Justification and Sanctification

The Blueprint of an Unshakable Christian Life

ZAC POONEN

Balancing the foundation of faith with the superstructure of obedience.

1 The Architectural Diagram

Warning:
Never put "bricks" (your own good works) in the foundation, or the building will sink. Only the concrete of Christ's finished work should be at the bottom.
Romans 16:20; 2 Corinthians 11:2

Ultimate Triumph
Satan crushed under our feet
Devoted to Christ as a pure bride (James 4:5)

The Superstructure
Sanctification - "Bricks"

Romans 12:1–2 Living sacrifice — 100% lordship	Romans 6–8 Freedom from sin's dominion
Matthew 5–7 Obeying the Sermon on the Mount	Luke 14:26–33 Paying the cost of discipleship

The Foundation: Justification by Faith
"Steel & Concrete"

Romans 4 & 5 Declared righteous as a free gift	Abraham's Example Accepted before works or rituals	By Christ's Blood Peace with God—made "friends of God"

Starting Point - Romans 3:23
"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

2 The Principle of Scriptural Balance

From Jesus' temptation (Matthew 4:4–7): one verse in isolation leads to error. **True doctrine pairs "It is written" with "It is also written."**

Topic	It is written	It is also written	The balanced truth
Salvation & Obedience	Romans 4:5 God declares sinners righteous by faith without works.	Matthew 7:24 Only those who hear and obey build on the rock.	Justification is a free gift (foundation) that empowers an obedient life (superstructure).
Family Devotion	Luke 14:26 "If anyone does not hate his wife and family, he cannot be My disciple."	Ephesians 5:25 "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church."	Christ must hold supreme, unrivaled priority over our deepest earthly affections.
Money & Possessions	Luke 14:33 "None of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions."	2 Corinthians 12:14 Parents ought to lay up and save for their children.	Keep money in the bank—but God must have 100% lordship over how every cent is used.
Spiritual Gifts	Acts 2:4 At Pentecost, everyone present spoke in tongues.	1 Corinthians 12:30 "Do all speak in tongues?" No.	Gifts are distributed sovereignly by the Spirit; no single gift is mandatory for all.

3 The Scriptural Definition of Sin

Romans 3:23
Sin is falling short of God's glory
+
John 1:14
God's glory = the life of Jesus
=
Anything less than the life of Christ is sin.

4 The School of Spiritual Growth

Believers of every age sit in the same room. You are accepted on Day 1 — **and called to advance every year.**

Level 1 - New Believers & Youth	Level 2 - Growing Believers	Level 3 - Mature Believers
Kindergarten	**10th Grade**	**Post-graduate**
Sincere repentance, immediate forgiveness of past guilt, total assurance as a child of God.	Overcoming anger, lust and love of money, learning patience through trials (Romans 5:3–4).	After 50+ years with God, uncovering deeper, subtle unchristlike attitudes — still pressing on toward perfection while resting securely on the Romans 4–5 foundation.
Danger: staying here 20 years, confessing the same sins without growing.	**Danger:** boasting over, or condemning, "kindergartens" not yet at this level.	**Mark:** growth that never stops, rest that never wavers.

5 Two Dangerous Traps and the True Path

Trap #1: The Shallow Church Trap

Romans 3 ➡ Romans 4 & 5 ➡ STOP

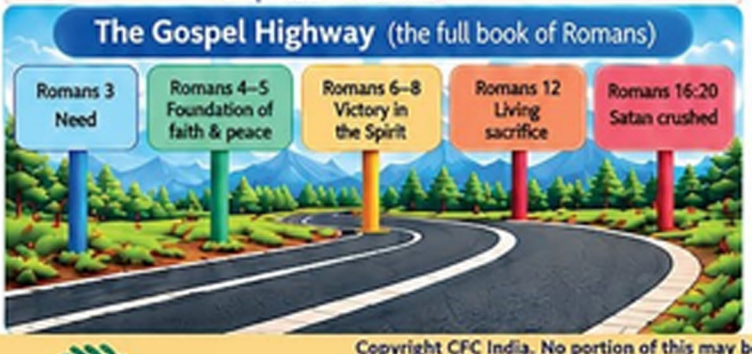
Tears Matthew 5–7 out of the Bible and calls its standards "impossible" — leading to lying, quarrelling at home and "third-rate Christianity."

Trap #2: The Legalistic / Shaky Trap

Romans 3 ➡ ~~Romans 4 & 5~~ ➡ Romans 6:14

Fighting sin without assurance of God's acceptance; peace based on performance — constant fear, pride or spiritual exhaustion.

The Gospel Highway (the full book of Romans)



6 Two "No Entry" Signs

NO ENTRY: Self-Condemnation

"God must be angry with me because I failed."

Antidote: Romans 8:1 & 5:9

There is no condemnation in Christ. If He died for you while you were an enemy, how much more will He care for you now that you are His friend?

NO ENTRY: Discouragement

"I will never reach this standard; it's impossible."

Antidote: Romans 8:37

You are more than a conqueror—not because of your determination, but because of Him who loved you.

7 Action Steps for the Week

1. **Read & Meditate**
Spend a full week in Romans 4 and 5 across several translations — especially The Living Bible
2. **Check Your Foundation**
Ask: "Does my peace with God come from how much I've grown, or 100% from what Jesus did on the cross?"
3. **Encourage the Young**
Remind the children and new believers that sincere repentance makes them immediately, unconditionally accepted children of God.

Copyright CFC India. No portion of this may be copied without permission from CFC India.
Prepared by Austin CFC. All teaching content © Zac Poonen / CFC. Used with Permission.

1 The Architectural Diagram

⚠ Warning:

Never put "bricks" (your own good works) in the foundation, or the building will sink. Only the concrete of Christ's finished work should be at the bottom.

Romans 16:20;
2 Corinthians 11:2

Ultimate Triumph

Satan crushed under our feet
Devoted to Christ as a pure bride (James 4:5)

The Superstructure
Sanctification - "Bricks"

Romans 12:1–2 Living sacrifice – 100% lordship	**Romans 6–8** Freedom from sin's dominion
Matthew 5–7 Obeying the Sermon on the Mount	**Luke 14:26–33** Paying the cost of discipleship

The Foundation: Justification by Faith
"Steel & Concrete"

Romans 4 & 5 Declared righteous as a free gift	**Abraham's Example** Accepted before works or rituals	**By Christ's Blood** Peace with God–made "friends of God"

Starting Point - Romans 3:23

"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

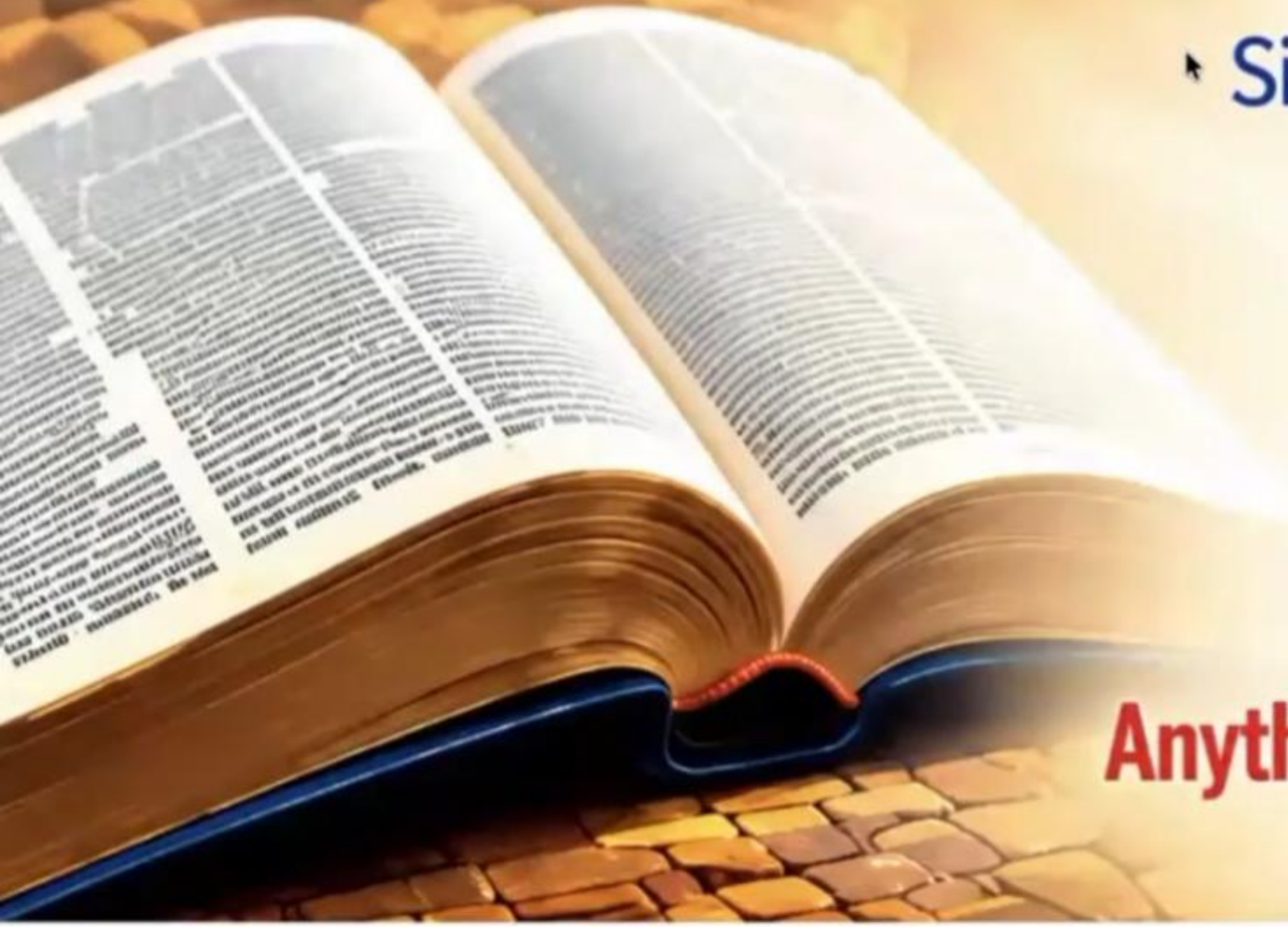
2 The Principle of Scriptural Balance



From Jesus' temptation (Matthew 4:4–7): one verse in isolation leads to error. **True doctrine pairs "It is written" with "It is also written."**

Topic	It is written	It is also written	The balanced truth
Salvation & Obedience	**Romans 4:5** God declares sinners righteous by faith without works.	**Matthew 7:24** Only those who hear and obey build on the rock.	Justification is a free gift (foundation) that empowers an obedient life (superstructure).
Family Devotion	**Luke 14:26** "If anyone does not hate his wife and family, he cannot be My disciple."	**Ephesians 5:25** "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church."	Christ must hold supreme, unrivaled priority over our deepest earthly affections.
Money & Possessions	**Luke 14:33** "None of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions."	**2 Corinthians 12:14** Parents ought to lay up and save for their children.	Keep money in the bank— but God must have 100% lordship over how every cent is used.
Spiritual Gifts	**Acts 2:4** At Pentecost, everyone present spoke in tongues.	**1 Corinthians 12:30** "Do all speak in tongues?" No.	Gifts are distributed sovereignly by the Spirit; no single gift is mandatory for all.

3 The Scriptural Definition of Sin



Romans 3:23

- Sin is falling short of God's glory

+

John 1:14

God's glory = the life of Jesus

=

Anything less than the life of Christ is sin.

4 The School of Spiritual Growth

Believers of every age sit in the same room. You are accepted on Day 1 — and called to advance every year.

Level 1 - New Believers & Youth

Kindergarten



Sincere repentance, immediate forgiveness of past guillt, total assurance as a child of God.

Danger: staying here 20 years, confessing the same sins without growing.

Level 2 - Growing Believers

10th Grade



Overcoming anger, lust and love of money, learning patience through trials (Romans 5:3–4).

Danger: boasting over, or condemning, "kindergartens" not yet at this level.

Level 3 - Mature Believers

Post-graduate



After 50+ years with God, uncovering deeper, subtle unchristlike attitudes – still pressing on toward perfection while resting securely on the Romans 4–5 foundation.

Mark: growth that never stops, rest that never wavers.

5 Two Dangerous Traps and the True Path

Trap #1: The Shallow Church Trap



Romans 3 → Romans 4 & 5 → STOP

Tears Matthew 5–7 out of the Bible and calls its standards "impossible" — leading to lying, quarrelling at home and "third-rate Christianity."

Trap #2: The Legalistic / Shaky Trap



Romans 3 → ~~Romans 4 & 5~~ → Romans 6:14

Fighting sin without assurance of God's acceptance;
peace based on performance — constant fear, pride or spiritual exhaustion.

The Gospel Highway (the full book of Romans)



6 Two "No Entry" Signs



NO ENTRY: Self-Condemnation

"God must be angry with me because I failed."

Antidote: Romans 8:1 & 5:9

There is no condemnation in Christ. If He died for you while you were an enemy, how much more will He care for you now that you are His friend?



NO ENTRY: Discouragement

"I will never reach this standard; it's impossible."

Antidote: Romans 8:37

You are more than a conqueror — not because of your determination, but because of Him who loved you.

7 Action Steps for the Week

1 

Read & Meditate

Spend a full week in Romans 4 and 5 across several translations — especially The Living Bible.

2 

Check Your Foundation

Ask: “Does my peace with God come from how much I’ve grown, or 100% from what Jesus did on the cross?”

3 

Encourage the Young

Remind the children and new believers that sincere repentance makes them immediately, unconditionally accepted children of God.