received a new identity. Sin no longer possesses the right to rule, even though it still attempts to exert influence.

Romans 6 distinguishes between sin’s reign and sin’s continued presence. The believer must reckon himself or herself dead to sin and alive to God, refuse to let sin reign in the mortal body, and present the body’s members as instruments of righteousness. These commands would be unnecessary if the conflict had disappeared; they would be useless if sin’s dominion had not been broken. Biblical teaching maintains both realities.

4.1 Grace as a Teacher

Titus 2:11-14 is decisive. The grace that brings salvation also “trains” us. The Greek participle παιδεύουσα (paideuoussa) belongs to the sphere of education, formation, and discipline. Grace does not merely forgive the past; it forms a life that renounces ungodliness, lives with self-control, and waits for Christ’s appearing. Therefore, setting grace against holiness contradicts the text.

Obedience born of grace has a different motive from self-justification. It does not attempt to buy God’s love, but responds to love already demonstrated. It does not seek to build an identity, but to live in harmony with the identity already received. It does not present good works as the currency of salvation, but as the fruit God prepared for those who have been created anew in Christ Jesus.

4.2 Real Responsibility without Condemnation

The absence of condemnation in Romans 8:1 does not remove the responsibility of Romans 8:12-13. Believers are not debtors to the flesh; by the Spirit they put to death the deeds of the body. The struggle is fought from a new position: not to escape a sentence still awaiting judgment, but because the condemning sentence was dealt with in Christ and the Spirit now dwells in the believer.

This pastoral order is vital. Constant threat may produce outward obedience, concealment, or despair, but it does not produce the fruit of the Spirit. Grace, by contrast, enables the believer to confess without running away, to receive correction without denying sonship, and to rise after a fall without turning restoration into a new meritorious work.

5. Human Nature and the Inner Struggle

*“to will what is good is present with me, but how to perform it I do not find”
Romans 7:18 (RVV1960 — English translation)*

Jesus told Peter and the disciples that the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. Years later, Peter urged believers to abstain from fleshly desires that “wage war” against the soul. Paul described a law of sin in his members opposing the law of his mind. These three witnesses do not portray the Christian life as the absence of conflict, but as a life in which the renewed will must depend on God in the face of continuing weakness.

5.1 Romans 7: A Confession of Inability

Romans 7:14–25 has received different interpretations. Some understand it as Paul’s experience under the law before fully grasping the gospel; others understand it as the experience of a believer who knows God’s will but discovers the powerlessness of the flesh. Without resolving every aspect of that debate here, the passage clearly teaches that the law can reveal what is good but cannot give the flesh power to perform it. Deliverance is found in Jesus Christ and unfolds in the life of the Spirit described in Romans 8.

The statement “in me, that is, in my flesh, nothing good dwells” must be read with Paul’s own precision. He does not say that nothing good exists in the renewed person; he acknowledges that he wills the good and delights in the law of God according to the inner person. He locates the problem in the flesh, understood as fallen human existence powerless against sin. This distinction prevents both self-exaltation and denial of God’s inward work.

5.2 Galatians 5: Continuing Opposition

Galatians 5 declares that the desire of the flesh is against the Spirit and the desire of the Spirit is against the flesh. The verb and structure describe real opposition. The solution is not to improve the flesh until it becomes spiritual, but to walk by the Spirit. The fruit — love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control — is produced by the Spirit, although it calls for the believer’s active response.

5.3 Peter: Desires That Wage War

In 1 Peter 2:11, the verb related to “waging war” depicts desires as forces carrying out a campaign against the soul. Peter writes to people who have been born again, redeemed, and called the people of God. He therefore recognizes that the new identity does not automatically end the siege of sinful desires. His response combines deliberate abstinence, honorable conduct, and remembrance of the believer’s pilgrim identity.

Acknowledged weakness is not an excuse for sin. In Matthew 26:41, the statement “the flesh is weak” is joined to two commands: watch and pray. The diagnosis leads to dependence, not resignation. The person who believes he is invulnerable falls easily; the person who recognizes weakness seeks God’s help, avoids occasions of stumbling, and receives support from the community.

Pastoral balance: Do not deny the struggle. Do not excuse sin. Do not trust the flesh. Do not despair of grace. Watch, pray, walk by the Spirit, and come to the Advocate.

6. The Practical Path: Walking by the Spirit

*“Walk by the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the desires of the flesh”
Galatians 5:16 (RVR1960 — English translation)*

The command “walk” translates περιπατεῖτε (peripateite), a present imperative that describes ongoing conduct. Life by the Spirit is not an isolated emotional moment, but a daily walk. The believer learns to bring thoughts, decisions, habits, and relationships under the direction of the Word and the Spirit.

6.1 Concrete Means of Struggle

- The truth of the gospel: Remembering justification prevents us from fighting out of fear and self-accusation. Romans 8 begins with “no condemnation” and continues with life according to the Spirit.
- Renewal of the mind: Romans 12:2 and Ephesians 4 teach that conduct changes through a renewed mind, not merely through outward prohibitions.
- Watchful prayer: Matthew 26:41 links watchfulness and prayer with resistance to temptation. Ephesians 6 adds persevering prayer to the armor of God.
- Flight and abstinence: 2 Timothy 2:22 commands us to flee passions; 1 Peter 2:11 commands us to abstain. Some battles are won by leaving the occasion of temptation.
- Presenting the body: Romans 6 calls believers to present their members to God. Holiness includes bodily choices, routines, and concrete boundaries.
- A restoring community: Galatians 6:1-2 commands restoration with gentleness and the bearing of burdens. Isolation encourages concealment and repetition.
- Future hope: Titus 2 connects godly living with the blessed hope. The expectation of Christ reorders present desires.

6.2 What Happens after a Fall?

The biblical response is not to hide, rationalize, or perform a penance in order to recover legal favor. Neither is it to treat sin as a minor matter. The believer should come into the light, confess truthfully, receive cleansing that rests on Christ’s blood, repair damage where appropriate, and resume the path in dependence on the Spirit.

First John 1:9 appears in a context of fellowship and truth. Confession does not inform God of something He did not know; it agrees with His verdict about sin. Forgiveness and cleansing rest on God’s faithfulness and justice, and the next chapter explains why: Jesus Christ the righteous is our Advocate and propitiation. Restoration does not repeat the cross; it applies the cross’s sufficiency to wounded fellowship.

When a fall has harmed other people, grace produces fruits of repentance: acknowledgment without excuses, a request for forgiveness, restitution where possible, new boundaries, and willingness to receive help. Eternal security must never be used to silence victims, avoid consequences, or prevent responsible discipline.

7. Jesus Christ, Our Permanent Advocate and Intercessor

*“we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous”
1 John 2:1 (RVR1960 — English translation)*

John writes so that his readers will not sin, yet he recognizes the real possibility that someone may sin. The phrase “and if” avoids two errors: it does not normalize sin as an unavoidable command, but neither does it leave the failing believer without hope. The remedy is not a new sacrifice or compensating merit. “We have” an Advocate — a present and continuing reality.

7.1 Paraklētos: A Defense Grounded in Righteousness

The term παράκλητος (paraklētos) may refer to one called alongside to help, defend, or intercede. In 1 John 2:1, the legal context favors “Advocate.” His identity is decisive: Jesus Christ “the righteous.” His defense does not deny guilt; it presents the righteousness and atoning work of the Son. The next verse calls Him the propitiation for our sins.

Intercession does not imply disagreement between a merciful Son and a reluctant Father. The Father sent the Son, God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, and access to the throne is called access to grace. Christ’s work expresses the Triune God’s will to save justly.

7.2 Romans 8: No Final Accusation

Romans 8 presents a courtroom scene: Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect? God is the One who justifies. Who is the one who condemns? Christ died, rose again, is at the right hand, and intercedes. The sequence joins past work, present ministry, and verdict: atoning death, vindicating resurrection, exaltation, and intercession. No accusation can overturn the judgment of the Judge who justified on the basis of Christ.

7.3 Hebrews: A Priesthood That Never Ends

Hebrews 7 contrasts mortal priests with Christ, who remains forever and possesses an unchangeable priesthood. Therefore He is able to save completely those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to intercede. The phrase “always lives” expresses the continuity of His ministry, while “once for all” expresses the unrepeatable sufficiency of His sacrifice.

Hebrews 4 adds a pastoral dimension: our High Priest can sympathize with our weaknesses because He was tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin. The consequence is not to run away in shame, but to approach the throne of grace with confidence in order to receive mercy and find grace for timely help.

7.4 Christ’s Prayer for Peter

Luke 22:31–32 shows Jesus interceding before Peter’s fall: “I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail.” Jesus does not deny the coming stumble; He also announces restoration and service: “when you have returned, strengthen your brothers.” Intercession preserves faith and turns the restored person into an instrument for strengthening others.

The center of assurance: The believer’s hope does not rest on never needing a defense, but on having a righteous Advocate; not on never being weak, but on having a compassionate High Priest; not on perfect discipline, but on Christ’s perfect sacrifice and unceasing intercession.

8. Understanding a Believer's Fall without Losing Biblical Balance

The Bible speaks of children of God who may stumble, believers who must be restored, and communities that need discipline. It also speaks of a new creation, divine seed, and a life that cannot settle comfortably into a persistent practice of sin. Biblical balance distinguishes a fall that is resisted from an entrenched indifference to sin.

8.1 Fall, Practice, and Hardening

First John uses strong language about not practicing sin. Its purpose is not to teach that a believer never commits a sinful act, because the same writer says that denying the presence of sin is self-deception and provides an Advocate “if anyone sins.” The letter confronts a practice marked by indifference, falsehood, and rejection of Christ. Life born of God introduces opposition to sin, even while the battle continues.

8.2 Assurance That Produces Honesty

Assurance in Christ should produce a greater capacity for honesty. A person who believes every fall cancels his or her relationship with God will tend to hide, minimize, or manufacture merit. A person who knows that acceptance rests in Christ can call sin what it is, come into the light, and accept correction. Grace removes the need to defend an image of sinless perfection.

8.3 Discipline and Consequences

Legal forgiveness does not automatically remove every temporal consequence. Conduct may require restitution, suspension of responsibilities, professional support, or church discipline. These measures do not purchase forgiveness; they protect people, honor the truth, and serve restoration. Biblical grace opposes both final condemnation and irresponsible impunity.

8.4 Hope of Transformation

The struggle is not useless. God works in us both to will and to act; the Spirit bears fruit; Christ will complete the work He began; and the God of all grace perfects, establishes, strengthens, and settles His people. Progress may be uneven, but hope rests on God's faithfulness. Future glorification will finally remove the presence of sin; until then, sanctification anticipates that freedom through growing dependence on Christ.

8.5 Focused Exegesis of Eight Decisive Passages

Romans 3:21-26 — God's Righteousness and Free Grace

The passage begins with a historical and theological turning point: “but now.” After demonstrating that every mouth is stopped and the whole world stands under judgment, Paul announces a righteousness of God manifested apart from the law, although witnessed by the Law and the Prophets. This is not an improvised solution, but the fulfillment of biblical promise. “Apart from the law” excludes law-keeping as the basis of the verdict, while “witnessed” preserves continuity with the Old Testament.

Justification is “free” and “by His grace.” Both expressions remove merit. Yet the gift's freeness to the believer does not mean there was no cost: redemption is “in Christ Jesus,” and propitiation is connected with His blood. The text holds together the free gift and the infinite price. God does not lower His standard; He demonstrates His righteousness by dealing with sin in Christ and justifying the one who believes.

Romans 4:5-8 — God Justifies the Ungodly

Paul deliberately chooses a startling expression: God “justifies the ungodly.” He does not mean that God calls evil good or celebrates ungodliness. He declares that the ungodly person who believes is credited with righteousness on a basis other than works. The contrast with wages is explicit: the worker receives what is owed; the believer is credited with righteousness by grace.

The quotation from Psalm 32 adds two negative aspects and one positive aspect: lawless deeds forgiven, sins covered, and sin not counted. Justification includes both the removal of guilt and the crediting of a righteous standing. Therefore conscience may rest without denying the need for practical growth.

Romans 6:11-14 — Under Grace, Not under Dominion

The command “reckon yourselves” calls conduct to align with the fact of union with Christ. The believer does not manufacture death to sin through self-suggestion; the believer counts as true what God declares about the new relationship to sin’s lordship. That truth becomes practical when the believer refuses to obey the desires of the mortal body and presents his or her members to God.

The statement “you are not under law but under grace” does not remove every moral obligation. In context, it explains why sin must not rule. Grace establishes a new order: it changes masters, provides identity, and opens a life of obedience from the heart. To be under grace means freedom from condemning dominion and power to serve God.

Romans 7:18-25 — The Bankruptcy of the Flesh

The passage repeatedly uses “I will,” “I do,” and “I do not.” The will recognizes the good, but the flesh lacks the power to carry it out. The result is a painful division between inward approval of God’s law and experienced captivity in the members. The law functions as light that exposes the problem, not as the power that solves it.

The cry “Who will deliver me?” asks not for a method, but for a person. The answer is Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 8 develops that answer through the life of the Spirit. Romans 7 should therefore lead to dependence, not to a permanent identity of defeat.

Galatians 5:16-25 — A Battle with Direction

Paul does not promise that walking by the Spirit removes the existence of contrary desires; he promises that their rule will not be fulfilled. The opposition between flesh and Spirit explains the real tension, while the Spirit’s guidance defines the path. The “works” of the flesh appear as a disorderly plural; the “fruit” of the Spirit appears as an organic unity expressed in many qualities.

The crucifixion of the flesh with its passions describes a decisive break in allegiance, not the automatic disappearance of every temptation. Therefore verse 25 returns to the command: if we live by the Spirit, we must also keep in step with the Spirit. The life received must become a daily walk.

Titus 2:11-14 — Grace That Saves and Trains

Grace “has appeared” in the coming and work of Christ. It is not an abstract idea or shapeless indulgence; it has a historical face and a redemptive purpose. The same grace that brings salvation teaches us to say no to ungodliness and yes to self-controlled, righteous, and godly living. This training takes place “in the present age,” in the very environment where worldly desires continue to press upon us.

The passage holds together three times: grace appeared, grace trains now, and grace directs us toward Christ’s future appearing. Past, present, and future are joined. The cross redeems from every lawless deed; present life displays zeal for good works; future hope sustains perseverance.

1 John 1:8-2:2 — Truth, Confession, and the Advocate

John rejects two false claims: saying that we have no sin and saying that we have not sinned. God’s light does not permit denial. Yet truth about sin does not end in despair. Jesus’ blood cleanses, God forgives, and Jesus Christ the righteous is our Advocate. God’s holiness and the believer’s security meet in the work of the Son.

The stated purpose is “that you may not sin.” The doctrine of the Advocate is never offered as permission. Yet John knows his readers’ frailty and adds, “if anyone sins.” Christ’s defense is not a second opportunity based on new merit; it rests on the fact that He Himself is the propitiation.

Hebrews 7:25 — Complete Salvation and Continuing Intercession

Christ’s ability to save is linked to His permanence. The ancient priests were interrupted by death; Christ lives forever. The expression translated “to the uttermost” or “completely” can include both total scope and duration. The person who draws near to God through Him finds a Priest whose life and office never end.

Intercession does not add anything lacking to the sacrifice. Hebrews distinguishes between the offering completed once for all and the Son's permanent priestly presence. The sacrifice is not repeated; the living Priest continually represents those who belong to Him.

8.6 Chart of Essential Distinctions

Aspect	Justification	Practical sanctification	Christ's intercession
Question	How am I accepted by God?	How do I live as one who is accepted?	What sustains my access when I fail?
Basis	Christ's work received by faith	Union with Christ and the Spirit's power	Christ's priesthood, righteousness, and propitiation
Character	Definitive legal declaration	Daily and progressive process	Present and continuing ministry
Does not depend on	Merit or works of the law	The self-sufficiency of the flesh	The believer's innocence or compensation
Produces	Peace, access, and assurance	Fruit, obedience, and growth	Mercy, help, and restoration
Key texts	Romans 3-5; Galatians 2	Romans 6-8; Galatians 5; Titus 2	Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2

The columns do not compete with one another. Justification establishes standing; sanctification develops conduct; intercession sustains access and restoration. All three depend on Christ.

9. Direct Texts: Primary Corpus

Passages are classified as direct when they immediately express one or more of the four central ideas: justification by grace, the flesh's conflict with new life, an explicit call to resist sin, or Christ's present ministry as Advocate and Intercessor. The table summarizes their function; readers should study each passage in its complete context.

Theme	Passage	Primary contribution
Legal declaration	Romans 3:21-28	God's righteousness is revealed apart from the law; the believer is justified freely by grace and through faith, apart from works of the law.
Legal declaration	Romans 4:1-8, 22-25	Abraham and David illustrate righteousness counted or credited; God justifies the ungodly person who believes and does not count sin against that person.
Legal declaration	Romans 5:1-11	Justification by faith produces peace with God, access into grace, and assurance in view of wrath.
Legal declaration	2 Corinthians 5:14-21	Reconciliation reaches its climax in Christ being made sin for us so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.
Legal declaration	Galatians 2:15-21	No one is justified by works of the law; new life is lived by faith in the Son of God.
Legal declaration	Philippians 3:8-9	Paul rejects a righteousness of his own derived from the law and seeks the righteousness that comes through faith in Christ.
Legal declaration	Titus 3:4-7	Salvation does not come from human works of righteousness; we are justified by grace and made heirs.
Legal declaration	1 Corinthians 1:30; 6:11	Christ is our righteousness and sanctification; believers have been washed, sanctified, and justified.
Struggle against sin	Romans 6:1-23	Union with Christ breaks sin's dominion; the believer must present himself or herself to God and must not yield the body's members to sin.
Struggle against sin	Romans 7:14-25	Paul describes the tension between the desire to do good and sin dwelling in the flesh, and he cries out for deliverance through Christ.
Struggle against sin	Romans 8:1-14	There is no condemnation in Christ; the Spirit empowers believers to put to death the deeds of the body.
Struggle against sin	Galatians 5:16-25	The flesh and the Spirit oppose one another; the answer is to walk by and be led by the Spirit.
Struggle against sin	Titus 2:11-14	Saving grace also trains believers to renounce ungodliness and to live self-controlled, righteous, and godly lives.
Struggle against sin	1 John 1:5-2:2	John rejects denial of sin, calls believers to walk in the light, and presents Christ as Advocate and propitiation.
Human weakness	Matthew 26:40-41; Mark 14:37-38	Jesus acknowledges that the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak, and He commands watchfulness and prayer.
Human weakness	1 Peter 2:11-12	Fleshly desires continue to wage war against the soul; Peter commands abstinence and honorable conduct.
Human weakness	1 Peter 4:1-2	The mind of Christ directs believers to live the rest of their time not for human desires, but for the will of God.

Theme	Passage	Primary contribution
Intercession	1 John 2:1-2	When the believer sins, Jesus Christ the righteous is with the Father as Advocate and propitiation.
Intercession	Romans 8:31-34	God is the One who justifies; Christ died, rose, is at the right hand, and intercedes for us.
Intercession	Hebrews 4:14-16	The compassionate great High Priest enables us to approach the throne of grace confidently for timely help.
Intercession	Hebrews 7:23-28	Christ's permanent priesthood sustains continuing intercession and complete salvation.
Intercession	Hebrews 9:24-28	Christ now appears before God for us; His sacrifice was once-for-all, not repeated.
Intercession	Luke 22:31-32	Jesus intercedes for Peter before his fall and points toward his future restoration and service.

10. Complementary Texts: Characteristics, Hope, and Promises

Complementary texts do not always contain every central affirmation in a single sentence. They reveal the background, consequences, means of growth, warnings, comfort, and promises associated with the theme. Together they show that grace is coherent from the promise given to Abraham to the final hope of Revelation.

Section	Passage	Relationship to the theme
Old Testament	Genesis 15:6	Abraham's faith was counted to him as righteousness; Paul cites this foundation in Romans 4 and Galatians 3.
Old Testament	Exodus 34:6-7	God reveals His mercy and justice; biblical grace never eliminates His holiness.
Old Testament	Psalms 32:1-5	The blessedness of forgiveness and of sin not being counted; sincere confession and restoration.
Old Testament	Psalms 51:1-17	Repentance, cleansing, inward truth, and dependence on the Spirit.
Old Testament	Psalms 103:8-14	Divine compassion toward frail creatures; God knows our frame.
Old Testament	Isaiah 53:4-12	The Servant bears sin, justifies many, and intercedes for transgressors.
Old Testament	Isaiah 61:10	The image of garments of salvation and a robe of righteousness.
Old Testament	Zechariah 3:1-5	The accused receives clean garments by divine initiative; a picture of guilt removed.
Old Testament	Habakkuk 2:4	The righteous shall live by faith; the text is taken up in Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews.
Gospels and Acts	Luke 18:9-14	The tax collector depends on mercy and goes home justified, unlike the person who boasts in merit.
Gospels and Acts	John 1:14-17	Grace and truth are revealed in Jesus Christ; grace is not mere indulgence.
Gospels and Acts	John 3:16-18	Faith in the Son delivers from condemnation; unbelief leaves a person under judgment.
Gospels and Acts	John 8:31-36	Sin enslaves; the Son gives true freedom.
Gospels and Acts	John 10:27-30	The flock is secure in the hands of the Son and the Father.
Gospels and Acts	John 15:1-10	Abiding in Christ is the source of fruitfulness and obedience.
Gospels and Acts	John 17:9-19	Jesus prays for the protection, sanctification, and preservation of His people in the world.
Gospels and Acts	Acts 13:38-39	In Christ, forgiveness and justification are proclaimed from what the law of Moses could not justify.
Gospels and Acts	Acts 15:7-11	Salvation is by the grace of the Lord Jesus for both Jews and Gentiles.
Gospels and Acts	Acts 20:24, 32	The gospel of grace and the word of grace that builds up and gives an inheritance.
Romans	Romans 1:16-17	The gospel reveals God's righteousness from faith to faith.
Romans	Romans 5:12-21	The Adam-Christ contrast: sin reigned in death; grace reigns through righteousness.
Romans	Romans 6:11-14	Reckon yourselves dead to sin and alive to God; sin must not rule because believers are under grace.
Romans	Romans 8:26-39	The Spirit helps in weakness; Christ intercedes; nothing separates believers from God's love.
Romans	Romans 10:1-4	Christ is the end or goal of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

Section	Passage	Relationship to the theme
Romans	Romans 12:1-2	Grace leads to reasonable self-offering and renewal of the mind.
Romans	Romans 13:11-14	Put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the desires of the flesh.
Corinthians	1 Corinthians 6:9-20	Grace changes identity and conduct; the body belongs to the Lord.
Corinthians	1 Corinthians 9:24-27	Spiritual discipline without merit-based confidence.
Corinthians	1 Corinthians 10:12-13	God limits temptation and provides a way of escape; vigilance is required.
Corinthians	1 Corinthians 15:10, 56-57	Grace produces labor, and final victory is given through Jesus Christ.
Corinthians	2 Corinthians 3:17-18	The Spirit progressively transforms believers into the Lord's image.
Corinthians	2 Corinthians 4:7-10	Treasure in jars of clay: God's power amid real human frailty.
Corinthians	2 Corinthians 12:7-10	Sufficient grace and Christ's power are perfected in weakness.
Galatians	Galatians 3:6-14, 21-29	Promise and justification by faith precede and surpass dependence on the law.
Galatians	Galatians 6:1-5	Restore the fallen person gently, while remaining conscious of one's own vulnerability.
Ephesians	Ephesians 1:3-7	Election, adoption, redemption, and forgiveness according to the riches of grace.
Ephesians	Ephesians 2:1-10	Salvation by grace through faith, not by works; created for good works.
Ephesians	Ephesians 4:17-32	Put off the old self, renew the mind, and put on the new self.
Ephesians	Ephesians 6:10-18	The armor of God for resistance, together with persevering prayer.
Philippians	Philippians 1:6	God will complete the good work He began.
Philippians	Philippians 2:12-13	God works both the willing and the doing; the believer responds with reverent obedience.
Philippians	Philippians 3:10-14	Maturity does not claim completed perfection; it presses toward the goal.
Colossians	Colossians 1:12-14	Transfer into the Son's kingdom, redemption, and forgiveness.
Colossians	Colossians 2:6-15	Fullness in Christ, forgiveness, and cancellation of the record that stood against us.
Colossians	Colossians 3:1-17	Put earthly practices to death and put on the new self and love.
Thessalonians	1 Thessalonians 4:1-8	A call to sexual holiness rather than impurity; God gives His Holy Spirit.
Thessalonians	1 Thessalonians 5:21-24	Test everything, hold fast what is good, abstain from evil; God is faithful to sanctify.
Pastoral Epistles	1 Timothy 1:12-16	Paul as an example of Christ's mercy and patience toward sinners.
Pastoral Epistles	1 Timothy 2:5-6	Christ, the one Mediator, gave Himself as a ransom for all.
Pastoral Epistles	2 Timothy 2:1, 19-22	Be strengthened by grace, depart from iniquity, and flee youthful passions.
Pastoral Epistles	2 Timothy 4:18	Confidence that the Lord will deliver and preserve His servant for the heavenly kingdom.
Hebrews	Hebrews 2:14-18	Christ helps those who are tempted because He suffered while being tempted.
Hebrews	Hebrews 10:10-14, 19-25	The one sacrifice, positional perfection, and confident access that encourages perseverance.

Section	Passage	Relationship to the theme
Hebrews	Hebrews 12:1-4, 14-15	Lay aside sin, run while looking to Jesus, and do not fall short of grace.
James	James 1:12-15	Temptation is related to inward desires; God is not the author of evil.
James	James 4:4-10	God gives greater grace to the humble; resist the devil and draw near to God.
Peter	1 Peter 1:13-21	Hope fully in future grace and live in reverent holiness.
Peter	1 Peter 2:21-25	Christ bore our sins and left an example of righteous suffering.
Peter	1 Peter 5:8-10	Be sober-minded before the adversary; the God of all grace perfects and strengthens.
Peter	2 Peter 1:2-11	Grace, divine power, and diligence in the growth of virtue.
Peter	2 Peter 3:17-18	Guard against error and grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ.
John and Jude	1 John 3:1-10	The identity of God's children stands against an indifferent and persistent practice of sin.
John and Jude	1 John 4:4; 5:4-5	The One in the believer is greater; faith overcomes the world.
John and Jude	Jude 20-25	Persevere in love, show mercy, and trust the One who can keep believers from stumbling.
Revelation	Revelation 12:10-11	The accuser is overcome by the blood of the Lamb and by testimony.
Revelation	Revelation 22:20-21	The final hope closes with the grace of the Lord Jesus.

11. Essential Greek Lexicon

Francisco Lacueva's interlinear work helps readers observe the relationship between each Greek word and its Spanish equivalent. The following summary does not reproduce his page layout; it identifies terms that support the argument and shows why an isolated translation must not be separated from its grammatical and literary context.

Greek	Transliteration	Basic meaning	Texts	Importance
χάρις	charis	grace, undeserved favor	Romans 3:24; Titus 2:11	Grace not only begins salvation; it also trains and sustains the Christian life.
δικαιώω	dikaioō	justify, declare righteous	Romans 3:24, 28; Galatians 2:16	A forensic verb: God declares the believer righteous on the basis of Christ's work.
δικαιοσύνη	dikaiosynē	righteousness	Romans 3:21-22; 2 Corinthians 5:21	It can refer to God's righteousness and to the righteous standing received in union with Christ.
λογίζομαι	logizomai	count, credit, reckon	Romans 4:3-11, 22-24	A central term for explaining righteousness credited apart from works.
ἁμαρτία	hamartia	sin	Romans 6-8; 1 John 1:8	In Romans it can describe sinful acts and also a power that seeks to rule.
σὰρξ	sarx	flesh	Romans 7:18; Galatians 5:17	Depending on context, it expresses human frailty or the fallen orientation opposed to God.
πνεῦμα	pneuma	spirit / Spirit	Romans 8; Galatians 5	The Holy Spirit gives life, guides, and empowers resistance to the works of the flesh.
παράκλητος	paraklētos	advocate, defender, helper	1 John 2:1; John 14:16	In 1 John 2:1 it identifies Jesus Christ as Advocate with the Father.
ἐντυγχάνω	entynchano	intercede	Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25	Christ's intercession is continuous and rests on His permanent priesthood.
ἱλασμός	hilasmos	propitiation / atoning sacrifice	1 John 2:2; 4:10	Christ's defense does not ignore sin; it rests on His completed atoning work.
κατάκριμα	katakrima	condemnation, adverse sentence	Romans 8:1	The absence of condemnation belongs to those who are in Christ Jesus.
ἁγιασμός	hagiasmos	sanctification	Romans 6:19, 22; 1 Thessalonians 4:3	It describes consecration and the practical process of living set apart for God.
περιπατέω	peripateo	walk, conduct oneself	Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 4:1	A metaphor for habitual conduct; walking by the Spirit is an ongoing path.
ἐπιθυμία	epithymia	strong desire	Galatians 5:16; 1 Peter 2:11	It may be neutral or sinful depending on its object; here it refers to desires that oppose holy living.

11.1 Key Grammatical Observations

Romans 3:24 — δικαιούμενοι δωρεάν τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι: “being justified freely by His grace.” The passive participle emphasizes that the action is received; δωρεάν reinforces its free character.

Romans 4:3 — ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην: “it was counted to him as righteousness.” The aorist passive ἐλογίσθη presents an attribution made to Abraham, not wages he earned.

Romans 8:1 — οὐδὲν ἄρα νῦν κατάκριμα: The expression opens with a total negation: “no condemnation now.” The word “now” points to the new situation in Christ.

Galatians 5:16 — πνεύματι περιπατεῖτε: “Walk by the Spirit.” The present imperative suggests a continuous pattern of conduct, not an occasional experience.

1 Peter 2:11 — αἵτινες στρατεύονται κατὰ τῆς ψυχῆς: The desires “wage war” against the soul. The military image communicates active conflict.

1 John 2:1 — παράκλητον ἔχομεν πρὸς τὸν πατέρα: “We have an Advocate with the Father.” ἔχομεν is present tense: Christ’s advocacy is a current possession.

Hebrews 7:25 — πάντοτε ζῶν εἰς τὸ ἐντυγχάνειν: “always living to intercede.” Christ’s permanent life guarantees the continuity of His priestly ministry.

Method note: transliteration and grammatical explanations are introductory guides. Detailed exegetical decisions should be checked against the full interlinear, a grammar of Koine Greek, and the literary context of each passage.

12. Doctrinal Summary, Conclusions, and Study Guide

12.1 Concise Doctrinal Statement

- Humanity cannot obtain justification through works, because all have sinned and the law reveals guilt.
- God freely justifies by grace the person who believes in Jesus Christ, on the basis of His death and resurrection.
- The believer's righteousness is not a personal credential; it is received in union with Christ and described as righteousness credited apart from works.
- Legal security does not make sin irrelevant. Grace trains believers to renounce ungodliness and to live godly lives.
- The flesh remains weak and fleshly desires continue to wage war; the believer must not trust self-sufficiency.
- The Holy Spirit empowers the believer to walk in newness of life, bear fruit, and put to death the deeds of the body.
- When the believer fails, Jesus Christ the righteous is Advocate with the Father; His defense rests on His propitiation, not on human merit.
- Christ always lives to intercede; His sacrifice was offered once for all, and His priesthood remains forever.
- Confession, restoration, and discipline belong to the believer's fellowship and growth; they do not repeat justification or remove responsible consequences.
- The struggle will end in glorification. Until then, hope rests on God's faithfulness, not on the perfection of the flesh.

12.2 Brief Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

Does grace mean that God ignores sin?

No. The cross demonstrates that sin was treated with absolute seriousness. God justifies because Christ bore condemnation and satisfied justice, not because sin is unimportant.

Does God still see my failures?

Yes. God perfectly knows the practical lives of His children. The doctrinal affirmation is that He does not base His verdict of acceptance on the believer's merits, but on Christ. That is also why He lovingly corrects and disciplines His children.

Does Romans 7 teach that growth is impossible?

No. It teaches the powerlessness of the flesh and leads to deliverance in Christ and to the life of the Spirit in Romans 8. Growth is real, but it never arises from self-sufficiency.

Does the Advocate act every time we sin?

First John presents a permanent defense: "we have an Advocate." His work does not repeat the sacrifice; it applies the sufficient value of the propitiation already completed.

Does confession save the believer again?

Biblical confession restores fellowship, brings the believer into the light, and produces practical cleansing. The basis of salvation remains Christ's finished work, not the perfection of the confession.

What shows that grace is at work?

Not a life without conflict, but a new relationship to sin: acknowledgment, resistance, repentance, dependence on the Spirit, growing fruit, and hope in Christ.

12.3 Questions for Personal or Group Study

1. What is the difference between justification and sanctification? Identify two passages for each concept.
2. Why does Romans 3:24-26 show that grace does not contradict God's justice?
3. What does the verb *logizomai* in Romans 4 contribute to the idea of credited righteousness?
4. How does Romans 6 prevent assurance from becoming a license to sin?
5. What do Matthew 26:41, Romans 7, and 1 Peter 2:11 acknowledge about human weakness?
6. What concrete means of struggle are mentioned in Galatians 5, Ephesians 6, and 2 Timothy 2?

7. What is the basis of Christ's defense according to 1 John 2:1-2?
8. How does Hebrews 7:25 combine continuing intercession with the once-for-all sacrifice?
9. What responsible steps should follow a fall that has harmed other people?
10. How does the struggle against sin change when it begins from "no condemnation" in Christ?

Final conclusion: The believer does not overcome by obsessively examining personal sufficiency, but by looking to Christ — justified by grace, aware of the weakness of the flesh, guided by the Spirit, and sustained by an Advocate who always lives to intercede.

13. Teaching Infographic



GRACE AND THE STRUGGLE AGAINST SIN

A biblical reading in five inseparable affirmations

1

GOD JUSTIFIES BY GRACE

Acceptance before God does not rest on human merit. Righteousness is received through faith in Christ.

Romans 3:24-28; 4:5-8

2

CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IN HIM

"Clothed with the righteousness of Christ" summarizes union with Christ and credited righteousness, not a personal credential.

2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 3:9

3

THE FLESH REMAINS WEAK

Paul describes the inner conflict; Peter speaks of fleshly desires that wage war against the soul.

Romans 7:18-25; 1 Peter 2:11

4

GRACE TRAINS US TO LIVE

Grace does not authorize sin: it trains us to renounce ungodliness and walk by the Spirit.

Titus 2:11-14; Galatians 5:16-25

5

CHRIST ADVOCATES AND INTERCEDES

When the believer fails, Jesus Christ the righteous is our Advocate with the Father and always lives to intercede.

1 John 2:1-2; Hebrews 7:25

SECURITY IN CHRIST ≠ INDIFFERENCE TO SIN

The same grace that justifies also instructs, strengthens, and restores.

Prepared for: Ruperto Bravo Benavente (R.B.B.)

The infographic summarizes the study's sequence: God justifies by grace; righteousness is received in Christ; the flesh remains weak; grace trains believers to walk by the Spirit; and Christ intercedes when the believer fails.

14. Compiler's Professional Profile



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In this work he serves as initiator, compiler, and person responsible for the editorial presentation. The doctrinal content is grounded in the cited biblical references and should be examined in the light of Holy Scripture.

Editorial note: only professional background relevant to a public publication has been included; sensitive personal data, identity documents, addresses, and other private information have been omitted.

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- Lacueva Lafarga, Francisco. Nuevo Testamento Interlineal Griego-Español [Greek-Spanish Interlinear New Testament]. Editorial CLIE, Barcelona/Terrassa.
- CLIE. Interlineal académico del Nuevo Testamento: Griego-Español [Academic New Testament Interlinear: Greek-Spanish], based on Francisco Lacueva's work and updated under the supervision of Juan Carlos Cevallos.
- Biblical passages were studied in their complete literary contexts, with special attention to Romans 3-8; Galatians 2-5; Titus 2-3; Hebrews 4, 7, and 9-10; 1 Peter 1-2 and 5; and 1 John 1-2.

Web References Consulted in the Original Study

- Bible Gateway — information about the Reina-Valera 1960 edition and consultation of passages.
- Editorial CLIE — catalog description of Francisco Lacueva's Greek-Spanish Interlinear New Testament.
- CLIE academic catalog — description of the academic interlinear based on Lacueva's work.

Use notice: this document uses biblical references and short quotations for study and teaching. The Reina-Valera 1960 and the cited interlinear works remain protected by the rights of their respective owners. This document does not replace the official editions.

STUDY OVERVIEW

This book brings together the principal biblical texts concerning God's grace and the believer's daily struggle against sin. It distinguishes the legal declaration of justification, righteousness received in Christ, the continuing weakness of the flesh, practical life guided by the Spirit, and the enduring intercession of Jesus Christ.

01

JUSTIFICATION BY GRACE

God declares righteous the one who believes, apart from human merit.

02

RIGHTEOUSNESS IN CHRIST

The believer's acceptance rests on Christ's finished work.

03

PRESENT STRUGGLE

The flesh remains weak; grace does not license sin, but teaches godly living.

04

ADVOCATE AND INTERCESSOR

Jesus Christ lives to intercede and is our Advocate with the Father when we fail.

*"There is therefore now no condemnation
for those who are in Christ Jesus."*

ROMANS 8:1 • RVR1960 — ENGLISH TRANSLATION

RUPERTO BRAVO BENAVENTE (R.B.B.)

Compilation and editorial presentation

Edition for study and free distribution