

# To the Saints of God at Topeka, Kansas

## August 13, 2017

Notes from Robert Haldane on Romans

Robert Haldane, 1764-1842, was a Scottish preacher. He is most famous for his exposition of the book of Romans. Today, I would like to give you some excerpts from that work.

***Christians ought to be particularly on their guard against tampering in any degree with the Word of God. We should never forget that when we are explaining any expression of Scripture, we are treating of what are the very words of the Holy Ghost, as much as if they had been spoken to us by a voice from heaven. – Robert Haldane***

***We must not regard the Scriptures as the production of ordinary men, treating of subjects of ordinary importance, instead of containing, as they do, the Message of the Most High God, revealing life or death to every soul to whom they come. – Robert Haldane***

Romans 3:4 ...*Let God be true, but every man a liar...*

Beloved, these are good words of warning and they echo the Scriptures. We must always handle the Word of God with the greatest of care and respect. We must never abuse these blessed Words. We must never take them out of context, or contort them to mean or say something we know is wrong or which stretches the words beyond any reasonable reading of them. There is great danger to those that do this!

2 Cor. 2:17 *For we are not as many, which corrupt the Word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.*

2 Cor. 4:2 *But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.*

2 Pet. 3:15 ...even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; 16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, **which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest** (wrest – “to twist, turn awry, 2) to torture, put to the rack”), **as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.** 17 Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.

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***The human mind is ever prone to soften the strong features of Divine truth, and to bring them more into accord with its own wishes and preconceived notions. – Robert Haldane***

I heard Gramps many times quote this sentence from Haldane and it is absolutely true and it has stuck with me over the years. The natural man wants to put his stinky, corrupt, and malignant take and thumbprint on everything. These reprobate people that we live in the world with, take it upon themselves to try and change the very nature of God Himself. (Ge 6:5 And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.) They are fools. God is unchangeable.

Number 23:19 *God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent (or change his mind): hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?*

Heb. 13:8 *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.*

Here are a few examples of how the human mind “softens the strong features of Divine truth.”

- **God loves everyone (in the world)** - Man cannot stand the thought that in God’s sovereignty He chose to not love everyone. The human rabble, cries “unfair!” This does not set well with their myopic, ignorant, egotistical view of themselves. God has the inherent right as the Creator to show mercy and have compassion on whom He will and He is not bound by the limitations of the human mind as to their notions of good and evil.

Rom. 9:14-16 ***Is there unrighteousness with God?*** *God forbid. 15 For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. 16 So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.* This is not a democracy, God Almighty does not share power, no matter how many false gods this wicked flesh drums up and pimps. They announce Wonder Woman as a new goddess. They want more than anything to have all power and to dispossess Christ of His inheritance, his purchased possession and his throne.

Rom. 9:21-23 *Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? 22 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: 23 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.*

1 John 2:15 *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*

Thankfully, God is not limited by man's feeble understanding.

- **There Is No Hell.** Humans cannot contemplate that everyone does not deserve to go to heaven just by virtue of being created. In their weakened condition and feeble minds, they believe that Heaven is an unalienable right, not a privilege, even for the sinful and corrupt. Stop softening the strong features of the Divine Truth and substituting it with your dark-hearted, sinful miasma.

Rom. 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the ***gift of God*** is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Deu 32:21 *They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation. 22 For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the*

*mountains. 23 I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them. 24 They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction.*

*Ps .9:17 The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.*

*Isa. 5:14 Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.*

*Isa. 14:9 Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations.*

*Isaiah 66:24 And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.*

*2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 2:9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: 10 But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.*

- **God Hates The Sin and Loves The Sinner** – The natural man cannot wrap his mind around the fact that God actually hates people; that God might create something that He chooses to despise and punish and that it is His right as the Creator to reserve the power to Himself, to meet His needs and His desires and for His pleasure.

*Rom. 9:13 As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.*

*Deut. 7:9 Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations; 10 And repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face.*

*Deut. 32:39 See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand. 40 For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever. 41 If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me. 42 I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh; and that with the blood of the slain and of the captives, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy. 43 Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people.*

They have deluded themselves to believe that if every power structure is not a democracy that it is bad or evil. God does not rule by the democracy of the wicked and perverted.

*Psalm 5:4 For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee. 5 The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity. 6 Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the LORD will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.*

*Ecc13:8 A time to love, and a time to hate.*

- **Man Has A Freewill And God Is Not In Charge** - The worldly wise man goes to great lengths to prove and argue that man has a freewill and is ultimately in charge of his own destiny and that God is not really the Almighty and in control of every single thing, large and inexplicitly small and seemingly trivial. They come up with constructs in their mind like “mother nature,” “luck,” “probability,” “chance,” “good fortune,” “biology,” “evolution,” “science” and the like to soften the blessed, righteous will of the Creator.

*Rom. 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*

*Rom. 8:30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

Eph. 1:5 *Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will;*

Eph. 1:11 *In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.*

Deut. 32:39 *See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.*

Col. 1:16 *For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*

Daniel 4:35 *And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?*

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***Men are very unwilling to admit that God should have any end with respect to them, greater than their happiness. - Robert Haldane***

The natural man can only conclude that everything is about them and their happiness; that the whole universe is consumed and made for one purpose and one purpose only – their temporal, stream of conscience happiness. How utterly self-absorbed and self-willed is that! Look at the breadth and depth of the universe – our tiny bit of knowledge we have assembled to date concludes that the age of the universe is 13 billion years. But the whole universe must revolve around how we feel at any given moment. It is so shortsighted to believe that everything must be centered around us! It's not about us – the will of God standeth Supreme.

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***But His own Glory is everywhere in the Scriptures represented as the chief end of man's existence and the existence of all things. – Robert Haldane***

This is the correct view of the universe! We exist to give glory to God and not the other way around! The existence of all things (seen and unseen, alive and dead, animate and inanimate) is to bring glory to the Almighty and we stand in awe of His power and worship Him.

*Rom. 11:33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! 34 For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? 35 Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? 36 For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen.*

*Psalm 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth His handywork.*

*Rom. 5:2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

*Rom. 15:7 Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.*

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***The world was created for God's glory, and His glory is the chief end of the restoration of sinners. - Robert Haldane***

God's redemption of corrupt man through the faith of Christ, brings glory to God. This act shows the goodness, mercy, patience and kindness of God to those He casts His favor to.

*Jas. 5:11 Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.*

*1Pet. 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.*

*Eph. 2:1 And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 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: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: 7 That in the ages to come He might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.*

Look carefully at this last verse because I think a lot about this concept. God has made a people for His name and made a commitment through the ages, through the end of time, without an expiration date to love His people forever. That is a commitment that we simply cannot comprehend.

God has committed Himself to attach His love, His loyalty, and His work for all eternity to the welfare of those people without end. Why would God make such a deep and long commitment to look after the welfare of these souls forever? The only answer is because He loved and wanted to is the only explanation. This is the ultimate act of loyalty, love and commitment that has ever been made. God is going to look after me, provide for me, attach Himself to me and do so for all intents and purposes without end forever. The natural man makes a commitment of 18 years (many not even that long) to their children and then many want to be unburdened.

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*Rom. 1:7 To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Robert Haldane:

*He addresses them by three designations, Beloved of God, Called, Saints. They were saints because they were called, and they were called because they were beloved of God. Their character of saints, was not the cause, but the effect, of their being beloved of God.*

*Beloved of God – In opposition to the rest of mankind, whom God hath left in unbelief and the corruption of the world. It is the greatest love that God can show to man, being*



*everlasting love, which originates with Himself. It is purely gratuitous, and does not spring from the foresight of anything worthy in those who are its objects; but, on the contrary, goes before all that is good in the creature and brings with it infinite blessings. This love is unvarying from eternity and through eternity.*

***Called – The first outward effect of election, or of the love of God to His people, is calling them, not merely by the word, which is common to many, but by the Holy Spirit, which is limited to few.***

*Mat. 22:12 And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. 13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 14 For many are called, but few are chosen.*

*Jer. 31:3 The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. I take this to mean that the love of the elect is not just forward after their birth and into eternity future, but also of eternity past, there never was a time that God did not love His elect – that is the only way it could truly be an everlasting love. Thus, He called us and has drawn us with loving kindness.*

*Saints – The end of the Divine calling is to convert sinners into saints or holy persons. Their sanctification is not figurative but a real consecration by which they are made to give themselves to God. It arises from union with Jesus Christ, which is the source of the sanctification of His people; and it consists in internal purity of heart and disposition, a new creation, for “if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.” “That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”*

*Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ – Peace includes everything that belongs to the idea of tranquility in its largest extent. But the foundation of all must be peace with God. Peace with God is the substance of happiness, because without it there can be no happiness, and with it there is happiness whatever else is wanting.*

I end with a reference to a couple of previous sermons.

Several weeks ago in Sam's sermon on the peacemakers, he quoted Hebrews 12:14-15; *Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: 15 **Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.*** That verse, when it references "root of bitterness" always reminds me of weeds in the garden that grow insanely fast and out of nowhere spring up and cause me immense trouble in the garden.

Then, a couple of weeks later Steve talked about Genesis 3:17-19 where as apart of the curse, God fundamentally made it more difficult to plant and harvest food.

*And unto Adam He (God) said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; 18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; 19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.*



I am going to talk to you about weeds in the garden. They are a virus and I am constantly at war with them. So, let me explain it to you in some detail.

1. In April a neighbor roto-tilled a patch of ground in the alley and planted it with vegetables, but then never returned to weed it. Three and a half months later, the weeds are more than 6 feet tall and it is a complete mess.

If you let the roots of bitterness spring up without restraint, this is what you get.

2. I plant potatoes in March in our raised beds, and in July we harvest them. After the potatoes are harvested if I do nothing with the raised bed and just leave

them alone, within 3 weeks the weeds will I guarantee be 2-3 feet high. If I let them go 2-3 months the raised beds will look like the neighbors garden.

3. This spring and early summer I tended to the front part of the garden, but not the far end towards McDonald. Finally, in early July I got back there. This is what I found. In between the raised beds (the aisles where you walk), in the places where the landscape fabric is (and which is supposed to prevent the weeds from growing) they were completely overrun with weeds. For the whole west end of the garden, in between the beds, the weeds were knee and waist high. Here is what the weeds had done:
  - a. They had grown straight through the commercial grade landscape fabric. How can a fast growing weed penetrate that heavy commercial grade landscape fabric and spring up right through it? Where do these never ending seeds come from and how can they germinate so quickly?
  - b. They had simultaneously grown over the top of the commercial grade landscape fabric. It literally looked like someone had carpeted the commercial grade landscape fabric with grass and weeds.
  - c. My plan was to take the pins out of the landscape fabric and pull the sheets of landscape fabric up intact, separate the weeds from the landscape fabric and put the landscape fabric back down, so I didn't have to spend \$500 in landscape fabric to replace it.
  - d. Let me tell you that this plan utterly failed. The grass and weeds were so thick, that as a grown man I did not have the physical strength to pull up the landscape fabric in sheets. I had to cut the landscape fabric into small pieces, ruining it, and take that up and throw it away. There was no separating the weeds from the landscape fabric. The root system under the landscape fabric was immense so that on both sides of the fabric the weeds had complete control.
  - e. At one point, when sweat was pouring into my glasses so I could not see and I was utterly exhausted, I just set down and stared at the weeds and contemplated this amazing work of God. With all my tools and analysis and thought processes, the weeds were single handedly beating me. I was experiencing firsthand the sorrow, curse and sweat of my face.
  - f. It took me and my loved ones two full-days and hundreds of dollars to completely remove all of the overgrown weeds and landscape fabric (between the raised beds), put weed killer over every inch of the garden

path and outside the fence, then put new commercial grade landscape fabric back.



4. If you put straw in the raised beds and leave a little bit of the bed uncovered in the corners, in 1 week you will have weeds there.
5. If you put straw in the raised beds and you don't put newspaper down first, the weeds will grow straight up through the straw.



6. I put 5 applications of Round-Up on this little stray tree and it is still bright and green – no change. I can literally spray an area with weed killers three weeks in a row and if I miss a week I will see a weed starting there. How can weeds recover and bounce back so quickly?



7. This is weeds that have grown into the railroad tie that keeps the dirt in the garden.

8. If I put landscape fabric down and leave a half of inch between the landscape fabric and the side of the raised bed in a few weeks there will be weeds growing in that ½ inch of space guaranteed. If there is any weakness the weed will find it and exploit it.
9. If mulch or stray soils gets on to the landscape fabric the weeds will germinate in that little bit of soil sitting on top.
10. All of the weeds grow fast. Some of the weeds grow tall and some are short like ground cover. Some grow deep under the soil like Bermuda grass (which those roots can be 8-12" deep) while some grow like a never ending vine on top of the soil.
11. Weeds can run tunnel under landscape logs or cement pavers and come out the other side. They can grow into a fence so there is virtually no way to separate the fence from the weeds.
12. Once the weed has a foothold in the bed, now you have a real fight on your hands because it will strive to kill and diminish the plant you are growing. And, sometimes you have to let it grow because it is so entwined with the plant.

So, when the verse says *cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee... In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread*; I am telling you that these words are true and these weeds and such are a formidable opponent in every way. And, if you grow things organically you will have your work cut out for you, the fight never goes away – at least in my rather large garden that is how it goes.

Hebrews 12:14-15; *Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: 15 **Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.***

Your job as the elect of God is to be peacemakers and enjoy and have peace with all men, particularly the brethren, and pursue holiness and if you do not do those things you shall not see the Lord. But your work does not end there. There is another aspect of this duty. You must look diligently (every day), lest any of your fellow laborers fail of the grace of God. How are you going to do that if you are not in the garden every day, walking and talking amongst your fellow elect? Here is why you must do that, because roots of bitterness (or galls of bitterness – Acts 8:23) lie dormant in a man's/woman's heart and spring up, unexpectedly and break ground. They may have lied below the surface for a little bit of time like when you have a weed that is ground cover, or they have lied a long

time beneath the ground making an elaborate network, strong and rooted deep in the soil like with Bermuda grass. And we must be there to shine a light on it and root it out immediately so that it doesn't grow and get out of a control and by it the church is destroyed.

*Looking diligently* – This means constantly and with close attention. That is a duty of the elders, but it is also the duty of every member of the church. I wasn't looking diligently this spring and early summer and I paid the price for it. The only way to stay on top of it is to go out every day and diligently do the work. There is no substitute for that. Looking diligently is constantly being reminded of the work and executing it. We should always be looking for malice, strife, contention, covetousness, lust, fornication, pride, oppression, vain glory, false doctrine, religious error, idleness, etc. Satan is constantly there to whisper in our ear and try and get a foot hold and enter our hearts. Like weeds in the garden that are constantly present and constantly ready to break ground every day, these things are infections in the fallen man's soul (our flesh is inherently slothful) and must be remedied and dealt with daily – it is how we help and assist one another. It is a requirement from God, not an option. This is the antidote to the infection.

*Lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you.* Barnes - Any bitter root. There is, doubtless, an allusion here to #De 29:18: "*Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, (individual, or collective – these root of bitterness are potent and can take down individuals, families and tribes) whose heart turneth away this day (a day will eventually happen when this occurs – by the process of time) from the Lord our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood (gall and wormwood are deadly – they are fatal to the living) ."*

*The allusion is to those who were idolaters, and who instead of bearing the fruits of righteousness, and promoting the piety and happiness of the nation, would bear the fruits of idolatry, and spread abroad irreligion and sin. The allusion, in both cases, is to a bitter plant springing up among those that were cultivated for ornament or use, or to a tree bearing bitter and poisonous fruit, among those that produced good fruit. The reference of the apostle is to some person who should produce a similar effect in the church – to one who should inculcate false doctrines; or who should apostatize; or who should lead an unholy life, and thus be the means of corrupting and destroying others. They were to*

*be at especial pains that no such person should start up from among themselves, or be tolerated by them.*

*Calvin – These roots will ever be found in the Church, for hypocrites and the ungodly are always mixed with the good; but when they spring up they out to be cut down, lest by growing they should choke the good seed.*

*and thereby many be defiled.*

*JFB - Rather, "the many," that is, the whole congregation. So long as it is hidden under the earth it cannot be remedied, but when it "springs up," it must be dealt with boldly. Still remember the caution (#Mt 13:26-30) as to rooting out persons. No such danger can arise in rooting out bad principles.*

We must diligently, every day, every day, every day look for roots of bitterness and expose them for what they are and never put our guard down with a false sense of security or many will be defiled. Like a root, that lays hidden under the ground, the bitterness or sin can lay hidden from the eyes of our loved ones, but, if left to flourish in the heart and mind, at a point, it comes springing up and is seen, and then it must be dealt with. And, we must constantly reaffirm our respect, love, charity, adoration and commitment to one another and to the Lord lest we leave our first love (Rev. 2).

Ro 15:14 And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

I love you all, Amen.