

SIMPLE STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES
THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS
LEADER'S STUDY GUIDE

Dr. Stanford E. Murrell



Just outside the village of Donnas is one of the last visible sections of the Roman road through the Aosta valley. The road is carved through solid rock.

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The Epistle of Paul to the Romans

Written AD 58

Human author. Paul

Divine author. God the Holy Spirit

Key Word: Faith

Romans 1

Division I

DOCTRINAL

The Righteousness of God is revealed in the Gospel: Chapter 1-8

Salutation

Romans 1:1-7

1 Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called *to be* an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,

1:1 Paul considered himself a bondservant of the Lord Jesus Christ. With the Psalmist he could say, “O LORD, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds” (Psa. 116:16). At his physical birth Paul had been separated from his mother’s womb to be an object of divine favor (Gal. 1:15). At his new birth Paul was separated from religious works. In time Paul would be separated from the Jewish community to minister to the Gentiles (Acts 26:23).

2 (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)

1:2 Claiming the prophets promised the gospel was a basic position in Paul’s understanding. Before King Agrippa he had made the same point (Acts 26:6).

3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;

4 And declared *to be* the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

1:3-4 The eternity of Christ is in view in that He is made of the seed of David (v. 3) but declared, not made, the Son of God (v. 4). The resurrection of Christ from among the dead is essential to the Christian message. 1 Cor 15:14 explains, “*And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.*”

5 By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:

1: 5 Grace is not only unmerited favor, but favor against merit. Paul, having persecuted the church out of ignorance deserved no divine mercy. Nevertheless, an apostleship was given to him so he might make known the gospel unto all nations, to the obedience of the faith for the sake of Christ.

6 Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:

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.

1:7 In the divine economy no one becomes a saint by acting in a saintly manner. Rather, by virtue of a divine call to salvation and service every believer is to manifest saintliness.

Introduction: Romans 1:8-17

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;

The Purpose of the Epistle Romans 1:10-12

10 Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you.

11 For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established;

12 That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.

1:10-12 This epistle was written during the journey from Macedonia to Jerusalem, and, according to tradition, at Corinth. The purpose of the epistle is to help Christians understand the salvation they possess by faith in Christ.

13 Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.

1:13 Paul would eventually have his prayer answered and arrive in Rome but he would arrive in chains as a political prisoner.

14 I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.

15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

The Theme Stated
Romans 1:16-17

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

1:17 The theme of the Epistle is the righteousness of God revealed and embraced by faith. Habakkuk 2: 4 declares, “*The just shall live by his faith.*” Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews are each based upon this text. The phrase in Romans 1:17 “*from faith to faith*” is better translated “*out of faith unto faith.*” The gospel of salvation is extended in righteousness by faith to all that believe from the faithfulness of God who justifies sinners (Eph. 2:8-9). Degrees of faith are not in view here for the grand objective of the apostle is to set forth the doctrine of justification or how a person can be righteous in the sight of God. Nor is the faith of God being spoken of, only His faithfulness.

The Gospel is Needed
Romans 1:18-3:20

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

1:18 The pagan world is the object of divine wrath for it is without excuse. Having once possessed great knowledge of God men could not stand such intimate knowledge for it made them uncomfortable in their vices. So men invented a myriad of lesser deities and divinities and eventually lost the knowledge of the true God.

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

20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

1:19-20 The sun, moon and stars are silent witnesses to the Divine Mind and the power of the great Creator. The words "*Things that are made*," translate the single Greek word *poiema* (poy'-ay-mah), from which we get our word "*poem*." Creation is God's great epic poem of His power. "*Forever singing as they shine, The stars declare, 'The Hand that made us is Divine.'*" In Ephesians 2:10 the same word is found again. "*We are His workmanship*" which is to say the Christian is His "*poem*" created in Christ Jesus unto good works. "*Twas great to call a world from naught; Twas greater to redeem the blood bought.*"

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

22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.

1:23 Observe the downward spiral of idolatry. God is first visualized as an exalted man, then He is likened to the birds of the heavens, next to the beast that prowl on the earth, and finally to creeping creatures such as reptiles or insects.

24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

27 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence [reward] of their error which was meet [due].

28 And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate [worthless] mind, to do those things which are not convenient [fit, proper];

1:23 Vile expressions of immorality are the natural result of turning from the Holy One. When God gives souls over to a reprobate mind (v. 28) they are confirmed in evil and await certain damnation.
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29 Being filled with all unrighteousness [iniquity], fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

30 Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

31 Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

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

Leader's Study Guide

Romans 1

Review

1. Who is the human author of the epistle to the Romans?

Answer

The apostle Paul.

2. What had God promised by His prophets in the Holy Scripture?

Answer

The gospel.

3. How is the eternity of Christ noted and protected?

Answer

Jesus is noted to be made of the seed of David (Rom. 1:3) but He is declared the Son of God (Rom. 1:4).

4. Explain the phrase, "*from faith to faith*" in Romans 1:17.

Answer

In matchless grace God faithfully saves all who believes in Christ and receives Him as Savior by faith.

5. List at least ten of the sins found in Romans 1:23-32.

Answer

The sins noted include the following:

- Changing the glory of God into an exalted man, animal and insect (v. 23).
- Homosexuality (v. 24-27).
- Fornication (v. 29).
- Wickedness (v. 29)
- Covetousness (v. 29).
- Maliciousness (v. 29)
- Envy (v. 29)
- Debate or strife (v. 29).
- Deceit (v. 29)
- Malignity (v. 29)
- Whispers (v. 29)
- Backbiters (v. 30)
- Haters of God (v. 30)

- Despiteful (v. 30).
- Proud (v. 30).
- Boasters (v. 30).
- Inventors of evil (v. 30).
- Disobedient to parents (v. 30).
- Without understanding (v. 31).
- Covenant breakers (v. 31).
- Without natural affection (v. 31)
- Implacable (v. 31)
- Unmerciful (v. 31)
- Have pleasure in others that sin (v. 31)

Reflection

1. Are you fully convinced that the gospel has power to change lives and to save a soul from eternal judgment?
2. What will happen to those who have never heard the gospel? Are they responsible for rejecting Jesus Christ as personal savior if they have never even heard of Him?
3. Why are people so fascinated with the animal kingdom that cars, sport's teams and clubs are named after them?
4. Do you believe that homosexuality is a choice of lifestyle or a by-product of natural birth?
5. Would you agree or disagree with the following statement. *"People would rather invite the judgment of God than to repent of sin and change"*? See Romans 1:32.

Personal Application

1. Write a paragraph of four to five sentences testifying to your salvation experience.
2. List three reasons why you are thankful to God.
3. Share a time when your prayer was answered but in an unexpected way.
4. How can you, like Paul pay your debt to the world by witnessing? In what form will your evangelism take shape?
5. In the list of sins in Romans 1:23-32 if you find any that are convicting because there is secret sin in the soul, will you right now confess, repent and renounce them?

Memory Work

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. 17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

Romans 2

The World of Culture Condemned *Romans 2:1-16*

1 Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.

2:1 Among the world of culture and refinement the educated rise to pronounce disgust and abhorrence for the lewdness of the pagan. However, though the voice of condemnation is loud and even eloquent, are their lives any cleaner and more acceptable to God?

2 But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.

3 And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?

2:2-3 Having been well educated himself Paul knows that knowledge is not enough. Philosophy does not preserve individuals from the dark side of the soul being expressed. Culture does not cleanse the heart nor does education change the nature of the flesh. It is against all doers of evil that the judgment of God according to truth will be expressed. To praise virtue while engaging in vice will not deceive the One who looks upon the heart.

4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

2:4 To their peril and shame men misunderstand God. Because a sentence against evil is not executed quickly the heart of the atheist assumes that God does not exist. The heart of the deist declares He does not care. The heart of the New Age devotee dares to believe man is God himself! Meanwhile, extended grace to repent is lost.

5 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

2:5 Every person will go to his own place be it paradise (Luke 23:43) or perdition (Acts 1:25). Each rebel against the righteous God, every sinner which tries to extinguish the glorious light of the gospel, ever soul which violates his own conscience will carry his own brimstone and fire of wrath with him to hell. He is marking his own destiny with destruction.

6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

2:6 In verses 7 – 15 great principles of judgment are set forth in order to silence forever anyone who would dare to charge God with being unfair and unrighteous because some have more gospel privileges than others. The first principle is that judgment will be rendered according to deeds (Rom. 2:6). When the gospel of salvation by grace through faith alone is rejected the only basis left to judge are deeds. And so one day the books will be opened and every unbeliever will be judged according to his works (Rev. 20:12).

7 To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:

2:7 Humans are by nature religious. Many seek to do well for they long for glory, honor, immortality and eternal life. Those who are the objects of saving grace manifest these characteristics in the heart. But where is the natural man who so lives? The divine commentary is that they seek a god of their imagination not the God of revelation (Psa. 10:4).

8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,

9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile [Greek];

2: 8-9 God will not discriminate in His judgment. Light given will be the standard by which souls are judged. If by the light of nature men realize their responsibility to the Creator and seek the Lord, He obligates Himself to give them more light unto the salvation of their souls (Jer. 29:13). But if individuals hate the light and turn and suppress the truth and worship and serve the creature more than the Creator God is not unjust in assigning such people a proper and fearful place of judgment.

10 But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:

11 For there is no respect of persons with God.

12 For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law;

2:11-12 This is a sound principle. Individuals are held responsible for what they know or could have known. They are not condemned for ignorance unless that ignorance is rooted in a deliberate rejection of light, which is the case of those who perish for men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil (John 3:19).

13 (For not the hearers of the law *are* just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

14 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:

2:14 God has never left Himself without a witness to the nations of the earth. He has given to all men both the light of nature and the light of conscience.

15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another ;)

2:15 The law that is written on the hearts of the Gentiles is the work of the law – the law worketh wrath. Gentiles who had never heard of the Sinaitic code knew it was wrong to kill, steal, covet, lie and commit adultery ‘*their conscience also being witness*’. This proves they are in a position to be held accountable to God and are worthy of being judged by Jesus Christ (Acts 17:31).

2:13-15 These parenthetical verses simply emphasize the principle established that judgment is according to deeds. To know the law of God and to deliberately disobey only increases a certain and just condemnation.

16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

Examination of the Chosen People
Romans 2:17-29

17 Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God,

2:17 Paul speaks to his kinsmen in a detached manner to note the Jew was very proud of being in possession of the divine oracles and mistook that privilege for a state of superiority over the Gentile nations. But there was religious hypocrisy for what the Jew condemned in others was condoned in the heart.

18 And knowest *his* will, and approvest [judges] the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law;

19 And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness,

20 An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law.

2:17-20. In these verses Paul gathers together all the Jew's pretensions. These are the elements in which they gloried. What they failed to appreciate is that privilege increases responsibility. Being religious is not the same as being regenerate and righteous.

21 Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?

2:21 Throughout the ancient world the Jew was considered to be the thief of all thieves for the clever devices used to extract resources from others and the high interest rates charged in the lending of money. The Gentile knew he would find no mercy in dealing with a Jew.

22 Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege [to traffic in idols]?

2:22 The *Old Testament* prophets rose up in judgment against the sexual sins of the Jews and their propensity to idolatry. Not only did the Jews practice idolatry they trafficked in the same. While professing to abhor images the Jew would often rob temples or negotiate trade in stolen idols or purchase the same from a conquered people (Acts 19:37).

23 Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?

24 For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.

2:24 This indictment could not be denied for it was justly deserved. The prophets declared all Paul had written to be true. The Scriptures declared it to be true. Their own conscience confirmed it to be true.

2:18-24. Embracing sound doctrines avails nothing if practical righteousness is disregarded. Jesus has come to set the captives free and save from sin. The gospel does not leave individuals in bondage and a cesspool for unrighteous behavior so that the name of a Holy God is blasphemed.

25 For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.

26 Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?

2:25-26 Bearing the sign of the covenant of righteousness in the body while walking in the flesh was only self deception. God would honor the Gentile who did not have the mark of the covenant on his body if he walked in righteousness before the Lord. Religious rhetoric without a corresponding spiritual reality is meaningless to God.

27 And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfill the law, judge thee, who by [with] the letter [Scripture] and circumcision dost transgress the law?

28 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:

29 But he *is* a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the spirit, *and* not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

2:28-29 The word for “*Jew*” is a contraction of “*Judah*” meaning “*praise*”. Paul uses play on words by noting that a true “*Jew*” is not according to the letter of the law but whose “*praise*” is of God – meaning even a righteous Gentile could be a true “*Jew*” in the divine economy.

Leader's Study Guide

Romans 2

Review

1. What two men went to their "own place" according to the verses noted in Luke 23:43 and Acts 1:25?

Answer

In Luke 23:43 a thief on the cross was promised Paradise. Judas too went to his own place in the sphere of the dead.

2. What is written on the hearts of Gentiles that does not save but condemns?

Answer

It is the work of the law that is written on the heart of the Gentiles and that condemns.

3. List two principles by which God will judge righteously.

Answer

God will judge righteously as he renders a verdict according to truth and according to the deeds that have been done.

4. In the divine economy who is a true "Jew"?

Answer

In God's sight a true Jew is someone who has the faith of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and walks in righteousness before Him while honoring His law.

5. In Romans 2:21-22 what four rhetorical questions does Paul ask of the Jew to silence him with shame?

Answer

Paul asks the following questions in Romans 2:21-22.

- Is it right to teach others and not teach self?
- Is it right to preach a man should not steal and then be known for stealing?
- Is it right to say a man should not commit adultery and then commit adultery?
- Is it right to pretend to hate idols and then traffic in them?

Reflection

1. What would be your response to Paul's question in Romans 2:3? *Romans 2:3 And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?*
2. Can you define repentance? What would be your response to Paul's question in Romans 2:4? *Romans 2:4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?*
3. In Romans 2:8, 9, 10 the judgment of God and the mercy of God are set side by side. What does this tell you about God?
4. What is meant when the *Scriptures* teach that God is no respecter of persons?
5. What does it mean to an unbeliever (in context, a Gentile) for a religious person to blaspheme the name of God?

Personal Application

1. Make a list consisting of five or more resolutions that you will commit to in order to demonstrate a holy life to the world.
2. List five modern day pretensions you have observed that religious people hide behind so they can have a sense of righteousness. .
3. Write a paragraph on the importance of not being a religious hypocrite by teaching one way and living another.
4. Write out the Ten Commandments on a separate sheet of paper (Exodus 20).
5. Memorize the Ten Commandments in order if you do not know them by heart (Exodus 20).

Memory Work

Romans 2:3 And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? 4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? 5 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; 6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

Romans 3

The Great Indictment of the Jew *Romans 3:1-9*

1 What advantage then hath the Jew? Or what profit *is there* of circumcision?

3:1 Paul maintains there is no moral distinction between Jew and Greek or Gentile. All are devoid of a righteousness that will justify. All will face a terrible judgment unless God can provide righteousness for them.

2 Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.

3:2 Though the Jew had certain advantages over the Gentiles by possessing the Holy Scriptures called the oracles of God, such possession only served to make guilt more obvious.

3 For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?

4 God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.

3:3-4 Despite the Jewish failure to be a righteous people and live a holy life while spreading the gospel to other nations, God will keep His Word. In judgment He will establish His righteousness as David acknowledge in his Psalm of repentance (Pas. 52:1-4).

5 But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man)

3:5 At this point Paul anticipates an objection to the concept of God judging the guilty. If the unrighteousness of man prepares the way for God to display His own righteousness, is not sin a necessity? If so, then man, sinning as a part of the divine plan, cannot be held accountable.

6 God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?

3:6 In a moment of protective holy anger Paul dismisses such thinking with the words, “*God forbid!*” God is just. God is righteous. He will judge men for their sins according to true gospel light and what their deeds deserve.

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

3:7 The objection is raised again. If God is glorified more through a lie or through an act of sin, why is the person who lies or sins judged as a sinner?

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

3:8 If the glory of God is advanced through sin is not Paul really teaching that men should do evil that good may come of it? Paul's response is simple. Those who raise such a question and make a slanderous accusation only demonstrate afresh a lack of moral integrity despite the cleverness of the inquiry and the unfairness of the accusation.

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

The Great Indictment of the Whole World
Romans 3:9-20

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

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

12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable [useless]; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

13 Their throat *is* an open sepulcher [grave]; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps [snakes] is under their lips:

14 Whose mouth *is* full of cursing and bitterness:

15 Their feet *are swift* to shed blood:

16 Destruction and misery are in their ways:

17 And the way of peace have they not known:

18 There is no fear of God before their eyes.

3:10-18 There are fourteen separate counts in this universal indictment to prove the whole world is guilty before God.

- There is none righteous, no not one.
- There is none that understandeth
- There is none that seeketh after God.

- They are all gone out of the way.
- They are together become unprofitable.
- There is none that doeth good, no, not one.
- Their throat is an open sepulcher.
- With their tongues they have used deceit.
- The poison of asps is under their lips.
- Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.
- Their feet are swift to shed blood.
- Destruction and misery are in their ways.
- The way of peace have they not known.
- There is no fear of God before their eyes.

These words are taken from the Psalms and from the Prophet Isaiah. Study Psalm 14:1-3; 53:1-3; 5:9; 140:3; 10:7; Isaiah 59:7,8; Psa. 36:1.

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

3:19 Though the Law was given to the Jew and has found them guilty the Jew is not alone for all the world is guilty before God. Who can honestly deny never violating the Law of the Lord?

20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh [man] be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

3:20 Here is a great purpose of the Law. The Law was given that all men could have a clear knowledge of sin and be humbled by that knowledge. As a sense of desperation sets in men should turn their eyes from themselves to God and ask for redeeming grace. The Law cannot redeem. The Law can only accentuate the guilt of man and condemn.

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

3:21 "*But now*". These precious words introduce a message of hope in contrast to the desperate plight of all men who by nature are born into a slave market of sin and the object of God's divine wrath having lost a righteousness that will justify. The divine remedy for the ruin is now set forth in Romans 3:21-5:11. The good news of the glorious gospel is set forth in two parts. First, the story is told as to what God has done with our sins. Secondly, the story is told as to what God has done with our sin – the sin principle that dominates the carnal mind of the unregenerate person.

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

3:21-22 In contrast to a legal righteousness based on works there is another righteousness revealed without the law. This righteousness of God is rooted in faith in the person of Christ. There should be no surprise that such righteousness exists. It too is “*witnessed*” or borne testimony to by the Law and the prophets. In the Law Moses spoke through symbolism of the Lamb who would take away sin. Isaiah wrote of One who would be “*bruised for our iniquities.*” In the Garden God provided a covering for Adam and Eve, a righteousness not of their own doing.

3:22 “*And upon all.*” While these words are not found in the Greek manuscript there is no question but that God freely and sincerely offers righteousness to all. There is a blood covenant of grace providing a covering for all those who believe. All men need this righteousness of God for all men have sinned.

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

24 Being justified freely [without cost] by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

3:24 To “*justify*” means to be declared righteous in the eyes of the law. It is the verdict of the judge in favor of the accused. No one is declared righteous because they are righteous in heart and life. First God justifies and then by the Spirit there is divine enablement to walk in a sanctified righteousness. Moreover, this justification is free or without a price. A person is justified freely, without a cause, when there is faith in Jesus. Such is the nature of grace.

*“Here’s pardon for transgressions past,
It matter not how black their cast,
And O my soul, with wonder view,
For sins to come, here’s pardon too.
Fully discharged by Christ I am,
From Christ’s tremendous curse and blame.”*

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

3:25 Faith is simply taking God at His Word. God speaks and the heart says, “*I believe.*”

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

3:26 The righteousness of God allowing Him to extend free grace to sinners and justify the guilty has a basis. Sin cannot be overlooked or dismissed. It must be atoned for and it has been *“through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”* Redemption means to buy back. By His death and with His blood Jesus bought back those who were sold under judgment. *“He bore on the tree, the sentence for me, And now both the Surety and sinner are free.”*

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

3:27 Inside the Ark of the Covenant were the tablets of the Law present to condemn. But above the Law there was the mercy seat where justice and judgment met. Blood, typifying the sacrifice of Christ on the cross was sprinkled on the mercy seat and the justice of God was satisfied. Then Jesus came as the Lamb of God to shed His precious blood. *“Mercy rejoiceth against judgment”* for God found a ransom. No one need fear God’s wrath nor may anyone boast of being worthy or producing their own salvation. It is all of grace and apart from the deeds of the Law..

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

29 *Is he* the God of the Jews only? *Is he* not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:

30 Seeing *it is* one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.

3:30 Great is the grace of God. It is freely given to Jew and Gentile alike. The gospel has a universal appeal.

31 Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

3:31 By offering free grace to sinful men, by justifying the guilty is the Law made void or of no effect? No, the Law is established and in this manner. The Law condemned all that transgressed it and demanded vengeance. Christ bore the wrath of the Law in His own body at Calvary so the majesty of the Law is upheld. Nevertheless, sinners can be saved.

*“On Christ Almighty vengeance fell
That would have sunk a world to hell;
He bore it for a chosen race,
And thus became a Hiding-place.”*

Leader's Study Guide

Romans 3

Review

1. What is one purpose for the Law?

Answer

When the Bible speaks of “*sin*” in the singular it often refers to the sin nature of man which dominates the mind of the unsaved and compels the heart to do evil. The fruit of this sinful fleshly nature are “*sins*” in the plural (Matt. 15:19; Gal. 5:19).

2. Clarify the distinction in *Scripture* between sins in the plural and sin in the singular.

Answer

The Law was given that all men could have a clear knowledge of sin and be humbled by that knowledge.

3. Give three examples of how the gospel of God's righteousness was witnessed to by the law and the prophets.

Answer

In the Law, Moses spoke of the righteousness of Christ through the symbolism of the sacrifices. The coats of skin provided by God to Adam and Eve spoke of this alien righteousness. Isaiah spoke of the Messiah who would be “*bruised for our iniquities.*”

4. Define the word “*faith*” and “*redemption.*”

Answer

Faith simply means to take God at His Word. Redemption is buying back what has been sold.

5. Explain the word “*justify.*”

Answer

To “*justify*” means to be declared righteous in the eyes of the law. It is the verdict of the judge in favor of the accused.

Reflection

1. Do you believe the offer of the gospel by God is sincerely given to all men? Why?
2. Are you amazed that the *guilty* can be declared righteous? Why or why not?
3. Would you agree that in all the ages souls have been saved only on the basis of grace through faith? Explain.
4. There is a teaching that the *Old Testament* saints did not understand as much about salvation as believers of the New Covenant. Do you think this is true?
5. Do you have any lingering questions about the righteousness of God in declaring the guilty just in His sight? If so what might they be?

Personal Application

1. List at least five spiritual advantages you have by being born in America.
2. What have you done to come short of the glory of God? Be specific.
3. Have you ever tried to justify an attitude or action you knew in your heart was wrong? Be specific.
4. Though salvation is by grace through faith apart from good works, why does the conscience fear dying in a state of known sin? When you think of the judgment of God and the various gospel warnings, do you tremble at the possibility of going to hell? What brings comfort to your heart?
5. Since no one asks to be born, does it seem fair to you that individuals are born physically alive but spiritually dead and under a fearful and certain condemnation?

Memory Work

Romans 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: ... 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

Romans 4

1 What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?

4:1 To prove the gospel is witnessed to by the Law and the Prophets Paul appeals to the story of Abraham, taken from the Pentateuch or the Law and the Psalms of David which are united to the Prophets.

2 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath *whereof* to glory; but not before God.

3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

4:3 The quotation is from Genesis 15:6 and illustrates the principle of salvation by grace alone through faith alone rooted in the righteousness of God and established by the redeeming blood work of Christ.

4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned [considered] of grace, but of debt.

4:4 If a person could be saved by good works then God would be in man's debt. He would owe it to the person who had fulfilled the obligations to save him. But this would be contrary to grace which is mercy shown "*to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly.*"

5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

4:5 The life of Abraham testifies to such saving grace. It was his faith which was counted for righteousness not his works.

6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,

7 *Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.*

8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

4:6-8 The song of David, the Sweet Singer of Israel adds his voice of praise to the grace and mercy of God apart from works. Ps 32:1-2 “*Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. 2 Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.*”

9 *Cometh* this blessedness then upon the circumcision *only*, or upon the uncircumcision also? For we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.

10 How was it then reckoned? When he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.

11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had yet* being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:

12 And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which *he had* being *yet* uncircumcised.

4:9-12 The blessedness of God’s righteous offer of free grace is not just for the Jew, it is for the Gentile also for Abraham was on Gentile ground when grace came to him. Before Abraham received the sign of the seal of the covenant in his body he was justified, not by works but by faith. Anyone who has the faith of Abraham can know the joy of having such faith counted for righteousness.

13 For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

14 For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect:

4:13-14 Abraham is called “*the father of circumcision*” for in him the ordinance was instituted. Nevertheless, the promise that he should be heir of the world was not given to him through the Law or based on human merit. Then he would have deserved the inheritance and faith would become a non-issue or void. No, the promise came to Abraham on the basis of sovereign grace. His righteousness was a by faith righteousness.

15 Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there *is no* transgression.

16 Therefore *it is* of faith, that *it might* be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,

4:16 Abraham is the spiritual father of all who believe in Jesus as he first believed in the promise of a seed.

17 (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, *even* God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.

18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations; according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.

19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb:

20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

21 And being fully persuaded [convinced] that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

22 And therefore it was imputed [credited] to him for righteousness.

4:17-22 The faith of Abraham becomes all the more remarkable when it is remembered that he went past the age of the ability to procreate naturally. Still he staggered not at the promise of God but believed in Him who is the God of resurrection. God works when the flesh is powerless. God kept His promise to Abraham and raised up Christ the true Seed by bringing Him into the world contrary to the laws of nature by the virgin birth and then by bringing Him back from the sphere of the dead, which is also contrary to the laws of nature. By faith Abraham saw this (John 8:56) and believed.

23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed [credited] to him;

24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;

25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

4:23-25 The story of Abraham's faith was not preserved simply to exalt him but to demonstrate the principle of grace. God's mercy will come to anyone if there is faith that God has raised Christ the Lord from the dead. The resurrection of Christ is proof that God is satisfied with the Lord's sin offering. At the Cross divine justice was appeased, the demands of the Law were met, the holiness of God was established and the mercy of God was vindicated. Grace is now free to flow and the believing sinner can be declared justified in all things. Halleluiah! What a Savior! Oh how great is our God!

Leader's Study Guide

Romans 4

Review

1. What would it matter if works justified Abraham?

Answer

If works had justified Abraham then God would have been indebted to Him and the principle of grace would have been lost.

2. Which two men from the *Old Testament* does Paul use to illustrate the principle of grace?

Answer

Abraham and David

3. Who is the blessed man? (Romans 4:8)?

Answer

The blessed man is the one to whom the Lord does not charge with sin.

4. Through what means was the promise made to Abraham (Romans 4:14)?

Answer

The promise given to Abraham was not through the law but through the righteousness of faith.

5. Why did Jesus die and why was He resurrected? (Romans 4:25)

Answer

Jesus died for the offenses of others and He was resurrected so sinners might be justified.

Reflection

1. Why is Abraham so highly honored by Jews, Christians, and Muslims?
2. Do you believe in the doctrine of an imputed righteousness, even the righteousness of Christ charged to individuals? If not, explain.
3. Is it imported to believe that Jesus is raised from the dead (Rom. 4:24). If so, why?
4. In what way is Abraham the father of us all? (Rom. 4:16)
5. How would you describe your own faith in God? Weak? Strong? Questionable?

Personal Application

1. Read and reflect on the death of Christ (Matthew 26:47-28:20). Write down your thoughts. What does the death of Jesus mean to you?
2. Are you depending on your good works to get you to heaven? Why or why not?
3. How would you characterize your faith?

My faith in God does not exist ___
I have a little faith in God ___
Occasional I have faith in God ___
I have a strong faith in God ___
4. How confident are you that when you die you will go to heaven? On what is your assurance founded? Do you ever have any doubts?
5. Do you think often of God's mercy and grace or more of His wrath and judgments?

Memory Work

Romans 4:5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Romans 5

A Summary of Justifying Faith Romans 5:1-11

1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

5:1 The peace of which Paul speaks does not refer to a state of mind or heart but to the prevailing condition that now exists between two parties once hostile to each other and alienated. *“There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked” (Isa. 48:22)*. But Christ has made peace through the blood of His cross (Col. 1:20). He is our peace. The heart believes and has peace with God.

“’Tis everlasting peace,
Sure as Jehovah’s name;
’Tis stable as His steadfast throne,
Forevermore the same.”

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

5:2 When the Law was given, a boundary was established lest the people draw too near to God. *Ex 19:12 “And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death:”* Now, because of Christ the believer has access by faith into grace. Access was not invited under the legal covenant. God was hidden behind a veil. Now the veil has been torn and the worshipper is exhorted to draw near to God in full assurance of faith for the heart has been sprinkled from an evil conscience (Heb. 10:22).

3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

5:3-4 While the heart rejoices in the peace the soul has with God there is a reality that grace and glory is not complete. There are sufferings to endure in time in order to strengthen faith and learn patience, as Abraham had to learn patience while he waited on the promise of an heir to be realized. In suffering and in sorrow the soul learns of its insufficiency and the sufficiency in Christ. Only in time can some spiritual lessons be learned.

“The touch that heals the broken heart
Is never felt above;
His angels know His blessedness,
His way worn saints His love.”

5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

5:5 As indignities and injustices are endured, as the sorrows of life press down upon the soul the spiritual experiences blossom into hope. The heart is turned from time to eternity and God’s love comes to the heart by the sweet ministry of the Holy Spirit who is given to us.

6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure [perhaps] for a good man some would even dare to die.

8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

5:6-9 The theological debate over the security of the believer could be resolved if all of God’s people embraced the teaching of this passage. The God who saves and justifies is the God who is satisfied. The Lord Jesus will never allow the justified soul to come into judgment. A divine promise is given. “*We shall be saved from wrath through Him.*”

10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

5:10 Five times the words “*much more*” are used in this chapter.

- In Romans 5:9 the believer is beyond the reach of God’s vengeance against sin.
- In Romans 5:10 the believer is reconciled to God.
- In Romans 5:15 the believer is the object of abounding grace.
- In Romans 5:17 the believer receives the gift of righteousness.
- In Romans 5:20 grace is greater than sin.

5:10 While the death of Christ atones for sin and through which the believer is redeemed and reconciled to God it is also true that by His resurrection life the Christian is said to be saved (Heb. 7:25).

11 And not only *so*, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

5:11 By embracing the doctrines of grace the heart of the believer has a reason to have joy in God. A living Christ is the pledge of eternal redemption. There is more reason to rejoice when it is realized a righteous atonement has been made on behalf of every believer. The sinner, unable to make atonement finds Christ being made an offering acceptable to God – and the soul receives the benefit by being reconciled to the Father.

12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

The Gospel and Indwelling Sin
Romans 5:12-7:25

5:12- 21 In this section the apostle introduces two great families and two federal heads. There is the family of faith and the family of the flesh. There are two great federal heads which represent their constituents. Adam represents the family of flesh while Christ represents the family of faith.

13 (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude [likeness] of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.

5:13-14 Sin was in the world dominating and condemning individuals from the Fall of Adam to Moses. Even though sin was not confronted with the legality of the Law written on stone it was present and so was death. Even infants who did not sin in the same manner as Adam were subject to death for they too were under the umbrella of the federal headship of Adam and so suffered his judgment. In Adam all die. From the beginning it was decreed that the soul that sinned would die, first a spiritual death and then an eternal death (Gen. 2:17).

15 But not as the offence [Adam's transgression], so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, *which* is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

16 And not as *it was* by one that sinned, *so is* the gift: for the judgment *was* by one to condemnation, but the free gift *is* of many offences unto justification.

17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)

5:15-17 Adam was a figure, an anti-type of Him who was to come even Jesus the Righteous One. As Adam took unto him to represent all of humanity so Christ took upon Himself to represent those who are born again by faith in Him. Those who are born again shall live again. “*Because I live ye shall live also*” is the gospel promise of Christ (John 14:19).

18 Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life.

5:18 By the single transgression of Adam judgment came upon all men to condemnation. Individuals are born physically alive but spiritually dead in the sight of God. No one sins and then becomes a sinner. Each person sins because they are a sinner. Sin is merely an expression of the natural flesh (Psa. 58:3). In contrast the righteousness of Christ comes to all who believe. By faith a soul can be justified in the sight of God and live not only for time but for eternity.

19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

20 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

5:20 The plight of all in Adam was made more desperate by the coming of the Law for the Law provided a specific character to transgressions. Nevertheless, where sin washed over humanity like a flood, Jesus came to provide abounding grace. A promise of God was kept. “*When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him*” (Isa 59:19). Flying a banner of love (Song of Sol. 2:4) Jesus challenged and defeated the despotic monarch to end the reign of sin. Now grace is on the throne and reigns unto eternal life through righteousness accomplished at Calvary. “*O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him*” (Ps 34:8).

21 That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Leader's Study Guide

Romans 5

Review

1. Describe the nature of the peace that is given to the believer who is justified before God.

Answer

The peace of which Paul speaks does not refer to a state of mind or heart but to the prevailing condition that now exists between two parties once hostile to each other and alienated.

2. Explain what Paul meant when he said that believers now have “*access by faith in His grace.*”

Answer

When the Law was given, a boundary was established lest the people draw too near to God. Now, because of Christ the believer has access by faith into grace. Access was not invited under the legal covenant. God was hidden behind a veil.

3. Whom does Adam represent in a federal headship?

Answer

Adam represents the family of flesh.

4. Whom does Christ represent in a federal headship?

Answer

Christ represents the family of faith.

5. What made the plight of men graver still?

Answer

The coming of the Law gave a new depth to sin.

Reflection

1. Do you believe in the eternal security of the believer? Explain.
2. Is God unjust in passing judgment upon all? If so why?
3. What should be said to the person who does not “feel” or think himself to be a grave sinner in the sight of God?
4. Do you find Paul’s thinking difficult to follow or is he logically making a case against the sinner and for the reign of grace? What part of Paul’s argument is challenging to comprehend, if any?
5. Do you believe that little ones who die in infancy go to be with the Lord? Why or why not?

Personal Application

1. Do you have peace in your heart knowing that you are right with God? If not, what can you do to have peace with God?
2. What specific tribulations have you endured that have made you a better Christian?
3. Has the love of God been shed abroad in your heart? Is there anyone that you harbor resentment and perhaps even hatred against? How can such bitterness be rooted out of your heart?
4. Have you ever witnessed the death of a child? What were your thoughts about that event?
5. Do you see yourself as a great sinner in need of greater grace? Have you ever had the secret thought, “*I am not such a bad person*”? Do you find comfort in a relative righteousness? By that are you comforted by remembering you have not done what Hitler or Stalin did to others and that you are not a mass murderer?

Memory Work

Romans 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: ...8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

On a tombstone in St. Andrew's children in Scotland
an engraving marks the resting place of four young children.

“Bold infidelity, turn pale and die.
Beneath this stone
four sleeping infants lie:
Say, are they lost or saved?

If death's by sin, they sinned,
for they are here.
If heaven's by works,
in heaven they can't appear.

Reason, ah, how depraved!
Turn to the Bible's sacred page, the knot's untied:
They died, for Adam sinned;
they live, for Jesus did.”

~*~

Romans 6

Arguments Against a Spirit of Lawlessness *Romans 6:1-23*

1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue [increase] in sin, that grace may abound?

6:1 Knowing all too well the innate corruption of the human heart Paul addresses the issue of anti-nomianism or lawlessness in the life of the believer.

2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

6:2 There is a reason why the believer will not want to act in a lascivious manner following salvation and that reason is stated in terms of a death to sin as a ruling principle in the life. In gospel terms the link that bound the soul to Adam as federal head has been broken by a new association with Christ in His death. Therefore, the believer has a right to consider himself too as having died to the authority of sin as a master.

3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were [are] baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

6:3 An emphasis is placed on the word “*know*.” While knowledge may puff up when used inappropriately (1 Cor. 8:1) ignorance of basic Bible doctrine is equally dangerous (2 Tim.2: 15).

4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like [just] as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness* of *his* resurrection:

6:4-5 Is this the Spirit’s baptism of 1 Corinthians 12:3 or water baptism? Certainly by water baptism the symbolism of death is established. In the gospel act of obedience to being baptized the Christian confesses, “*I have died to the old life and the person I was in Adam. No longer shall sin have dominion over me. By walking in the newness of life I show I have been resurrected from among the spiritually dead.*” A genuine confession of this nature cannot be made apart from the Holy Spirit baptizing the believer into the body of Christ.

6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

6:6 Once more emphasis is placed on the word “*know*.” A theological point is pressed with practical application for as a man thinketh in his heart so is he (Prov. 23:7). It is a glorious truth for a believer to comprehend that in Christ the body of sin is destroyed. All that a person was in the flesh was crucified with Christ. It was not just three people that were crucified at Calvary for Paul says in Galatians 2:20 “*I am crucified with Christ*”. He was there too. And every believer by faith can declare, “*My old man was crucified with Jesus. I have died to the reign of sin. This much I know. No longer do I have to serve sin as a reigning Master.* “

7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.

6:7 It was not just the sins of Christians that were dealt with at Calvary but themselves as sinners. So the apostle continues in Galatians 2:20. “*Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life I now live in the flesh (that is my body) I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me.*” What was taught to the Galatians was taught to the saints in Rome.

8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:

6:8 The practical application is now made. Those who have faith in Christ can believe they live with Him, not just in eternity but also in time. Heaven has come down for glory to fill the soul.

9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

6:11 The word “*reckon*” conveys the idea of considering something to be true. What is true is that in the divine economy it is a spiritual judicial fact, there has been a death unto sin. It is faith not feelings that engages the mind to “*reckon*” self to be dead unto the reign of sin.

12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments [weapons] of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

6:12-14 There is a logical progression in Paul's argument. When a sinful impulse rises in the heart demanding the soul serve sin the renewed mind says, "*No, I will not yield my members instruments of unrighteousness nor do I have to.*" As faith lays hold of this divine power the strong chains of lust are broken. In this process of finding freedom from the tyranny of evil a holy responsibility is placed upon the believer. There must be diligent watchfulness over the soul and a constant recognition of the believer's union with Christ (Mark 14:37-38). The body is to be used for the glory of God as a weapon or armor (Rom. 13:2; 2 Cor. 6:7; 10:4) in the spiritual conflict. The Christian is a soldier in the King's army (Eph. 6:11-18).

15 What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

6:15-16 If a person habitually yields themselves unto sin to obey its call in a voluntarily manner then the person demonstrates they are still the servant of sin and the end of that service is death. The new man in Christ from a new heart has an innate desire to obey the One who loved him and gave His life for him (2 Cor. 5:17).

17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine [teaching] which was delivered [given] you.

18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

6:17-18 Paul is confident that the believers in the church of Rome had obeyed from the heart the doctrinal teaching which was able to make them wise unto salvation and sanctification. They were the servants of righteousness.

19 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness [sanctification].

6:19 What Paul had taught doctrinally he now repeats as a pastoral exhortation. It is imperative the believers no longer yield any part of their bodies as an instrument of iniquity. Rather the mind, the tongue, the ears, the hands, the feet, every member of the body must be a servant of righteousness. The heart of the believer, yea the whole body becomes a home for the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19).

20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things *is* death.

6:20-21 The heart of the Christian grows heavy with shame when it remembers former sins as the heart of David wept over his transgressions (Psa. 51). While the guilt and pollution of sin is removed the scars of sin remain to remind the believer why Jesus had to die. The apostle Paul never forgot that he once persecuted the church of God, though it was done in ignorance.

22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

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

6:23 The Gospel Road

- In Romans 3:10 the declaration is made that no one is righteous in the sight of God according to the flesh.
- In Romans 3:23 the reason why no one is righteous is declared.
- In Romans 6:23 the penalty of sin is stated. Wages is what is earned or deserved.
- In Romans 5:8 the good news of the gospel is contrasted with the bad news of the plight of man.
- In Romans 10:9-10 the divine remedy for sin is found. Individuals must call upon the name of the Lord.

Leader's Study Guide

Romans 6

Review

1. Do Christians have freedom to sin following salvation?

Answer

In the strongest language the answer is no, “*God forbid such a thought!*” On the night of the Lord’s birth the angels told the shepherds that Jesus would save His people from their sins (Matt. 1:21).

2. In what verse(s) does the apostle stress the importance of knowledge of doctrine?

Answer

The apostle stresses the importance of knowing doctrine in verse 3, 6, 9, and 16.

3. Define the word “*reckon*” in Romans 6:11.

Answer

The word “*reckon*” conveys the idea of considering something to be true. What is true is that in the divine economy there has been a death unto the tyranny of sin.

4. What doctrinal teaching does Paul make to help believers not serve sin (Rom. 6:16)?

Answer

Paul teaches that a person who yields their body to sin remains a servant of sin and will receive the just reward of that service which is death. In contrast a person who yields their body unto righteousness will do so because of redeeming grace.

5. How does Psalm 51 characterize godly repentance?

Answer

David was deeply ashamed of what he had done against the Lord. His sin was ever before him to remind him he needed a Savior.

In Times Like These

“In times like these you need a Savior,
In times like these you need an anchor;
Be very sure, be very sure,
your anchor holds and grips the Solid Rock!

This Rock is Jesus, Yes, He’s the One,
This Rock is Jesus, The only One;
Be very sure, be very sure,
your anchor holds and grips the Solid Rock!

In times like these you need the Bible,
In times like these, oh be not idle;
Be very sure, be very sure,
Your anchor holds and grips the Solid Rock!

In times like these I have a Savior,
In times like these, I have an anchor;
I’m very sure, I’m very sure,
my anchor holds and grips the Solid Rock!

Ruth Caye Jones

Reflection

1. What place does knowledge have in the Christian’s life? A gifted and well-educated pastor was once rebuked by a church member who sneered, “*God does not need your education.*” To which the pastor wisely responded, “*Neither does God need a person’s ignorance.*”
2. What manner and mode of baptism do you believe is most Scriptural and representative of the doctrinal truth found in Romans 6:4-5?
3. Make a chain reference in your Bible of the Roman’s Road. Go to Romans 3:10 and at the end of the verse write *See next Romans 3:23*. At the end of Romans 3:23 write *See next Romans 6:23*. At the end of Romans 6:23 write, *See next Romans 5:8*. At the end of Romans 5:8 write *See Romans 10:9-10*. Practice with someone sharing the plan of salvation following the Roman’s Road. Explain the gospel in a simple manner.
4. What should be said to the professing Christian, who lives a life apart from the fellowship of the local assembly, ignores communion and is willfully and obviously disobedient to biblical commandments to be holy?
5. How can the teaching of Romans 6:6ff help a professing Christian struggling with addictive behavior?

Personal Application

1. In the *New Testament*, all professing believers were baptized, with the exception of the thief on the cross. Have you been baptized as a professing Christian? If not, why not?
2. If the baptism Paul refers to in Romans 6 is a Spirit baptism whereby every believer has been placed into union with Christ at the moment of salvation then the question comes, “*Have you been baptized by the Holy Spirit*”? (See also 1 Corinthians 12:13).
3. Is there any sin which reigns or has a controlling force in your body? Do you obey your negative intense desires? Do you yield your body as an instrument unto sin? Is there any area of your life that sin has dominion over you?
4. Have you, do you obey from the heart that form of doctrine or teaching which has delivered you from the ruling principle of sin? If not, why not? What can be done when the will is weak and the heart is full of love?
5. In looking back over life, will God be able to say to you, “*I see you have fruit unto holiness. Now, enter into everlasting life*”?

Memory Work

Romans 6:12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. 13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. 15 What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. ...6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 7

The Rule of Life for the Redeemed *Romans 7:1-25*

1 Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion [is in legal force] over a man as long as he liveth?

7:1 In considering the ethical nature of the Christian life it would be natural for the place of the Law of Moses in the life of the believer to come into question. Anticipating Jewish concerns in particular Paul proceeds to teach that the believer does not look to Law keeping as a means of obtaining a right standing before God. In fact, legally, the believer is not bound to the Law but to Christ. How did this new relationship come into existence? Using a human analogy Paul teaches that a spiritual death has occurred thereby freeing the heart of the believer to be married to Another, even Jesus Christ the Righteous One.

2 For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to *her* husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed [set free] from the law of *her* husband.

3 So then if, while *her* husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.

4 Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

7:4 The doctrinal teaching of the believer being dead to the Law is followed by the practical spiritual application. The believer is married to Another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, Jesus Christ. Because of this wonderful mystical union with Jesus, the Christian is not lawless. Rather the believer is "*under the law to Christ*" (1 Cor. 9:21) which means the Christian is legitimately subject to Christ as the Head of the body and the Husband of the heart (Eph. 5: 23).

7:4 Paul stresses the fact that death has ended the relationship of the believer to the Law. It is not the death of the Law that is in view but the believer's death with Christ which has brought an end to the old order with freedom to be married to another, Jesus Christ in order to bring forth fruit unto God.

5 For when we were in the flesh, the motions [desires] of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members [body] to bring forth fruit unto death.

7:5 The term “*flesh*” is used by Paul to refer to the natural state, the unsaved man. Prior to salvation the Christian was married to the Law and sought to bring forth acceptable fruit unto God. But tragedy struck. Instead of bringing forth-good fruit, only that which was worthy of death ensued. The child of works righteousness was stillborn.

6 But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not *in* the oldness of the letter.

7:6 As horrific as a stillborn child of works righteousness was, divine deliverance came from the Law in order to allow a marriage to Christ. The new relationship brought a view of serving the Lord with a new spirit, a spirit of love thereby replacing the old spirit of legal servitude.

7 What shall we say then? *Is* the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

7:7 A familiar question appears again. Is the believer to become lawless because the soul is no longer under Law? Is the Law itself sin? The familiar answer is no. The Christian is not lawless and the Law is not sinful. Rather, the Law is holy, just and good and has a unique ministry. The Law has the ministry of condemnation as it defines evil and gives shape to the various lust patterns of the heart. Using himself as an illustration of what he means Paul confesses, “*I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.*” The apostle explains what happened next.

8 But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought [produced] in me all manner of concupiscence [strong passions]. For without the law sin *was* dead [inert, unrecognizable].

9 For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.

10 And the commandment, which *was ordained* to life, I found *to be* unto death.

7:10. The initial divine objective for the Law was to give life. “*Do this and live*” was the great promise underlying Law keeping. As a devout Pharisee, Paul believed he could and was keeping the Law in the same manner the people of the Exodus generation thought they could and would keep the Law. “*And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do*” (*Ex 19:8*). However, no one had ever or could ever keep the Law perfectly. Honest individuals discovered that because they could not keep the Law perfectly they were subject to eternal death for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all who violate His commandments.

11 For sin, taking occasion [opportunity] by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew *me*.

7:8-11 Paul admits that his sin nature rebelled against the commandment in the moral law of Exodus 20 prohibiting covetousness. Though physically alive, the moment came when Paul realized he was spiritually dead in the sight of God for he had to confess, he was a covetous man. Such spiritual honesty and insight was electrifying. By the illuminating grace of God the Holy Spirit, Paul realized sin had deceived him by offering him works righteousness as the basis of salvation. By this manner of deceit sin actually slew him. In a state of spiritual death Paul, the former Saul of Tarsus, suddenly realized he needed a Savior. If he was to know salvation Paul came to understand he would need an alien righteousness imputed to his account.

12 Wherefore the law *is holy*, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

7:12 Was Paul angry at the Law for condemning him and exposing the true nature of his soul? No, he considered the Law to be what it was— holy, just and good.

13 Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

7:13 Was the law evil because it produced death? No. It was not the Law that was evil but sin which took advantage of the Law and tried to transform it into a basis for works righteousness. In this manner the exceeding sinfulness of sin was displayed.

Conflict in the Conscience
The Man of Romans 7:14-25

14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

7:14 Having defended the Law as holy, just and good and blameless in the matter of producing spiritual death in his soul, Paul turns attention to himself declaring, “*I am carnal, sold under sin.*”

15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

7:17 Verses 14-25 have been understood by many to be Paul’s personal testimony of his own continuing struggle with sin as a saved man. The words are said to represent the legitimate experience of the believer throughout his whole life. Others understand Paul to be describing the conflict that arises in the conscience prior to salvation. It is not probable that Paul is writing in retrospect as an unconverted man nor is he writing about one, for the overall theme of this section is the deliverance of a believer from the power and dominion of sin.

The desire of the unbeliever to be converted and to be delivered from his sins is not in view. In addition, no unsaved man could ever say in honesty, “*I delight in the law of God after the inward man*” (Rom. 7:22). Only a heart that has been born of God could say that. However, this section should not be regarded as the normal Christian experience, though it is certainly the temporary experience of the renewed heart moving towards spiritual maturity. In the process of sanctification the believer grows in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior and how the Messiah sets the captives free (Luke 4:18).

16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent [agree] unto the law that *it is* good.

17 Now then it is no more [not really] I that do it, but sin that dwelleth [lives] in me.

18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not.

19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

7:16-19 God is often pleased to allow the soul to struggle with indwelling sin that the heart might learn that the flesh in the believer is not better than the flesh in an unbeliever. When the Christian ceases from legal efforts to find deliverance from self then through the Spirit deliverance comes by being occupied with the person of Christ. This particular aspect of the journey into grace takes a long time in some believers for the strength of sin is great. The heart does not take by faith its rightful inheritance. Like the children of Israel wandering in the desert the Christian can wander in a maze of spiritual darkness misguided by thoughts of moral reformation, self help efforts, promises, acts of dedication and rededication all the while experiencing failure. This terrible experience leads to doubts of salvation and legal fears of damnation. The soul is wretched for much of the sinning is done in secret. Only God and the struggling saint know this facet of sin. Terrible feelings of shame are experienced over the disconnect between religious rhetoric and the reality of the inward conflict in the conscience.

20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth [lives] in me.

21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

7:20-23 The process of divine deliverance from the dominion of sin in the soul of the saint begins by understanding there is a law of sin that lives in the heart. This law in the members of the body wars against the law of the renewed mind and brings the life into captivity. Like a slave this law commands and the believer obeys by yielding to the evil suggestions.

24 O wretched [miserable] man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

7:24 The Christian is miserable because the soul is caught up in a vicious cycle. The cycle begins with a sweet time of fellowship with God. Then, the heart succumbs to the pleasures of the flesh. But the pleasures of the flesh do not last and so a measure of sorrow for what has been said and done sets in. An effort is made to repent by confession and the making of a resolution to be different. A sense of being restored to fellowship with the Lord comes to the heart. But soon, very soon there is moral failure again. Sometimes the heart speaks to itself and asks, “*Why do I do this?*” Sometimes the heart screams at God in frustration and anger— as if the cycle of sin were His fault. The overall testimony of the conscience in crisis is this: “*O wretched man that I am!*” When the Christian has come to the end of himself, a desperate cry goes out to heaven. “*Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*” When the cry is finally sincere it is heard. Heaven answers and the heart is once more turned to Jesus who is not only the Savior but also the believer’s sanctification (1 Cor. 1:30).

25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

7:25 Christian, take hope. God will sanctify His people. God will sanctify you. You will yet be able to say,

*“Now free from sin, I walk at large,
My Savior’s blood’s my full discharge;
At His dear feet content I lay,
A sinner saved, and homage pay.”*

Romans 8 explains how the believer is delivered from the dominion of sin by the power of the living Christ.

Leader's Study Guide

Romans 7

Review

1. Why does God allow the Christian to struggle with indwelling sin?

Answer

The Lord allows the Christian to struggle with indwelling sin in order to learn the flesh in the believer is no better than the flesh in the unbeliever. The flesh cannot save the unconverted nor can the flesh sanctify the renewed heart.

2. In Romans 7:14-25 does Paul describe a normal Christian experience that continues throughout the life?

Answer

Paul describes a typical Christian experience in the process of sanctification. However, a cycle of sin is not meant to be the normal pattern of Christian behavior.

3. What should be the Christian's attitude towards the Law?

Answer

Because the Law is holy, just and good the believer should hold it in the highest regard.

4. What two laws are found in the life of the believer?

Answer

There is the law of sin and the law of the renewed mind (Rom. 7:20-23).

5. List the seven phases found in the cycle of sin.

Answer

A distinct pattern can be observed in the cycle of sin.

- The cycle begins with a sweet time of fellowship with God.
- Then, the heart succumbs to the pleasures of the flesh.
- But the pleasures of the flesh do not last and so a measure of sorrow for what has been said and done sets in.
- An effort is made to repent by confession.
- Resolutions are made to be different.
- A sense of being restored to fellowship with the Lord comes to the heart.
- But soon, very soon there is moral failure again for the principle of pleasure is alluring and the will to power is irresistible while under sin's dominion.

Reflection

1. Do you believe the Law is the enemy of the Christian and is a rival to grace? Explain.
2. Should a Christian ever give up in the struggle to move towards spiritual maturity and break out of the cycle of sin? Why?
3. What is to be said to those who surrender to the dark side of the soul with expressions such as, “*That is just the way I am*”?
4. How would you instill hope in a Christian’s miserable heart made so by sin?
5. If applicable, would you be willing to share your own struggle with the cycle of sin and the effect it has had on your Christian testimony and walk with the Lord?

Personal Application

1. While some people believe the apostle is speaking of his condition prior to salvation, can you a believer, identify with the internal struggle with sin that Paul had?
2. To whom are you married spiritually?
3. Has the Law of God ever done a deep work of grace in your heart by condemning your conscience and driving you to the cross and to Christ for salvation and sanctification? Is there a natural resistance to this Law Work you recognize?
4. Are you a “*miserable*” person on some level? If so, what is causing the misery? What can you do about it?
5. Can you “*thank God*”? What are you thankful for in the areas Paul addresses in this chapter?

Memory Work

Romans 7:24 O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

Romans 8

The Reign of God's Sovereign Grace

Romans 8:1-39

1 *There* is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in [union with] Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

8:1 The last part of verse one, “*who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*”, is an interpolation and belongs properly in verse 4. The concept of there being no condemnation or judgment to them which are in union with Christ Jesus needs no qualifying clause. The apostle is continuing his teaching set forth in Romans 7:25 that spiritual freedom from the power of sin and death is found in the person and work of Jesus Christ with blessed results, the first of which is a sense of security for the soul in order to enjoy sanctification.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

8:2 The Spirit's law, which is life in Christ Jesus, stands in stark contrast with sin's law, which only produces moral defeat and spiritual death. As long as a believer struggles in the flesh to be free from the law of sin and death there will be moral failure in the life. However, when the fact of freedom from the tyranny of the law of sin and death is appropriated by faith, victory will be found. Victory comes by turning from self to the Savior.

*“Free from the law, Oh happy condition.
Jesus has blessed and there is remission.”*

3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

4 That the righteousness [ordinance] of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

8:3-4 According to the provision of the new covenant God has promised to write His law on the heart, a tablet of flesh in contrast to the table of stone at Mt. Sinai (Jer. 31:31; Heb. 8:8-10). Because God keeps His word the believer longs to do what is right. The Christian wants to keep the moral law of God. However, he finds he cannot keep the law. Why? Because the law of sin and death is found in his members and must be dealt with. Unfortunately, the tendency is to deal with the law of sin and death by fleshly means, but the flesh cannot prevail against the strength of the law. The principle of sin is too strong for the saint. How then is the law to be fulfilled in the believer?

How is the moral law to be honored? The answer is this. By faith the Christian embraces the fact of a new relationship in Christ. Because this relationship is based on free grace it is secure and so the fear of a future condemnation is removed. With the promise of no condemnation in his heart the believer has freedom to walk, not after the flesh but after the Spirit. No longer is there a fleshly striving to be good as the religious non-Christian strives to be good. Rather, there is a faith-rest by which the Christian depends on the Holy Spirit to sanctify the heart.

5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace.

7 Because the carnal mind *is* enmity [hostile] against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

8:5-5 As long as the Christian tries to struggle against sin by fleshly means – as unconverted religious people also do – God will not be pleased and for good reason. The flesh is ultimately concerned only with fleshly matters just as the Spirit is concerned about matters of the Spirit. The flesh and the Spirit have nothing in common. Because of this the flesh and the Spirit are openly hostile to one another even unto death.

9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be [since] that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

8:9 The professing Christian must examine himself to see if he is truly born of God (2 Cor. 13:5). If the answer is yes then by faith the indwelling presence of the Spirit is to be relied upon to perform righteous deeds thereby keeping the law of God and pleasing Him.

10 And if Christ *be* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin; but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness.

8:10 The body, used by the flesh as an instrument against the law of God and the Spirit of God is dead to sin when Jesus comes (John 14:18) and the Holy Spirit indwells the heart (1 Cor. 6:19). Joseph fled from the luring attraction of Potiphar's wife because he was dead to sin for Christ dwelt in him (Gen. 39:1-20).

11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken [make alive] your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

8:11 Because of Calvary the body will not be used in time as an instrument of unrighteousness; in eternity the body will know complete redemption and life through the resurrection by the same Spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead (John 5:28-29; 1 Cor 15:51-58).

12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors [in debt], not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

8:12 No Christian owes the flesh anything. Sin may present to the mind a sense of obligation to linger in an unrighteous relationship or fulfill an unholy vow. Remember Lot's wife (Luke 17:32). Then, remember that Jesus taught sin must be dealt with radically. "*And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. 30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell*" (Matt 5:29-30).

13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify [put to death] the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

8:13 Belief in the security of the believer and confidence in the promises of God that there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus does not give individuals a license to sin. The language of *Scripture* is very plain. Anyone, without exception or distinction, who lives after the flesh shall die. Only those who actually put to death the deeds of the body shall live. This teaching does not revert back to a works salvation for the life that is lived in holiness is the life that is dependent upon the Spirit so that it can be said, "*Salvation is of the Lord*" (Jonah 2:9). It is all of grace.

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage [slavery] again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

8:15 Having been set free from the tyranny of the law of sin and death the believer can be and will be led by the Spirit of God. There will be no more rebellion for Christ is submitted to as Lord. Recognition of the Lordship of Christ precedes salvation (Luke 6:46; Titus 1:4; 2 Peter 1:11; 2:20; 3:2; 3:18). The Christian values the Spirit that has adopted or placed him into the family of God. There is a natural desire to cry, "*Abba (Papa), Father*" as Jesus did in the Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:36).

16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

8:16 The test the professing Christian is to use to examine himself and see if he is within the sphere of saving grace is the witness of the Holy Spirit. As the mind meditates upon spiritual matters there will be a consciousness that the heart believes or disbelieves the essential elements of the gospel message – “*that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures*” (1 Cor 15:3-4). Judas knew that Jesus knew; he was a thief, a deceiver and a traitor (John 6:64). There was no Holy Spirit bearing witness with the spirit of Judas that he was a son of God. Because of this, when Jesus told Judas to depart from the supper table and go do what he had to do according to his fleshly nature, Judas simply walked out of the room and embraced his own damnation without protest.

17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

8:17 When the Holy Spirit bears witness in the heart that the soul belongs to Jesus there is the joy of remembering that a divine adoption has taken place making the believer an heir of God and joint-heir with Christ. Simply stated all that Christ is and has belongs to the believer. If that vital union includes suffering, it also includes glorification.

The Glory that is to Come
Romans 8:18-27

18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

8:18 With the reign of sin issue settled according to gospel terms the apostle turns the thoughts of his readers in a new direction which is the glory which shall be revealed in the Christian.

19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* in hope,

21 Because the creature [creation] itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption [decay] into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

23 And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body.

24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

25 But if we hope for that we see not, *then* do we with patience wait for *it*.

8:20-25 According to biblical theology paradise lost shall be paradise restored, when Jesus comes (2 Peter 3:13).

26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will* of God.

8:26-27 As the Holy Spirit indwells the believer and provides power to keep the moral law of God, as the Spirit gives victory over the law of sin and death, as the Holy Spirit provides assurance of salvation, so the Spirit teaches the heart what to say in prayer while making intercession with groanings that cannot be uttered. "*Once we groaned in bondage, now we groan in grace.*"

28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

8:28 For those who love God there is a high level of confidence that all that happens in life is because of the Father's will (Eph. 1:11). For the believer life is not guided by cosmic chance, an evolutionary process or economic determinism. Life for the Christian has definition and meaning. The believer has been called for a grand purpose which is to be conformed into the image of Christ.

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.

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.

8:29-30 To confirm that life for the believer has purpose and definition, the apostle takes the reader into eternity past. Before any soul was ever created and saved God predetermined that Christians would become fully like the blessed Lord, "*conformed to the image of God's Son,*" that He, who was from all eternity the "*only Begotten*", might be "*the Firstborn among many brethren.*"

To that end individuals are called by grace divine, justified by faith sublime on the basis of a redemption accomplished and applied with a view to ultimate glorification, which is as certain as the foreknowledge of God.

A Wonderful Sense of Security for the Saint
Romans 8:31-39

31 What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?

32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth.

34 Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation [trouble], or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword [war]?

36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

38 For I am persuaded [persuaded], that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

8:31-39 The chapter began with no condemnation and ends with no separation. What more could the heart want by way of divine reassurance that all shall be well with the soul?

“No condemnation; blessed is the word
No separation; forever with the Lord,
By His blood He bought us, cleansed our every stain;
With rapture now we’ll praise Him.
The Lamb for sinners slain.”

J. Denham Smith

Leader's Study Guide

Romans 8

Review

1. Why cannot the flesh find a way to please God?

Answer

By nature the flesh has only self-interest. The flesh can only be consistent with its nature just as the Spirit can only be consistent with His nature which is holiness.

2. Define the word, "*mortify*." How does the concept of mortification of sin apply to the Christian?

Answer

The word "*mortify*" means to put to death or to render inoperative. The believer has a holy responsibility to put those deeds to death which are contrary to the known will of God. Only through the power of the Spirit is it possible for mortification of sin to take place.

3. What are the links in the golden chain of salvation that binds the believer to God?

Answer

"*Abba, Father*" are words of endearment and teach that the believer has a wonderful privilege of being on intimate terms with God.

4. What do the words "*Abba, Father*" mean in context?

Answer

The Christian values the Spirit that has adopted or placed him into the family of God. There is a natural desire to cry, "*Abba (Papa), Father*" as Jesus did in the Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:36).

5. List the links in the golden chain of salvation.

Answer.

The links in the golden chain of salvation are noted.

- **Foreknowledge.** "*For whom he did foreknow...*"
- **Predestination.** "*He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*"

- **Calling.** “Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called”.
 - **Justification.** “And whom he called, them he also justified.”
 - **Glorification.** “And whom he justified, them he also glorified.”
6. List nine entities that will not separate the believer from the love of God

Answer

The nine entities that will not separate the believer from the love of God are noted.

- Death.
- Life.
- Angels.
- Principalities or powers (demonic angels)
- Things present.
- Things to come,
- Height.
- Depth
- Any other creature.

Reflection

1. What are some fleshly methods by which Christians try to gain victory over sin?
2. If you are not familiar with Twelve Step Programs offered by organizations such as AA (Alcoholics Anonymous) take time to discover what they are and evaluate them. How do they compare and contrast with the teaching of Paul in Romans 7-8?
3. Write a paragraph on the difference between faith and fantasy or wishful thinking in relation to the death of the reign of sin in the life of the believer.
4. In Romans 8: 9, Paul writes, “*Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*” In light of this do you think it would be possible for *Old Testaments* believers not to be indwelt by the Holy Spirit? Explain.
5. Is the believer active or passive in the process of sanctification?

Personal Application

1. Do you try to mortify sin in your life? What besetting sin do you struggle with?
2. Do you love Jesus? Do you ever call God, “Abba”?
3. Can you testify that God has worked all things together for good in your life?
4. Do you understand the doctrine of predestination and election? Do you appreciate and love the doctrines of grace or does your heart react in a negative way against them?
5. Do you believe that nothing and no one shall ever separate you from God’s love?

Memory Work

Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 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. 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. 31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

Romans 9

The Place of Israel in the Plan of God *Romans 9-10-11*

1 I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,

2 That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.

3 For I could wish that myself were accursed [cut off] from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:

9:1-3 Having set forth the great doctrines of human bondage and divine deliverance from the power and pollution of sin the apostle turns attention to the place of Israel in the plan of God. Paul's willingness to address this subject was based on his great love for his kinsmen as Moses also loved his brethren (Ex. 32:31-32). But there was another reason. The apostle knew that many godly Jews in Rome were concerned as they watched national Israel reject Christ as Messiah and Savior. What fate awaited such horrendous national behavior? In Romans 9 Paul will address God's past relationship with Israel. In Romans 10 he will write of God's present dealings with Israel in the form of divine discipline. In Romans 11 the future of Israel will be considered.

4 Who are Israelites; to whom *pertaineth* the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service *of God*, and the promises;

5 Whose *are* the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ *came*, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

9:4-5 The agony of Paul's soul was intense because the apostle understood how great were the privileges his brethren had historically. He mentions several great privileges associated with national Israel.

- Israel had the adoption of God (Ex. 4:22, 23).
- Israel had the Shekinah glory.
- Israel had the covenant (Gen. 22:16-18)
- Israel had the Law (Ex 20).
- Israel had the services of the Aaronic and Levitical priesthood
- Israel had the promises (Num. 24:15-19; Isa. 53:49)
- Israel had the fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
- Israel had the Messiah

6 Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they *are* not all Israel, which are of Israel:

9:6 Into the divine narrative Paul is led to make a sudden and dramatic distinction between religious Israel, racial Israel and regenerate Israel by teaching that not all Israel is Israel.

7 Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, *are they* all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.

9:7 Over the centuries the Jews had promoted among themselves the idea they were a racially superior nation because of their great spiritual privileges and because they had Abraham as their father. However, simply being of the physical seed of Abraham did not automatically make individuals the children of God. The descendants of Ishmael came from the seed of Abraham, but they were not the children of God. The reason? They were not of divine promise. They were children of the flesh.

8 That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these *are* not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

9 For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son.

9:8-9 In the divine economy the way Ishmael came into the world is considered to be fleshly. God had promised Abraham a child but, growing impatient, Sarah gave her handmaiden to Abraham who conceived the child Ishmael. The problem was God had promised that Abraham and Sarah would have a son according to promise. Ishmael was not the product of promise but the child of the flesh. Only the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

10 And not only *this*; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac;

9:10 There is something more. The children of God are not only those who are according to promise but those who are chosen according to the election of grace illustrated in the lives of the twin boys Esau and Jacob.

11 (For *the children* being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)

12 It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.

13 As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

9:11-13 The election of individuals to be the children of God is according to the Lord's own sovereign choice, a choice which has nothing to do with race nor personal merit or ability. For example, before Esau or Jacob were born God made His choice of who would serve whom and which individual would be the object of His special love. The reason for the divine selection prior to the birth of the children or the lives they would lead was so the principle of sovereign grace might be established. Had God based His decision on merit He might have chosen Esau for Jacob was a scheming man out to make himself rich at the expense of others. Then one night by the babbling brook of Jabbok he met the Lord and became the object of redeeming grace.

“Marvelous grace of our loving Lord,
Grace that exceeds our sin and our guilt,
Yonder on Calvary's mount outpoured,
There where the blood of the Lamb was spilt.

Grace, grace, God's grace,
Grace that will pardon
and cleanse within;
Grace, grace, God's grace,
Grace that is greater than all our sin.”

Julia H. Johnson

Election is “*not of works, but of Him that calleth.*”

14 What shall we say then? *Is there* unrighteousness with God? God forbid.

9:14 If the doctrine of election with a view to service and salvation sounds intrinsically unfair, it is not, as Paul asserts. God is not unrighteous. Indeed, such a thought is unworthy of Him. The doctrine of election is rooted in righteousness and in the absolute sovereignty of God over His creation, a point to which the heart must bow in humble submission.

15 For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion [pity] 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.

17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.

18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will *have mercy*, and whom he will he hardeneth.

9:17-18 To impress upon the heart the absolute sovereignty of God in the matter of election to service and / or salvation, Paul brings to the forefront the plight of Pharaoh, the mighty monarch of the Exodus Generation. Pharaoh thought that he was the ruler of millions and the ultimate master of the multitudes. Pharaoh thought he could treat his subjects in any manner that he pleased. Proud Pharaoh thought he held life and death in his hands. If he wanted to practice ethnic cleansing, he would do just that. The royal order was given. (Exodus 1:8-22) The Hebrew male children were to be murdered, but of one baby in particular God said in His secret counsel (Deuteronomy 29:29), “*Touch him not*”, and Moses was spared. Time passed and truth crystallized: Pharaoh’s free will was subject to the Sovereign will of God. “*For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy and whom he will he hardeneth*” (Romans 9:17, 18).

19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?

9:19 Despite the sovereignty of God, the Lord still holds individuals responsible for their attitude and actions—just as parents who bring children into the world hold them responsible for their attitude and actions. The question comes “*Why doth He yet find fault? For who hath resisted His will?*” (Romans 9:19). To the fleshly heart there is a sense of frustration, to be told that God is sovereign and yet individuals are still held accountable for what they say and do.

20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed *it*, Why hast thou made me thus?

21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?

9:20-21 The rhetorical questions contain their own answers. The divine position is that God has the right to hold His creation to whatever level of accountability He chooses. Discussion ends at that point for, “*Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?*” (Romans 9:20b-21)

22 *What* if God, willing to shew [demonstrate] *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,

9:22-23 Though God does make vessels according to promise as in the case of Isaac, fit for service as in the life of Jacob and fit for destruction illustrated by Pharaoh, He is also pleased to make many vessels to display His mercy in order to make known His glory. In fact, the greatness of the glory of God is best revealed against the black backdrop of sin. Humans would never know anything about grace if it were not for sin and the agony of the Savior. We would never know anything about mercy and infinite love apart from sin. The angels do not know about mercy and grace, which is one reason why they are curious about the actions associated with salvation. (1 Pet. 1:12)

24 Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

25 As he saith also in Osee [Hosea], I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved.

26 And it shall come to pass, *that* in the place where it was said unto them, Ye *are* not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.

9:24-26 Those who are the heirs of salvation are a privileged people. What a blessing it is for Gentiles to understand something about the, "*riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory*" (Romans 9:23). What a privilege it is for Gentiles to be united with the spiritual remnant of elect Jews (Romans 9:27-29) in order to discover a righteousness that was never sought.

27 Esaias [Isaiah] also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved:

28 For he will finish the work, and cut *it* short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.

29 And as Esaias [Isaiah] said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha.

30 What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.

31 But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.

32 Wherefore? Because *they sought it* not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone;

33 As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling stone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

9:27-33

Only sovereign grace has made it possible for the Gentiles, who never sought the Lord, to be converted.

Only sovereign grace has made it possible for a remnant of Jews from a privileged nation that became offended at the Messiah to remain alive in order to be saved with a view to serving God.

Only sovereign grace has kept stumbling souls from the second death (Rev. 20:6).

Only sovereign grace has devised a system of salvation so that, “*whosoever believeth on him [Christ] shall not be ashamed*” (Romans 9:33).

To every person who comes under the sound of the gospel the divine command is given with promise. Believe on Christ and you will never be ashamed. Believe on Christ and you will know you are numbered among the elect. (Acts 16:31; 1 Thessalonians 1:4).

Leader's Study Guide

Romans 9

Review

1. List eight great spiritual privileges associated with national Israel.

Answer

Paul notes eight great privileges associated with national Israel.

- Israel had the adoption of God (Ex. 4:22, 23).
- Israel had the Shekinah glory.
- Israel had the covenant (Gen. 22:16-18)
- Israel had the Law (Ex 20).
- Israel had the services of the Aaronic and Levitical priesthood
- Israel had the promises (Num. 24:15-19; Isa. 53:49)
- Israel had the fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
- Israel had the Messiah

2. What did Paul mean when he said that not all Israel is Israel?

Answer

Paul was teaching there is a religious, racial and regenerate Israel. Only those who have the faith of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are to be considered the children of promise and the true regenerate and spiritual "*Israel*" of God.

3. Whom does Paul use to illustrate the doctrine of election?

Answer

Isaac was chosen over Ishmael, Jacob was chosen over Esau and Pharaoh was raised up to demonstrate the power of God.

4. List the two great questions of concern that are raised and answered by Paul in Romans 9.

Answer

The two following questions of concern were raised and answered by the apostle.

- Is there unrighteousness with God? (Rom. 9:14)
- Why does God yet find fault? (Rom. 9:19)

5. How can a person know if God has chosen them for service and / or salvation?

Answer

There is a divine promise associated with Acts 16:31. "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.* "

Reflection

1. Why do you think the doctrine of election to service and or salvation has been and is such a controversial topic among Christians (Luke 4:25-29)?
2. Do you believe people have a right to question God in the outworking of His will? Why or why not?
3. Are you emotionally comfortable with the doctrine of election? If so why and if not, why not?
4. Did Paul answer the questions of concern fully or do you wish he would have said more? Cite the verses you would like more information on.
5. If you could visit with Paul about the doctrine of election, what question would you like to ask him, if any? Make a list of your questions.

Personal Application

1. Do you believe you are among the elect of God? What is the evidence?
2. What is your response to the doctrine of election?
3. Write out your personal testimony of how you came to salvation.
4. Why do you think so many people get angry at the doctrine of election?
5. In Romans 9:22-23 Paul teaches that God is willing to show His wrath in order to make His other attribute of power known. Paul also teaches that God has suffered long with the vessels of wrath in order to manifest the riches of His glory on those who will be the heirs of salvation. What is your mental and emotional response to this teaching?

Memory Work

Romans 9:14 What shall we say then? 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.

Romans 10

God's Present Dealing with Israel *Romans 10:1-21*

1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal [religious devotion] of God, but not according to knowledge.

10:1 The heart of every Christian should desire to see souls saved. Proverbs 11:30 says, "*The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise*"

3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish [secure] their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

10:3 The term "*God's righteousness*" is used in contrast to the "*righteousness of God*" The "*righteousness of God*" refers to God's consistency with Himself in ministering the affairs of the universe. God is holy, just and good. He does all things well. In the area of salvation God is the Justifier of those who put their faith in Jesus Christ. He can do this because the question of sin has been settled in a righteous way, as the nature of God demanded that it should be. Sin was not "*winked at*" or passed over but was judged at the Cross according to the principle of righteousness. All of that is as it should be.

However, Paul declares that the Jews were ignorant of "*God's righteousness*", which means they did not comprehend just how righteous God really is in His own essence. As a result they went about to establish their own righteousness. This is without doubt the most serious charge Paul levels against the Jews for it touches the essence of sin which is unbelief. Lucifer did not believe he was inferior to God and decided he would be like the Most High (Isa. 14: 12-15). Adam and Eve did not believe God when He told them the day they ate of the forbidden fruit they would die (Gen. 2:17).

The Jews did not believe God would justify the guilty on the principle of grace and so moved to establish their own righteousness thereby forcing God to accept them on their terms. They did not submit to gospel terms in order to receive forgiveness for sins by expressing faith in Christ. But they should have for Christ is the consummation of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.

4 For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

10 4 By these words Paul teaches that Christ is the goal of the Law in the sense that all of the moral obligations of the Law are fulfilled in Him. Certainly Jesus did not come to violate the Law but to fulfill it, which He did perfectly. (Matt. 5:17; John 8:46)

Second, Christ is the end of the Law's antitypes. In the Old Testament many sacrifices and offerings were established to teach some spiritual facet of the coming Messiah. In particular there was the Burnt Offering, the Meat Offering, the Peace Offering, the Sin Offering, and the Trespass Offering. (Study book of Leviticus) In Christ, all of the types find fulfillment. This then, is the gospel for the salvation of the sinner. Jesus was sacrificed, according to the *Scriptures*. The Lord died a substitutionary death. Christ was buried, and God raised Him from the dead. There remaineth now no more sacrifice for sin. (Heb. 10:118) Christ is the end of the Law in this matter so that the saint can say,

“No blood, no altar now,
The sacrifice is o’er;
No flame, no smoke ascends on high,
The lamb is slain no more.”

Third, as Christ is the goal of the Law and the end of all antitypes, so in Him the Law terminates. The Law holds no binding authority over the believer as a rule of life ceremonially or socially. Christ has terminated it. Now the believer fulfills the righteousness of the Law by walking in the sphere of the Spirit in the newness of life. What was once written on stones is written in the heart. (Heb. 10:16)

5 For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.

10:5 Having established the fact that Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone that believeth, (Romans 10:4) the apostle presses his point by drawing a contrast between Legal Righteousness and Gospel Grace. “Moses”, said Paul, “*describeth the righteousness which is of the Law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them*” (Romans 10:5). One passage that Paul may have had in mind by referring to Moses was Deuteronomy 30:10-16. In that passage the commandments and statutes of the Lord are set forth with the injunction to love God, walk in His ways, keep His Law, and live. But therein lies the problem. Who can ever do all that the Law demands? Who can live? Many have sincerely tried to obey the Law. Many have tried to do good in order to earn or merit eternal life. Many had a zeal for God through legal righteousness, but there was no one who could abide by the Law perfectly. What then is to be done? If legal righteousness cannot be obtained, is there another righteousness that can be found? The answer is, yes! There is a righteousness of Faith.

6 But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (That is, to bring Christ down *from above* :)

7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (That is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)

8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

10:6-9 What characterizes the righteousness of faith? Good works of another nature? No. “*Say not in thine heart, ‘Who shall ascend into heaven? (That is, to bring Christ down from above :) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (That is, to bring up Christ again from the dead)’*” (Romans 10:6, 7). The righteousness of faith is not found by going forth to personally bring Christ from heaven to earth nor by bringing Him back from the dead—that would be works. But what saith the righteousness of faith? “*The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach*” (Romans 10:8). What is the word of faith? It is the gospel that is proclaimed! And this is the gospel, “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved” (Romans 10:9).

10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

10:10 The word “*confess*” is a very important word. In the first century, to confess Christ meant a willingness to honor Jesus before a watching world which hated Him. Both Judaism and Rome felt threatened by the Lord and His followers. For the Jews, if Christ was the Messiah, then the Jewish leaders had done a horrible thing in delivering their King to be crucified. Moreover, if the Law really did end in Christ as the new theology taught, then the sacrificial system should cease. But a sudden termination of the sacrifices and offerings would disrupt the economy of the Temple, and that could not be allowed to happen.

The Roman concerns were far different than the Jewish interests. It was widely believed that the ultimate bonding of the empire relied upon a social recognition that Caesar was master or lord. To deny Caesar was lord was to unleash the forces of lawlessness and anarchy as individuals struggled with whom would be master of the multitudes.

Therefore, patriotism demanded that honor be paid to Caesar in a special way. This, the Christians refused to do. They would confess no one to be their Lord or Master except Jesus.

To confess Christ was to publicly declare allegiance to Him in a hostile world. Confession of Christ was not something that was done in the safety of a religious ceremony; rather, it was done in the market places of the masses on a daily basis.

11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

10:11-13 Paul assures the Roman Christians that confessing Christ and believing that God raised Him from the dead brings salvation. *“Thou shalt be saved” (Romans 10:9).*

Salvation, what a lovely word that is though it is no longer valued very highly. Time has passed. We are living in a generation that no longer asks, *“What must I do to be saved?”* but, *“What must I do to be happy?”* While it is happiness that men seek after, it is salvation that they need.

Now those who do seek for salvation, those who do confess Christ openly will never be ashamed for whether Jew or Gentile the same Lord will rule over both. Whosoever comes to Christ will be saved (Romans 10:11-13).

The only issue remaining for individuals to determine is whether or not they will call upon Christ or try to be saved according to legal righteousness. The choice is real. Either a system of salvation by works resulting in Legal Righteousness will be pursued or the Righteousness of Faith will be followed after. In deciding between the two, it must be said once more that Legal Righteousness based upon the Law will never be obtained and the Law itself is weak and inadequate to help.

“Run and live! The Law commands
But gives me neither legs nor hands.
Yet better means the Gospel brings,
It bids me fly and gives me wings.”

Come to Christ by the Faith of Righteousness. Believe on the Lord Jesus for salvation for, *“If ever man was God, or God was man, Jesus Christ was both” (Lord George Byron).*

As the God-Man, Christ can help as no one else. Great moral teachers cannot save. Confucius confessed, *“How dare I lay claim to holiness or love; a man of endless cravings who never tires of teaching, I might be called, but nothing more.”*

Great religious leaders cannot help. The grave of Mohammed can still be visited today. But the grave of Christ is empty. He is a risen Savior. Call upon Him, and you will never be ashamed in time or in eternity for you will stand clothed in His perfect righteousness—by faith. To call upon Christ means to believe.

To call upon Christ means that you say, *“Lord, help me. Lord, save me from the penalty, the power and the pollution of sin. I do believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I do believe that God has raised you from the dead. I do believe that you and you alone are Lord. Amen.”*

14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?

15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

10:14-15 Having made a dramatic distinction between the legal righteousness of the Law that cannot save and the righteousness of faith that produces salvation, the apostle continues his reasonable inquiry regarding the way of redemption. Several rhetorical questions are raised resulting in specific conclusions that may be summarized.

- Every sinner must *call* upon the Lord Jesus Christ and recognize Him as Lord in order to be saved.
- No one can call upon Christ unless they *believe* in Him.
- Belief in Christ is impossible without *hearing* about Him.
- Hearing about Christ cannot take place unless the message of the gospel is *preached*.
- The message and the messenger must be divinely *sent* if sinners are to be saved.

Concerning the matter of the messenger being sent, Jerome (c. AD 345-419), one of the great Bible teachers of the early church observed that there are several classes of ministers.

First, there are individuals who have been sent directly from God such as the prophets and the apostles.

Second, there are individuals sent by God but through men. The church has commissioned these individuals because the local assembly believes that God has honored their ministry in a special way. Barnabas might fall into this category as well as Timothy.

Then third, there are those who are sent by men but not by God. This is the professional minister who sees the ministry as a career choice and not as a divine calling.

To this group another classification could be made according to 2 Corinthians 11:14-15. There are those who are sent by Satan. They are preachers of righteousness but they are ultimately servants of the Wicked One.

Despite false ministers, those who have been sent are happy to proclaim the gospel. They set forth the fundamental character of the gospel as well as its terms knowing that it will have different effects on different people. Someone has said the gospel of the sovereign grace of God *makes sinners mad; it makes the saints glad; and it makes pretenders mad*. How true that is. The gospel reveals sin—and that makes sinners mad. The gospel brings assurance of salvation—and that makes the saints glad. And the gospel makes pretenders mad—by stressing free grace and not free will.

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

17 So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

10:16-17 Those who hear the gospel preached are under a divine injunction to respond in a positive manner by faith. It is faith that saves the soul. But how does one get such saving faith? The divine answer is, “*by hearing the word of God. ‘Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God’ (Romans 10:17).*”

Mr. Spurgeon liked to say, “*Faith cannot be washed into us by immersion. It cannot be sprinkled upon us at a christening. It is not to be poured into us from a chalice. It is not generated in us by a consecrated piece of bread. Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*”

As the *Bible* is read, Faith leads the soul to the Garden of Eden to experience once more the Fall. As the gospel is heard Faith leads the soul to the Garden of Gethsemane where Christ prayed with blood and sweat and tears. Faith takes the soul by the hand and leads it to Calvary and says, “*Here is your Lord and your God. Believe.*” By faith the soul is able to say, “*I believe.*”

“Before the Cross in awe I stood,
Beholding brow and pierced hand;
For me it was He bled and died,
No other price for sin beside
Could pay the price for me.

His precious blood, there flowing red,
Was love’s best gift, most freely shed;
No one but He the price could pay,
Or save from death and point the way
For sinners, you and me.

And as I gaze, I seem to hear
Him gently say, My son, draw near;
New life I give and power withal,
Free unto all who on Me call,
Now and eternally.”

Ernest O. Sellers

18 But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.

19 But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by *them that* are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you.

20 But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me.

21 But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.

10:18-21 Because God will save all that call upon Christ, Israel is without excuse. *“Have they not heard?”* Yes, Israel has heard the gospel. *“Verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world”* (Psa. 19:4 cf. Matt. 24:14; Mark 16:15; Romans 1:8; Col. 1:6, 23)

“Did not Israel know?” Yes, Israel knew the gospel according to Moses and the prophets.

First, Moses saith, *“I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you”* (Romans 10:19 cf. Deuteronomy 32:21).

And Isaiah boldly said, *“I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me”* (Romans 10:11 cf. Isa. 65:1).

So Israel knew that God would one day exalt the Gentiles and entrust to them the gospel so that the entire world, including Israel, would be without excuse.

Israel knew the gospel, Israel heard the gospel, but Israel rejected all the incessant expressions of unwearied mercy that was extended. *“But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying [contrary] people”* (Romans 10:21 cf. Isa. 65:2).

It is difficult to stretch out one’s hands for even a few minutes let alone a whole day. Yet God says that He has stretched out His hands for a long, long while. Though Israel rejected the outstretched hands of God, we must not.

At Calvary, God stretched out His hands once more in the person of His Son in order to express the extent of His great love and mercy. Believe on Christ and receive Him as Lord and Savior. There will be no excuse for not doing that in the day of divine judgment.

Leader's Study Guide

Romans 10

Review

1. What is the distinction between “*God’s righteousness*” and “*the righteousness of God*”?

Answer

The “*righteousness of God*” refers to God’s consistency with Himself in ministering the affairs of the universe. It is directed externally. In contrast the term, “*God’s righteousness*” refers to just how righteous God really is in His own essence. It is directed internally.

2. List three meanings to the concept that Christ is the end of the law.

Answer

Christ being the end of the law includes three concepts.

- First, Christ is the goal of the Law in the sense that all of the moral obligations of the Law are fulfilled in Him.
- Second, Christ is the end of the Law’s antitypes found in the sacrifices and symbols of the Old Testament.
- As Christ is the goal of the Law and the end of all antitypes, so in Him the Law terminates.

3. What honor has the Lord given to preaching?

Answer

The divine means for receiving faith is to give attention to the *Word*. Romans 10:17 explains how “*faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*”

4. What is the divine means of receiving faith?

Answer

God has given great honor to those who minister the gospel. Those who are called to preach are declared to have “*beautiful feet*” in appreciation for the gospel they bring to souls struggling with sin and secret shame. *Romans 10:15* “*And how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!*”

5. What is the “*word of faith*” of Romans 10:8?

Answer

What is the word of faith? It is the gospel that is proclaimed! And this is the gospel, “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved” (Romans 10:9).

Reflection

1. What specific steps can you take to become a better soul winner for Christ?
2. Have you ever won any one to Christ and heard them call upon the Lord? If so please write a testimony of a soul winning moment.
3. How can you increase your own faith?
4. According to the words of Romans 10:18 is it possible that the gospel has already gone “*into all the world?*” What are the implications of that concept?
5. Which verse in Romans 10 speaks of the patience and longsuffering of God and what does that say to your heart? Was God, is God, long-suffering and patient with you?

Personal Application

1. Do you believe God has called you into full time special service such as being a pastor, evangelist or a missionary? If so, how did this call come about? What can the average Christian do to promote the gospel?
2. How do you confess Christ before others?
3. In the margin of your Bible write the following verses as a chain reference in order to be able to present the gospel and lead someone to a saving knowledge of Christ. Begin with Romans 3:10.
 - *Romans 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:*
 - *Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*
 - *Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*
 - *Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*
 - *Romans 10:9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

4. How strong is your faith? Give a specific example of how you have had to trust in the Lord. What was the result?
5. Have you been, are you now disobedient to any facet of the gospel? If so, what are you doing that you should not be doing?

Memory Work

Romans 10:17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Romans 11

The Relationship of God to Israel in the Future Romans 11:1- 36

1 I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, *of the tribe of Benjamin.*

11:1 As the apostle continues his line of reasoning in Romans 11, he asks a rhetorical question that demands a negative answer. "*Hath God cast away His people?*" The proper response is an emphatic, "*No! God has not cast away His people.*"

Paul is a personal testimony that racial Jews can become spiritual Jews by having the same faith as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. "*For I **also** am an Israelite of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin*" (Romans 11:1). As a regenerate Jew, Paul is not alone. He is just one of an elect remnant of grace that includes Simeon (Luke 2:25-35), Anna (Luke 2:36-40), Nicodemus (John 3:121), Joseph of Arimathea (Matt. 27:57-60), and many more. Racial Jews in every generation are being and shall be saved until the end of time. *God hath not cast away His people which He foreknew.* (Romans 11:2)

The repetition of the words "*His people*" is important to note because the scripture is very careful to define what is meant by *His people*. The "*people*" of God are those whom He foreknows (Romans 11:2 cf. 8:28-30; John 8:27, 28), that is "*on whom, from the foundation of the world, He had set His love. He had made them the object of His special delight, a delight beginning in eternity, continuing in connection with their conception and birth, and never leaving them*" (Romans, William Hendriksen). Because God has foreknown Israel, souls shall be saved.

2 God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? How he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying,

3 Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.

4 But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to *the image* of Baal.

11:2-4 Additional proof for a present keeping of a spiritual elect of national Israel is found in the historical preservation of just such a group. The apostle argues that a parallel to the situation in the first century could be found in the time of Elijah. Having defeated the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, Elijah entered into a period of personal depression when word reached him that Jezebel sought his life. Suddenly filled with fear Elijah cried out to God saying, "*I am alone and they seek my life*" (Romans 11:3b cf. 1 Kin. 19:10, 14, 18).

But Elijah was not alone for, “*what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.*” The point becomes crystal clear. “*Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace (Romans 11:5).* Within the nation of Israel in the first century, there was still, “*the election of grace*”. God had preserved faithful followers before in Israel He would do so again.

5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

6 And if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded

8 (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day.

11:5-8 While national Israel has never obtained that for which she has sought—an election based upon the righteousness of good works—there is a spiritual election according to the righteousness of grace (Romans 11:5-7). The remnant which have been elected according to the righteousness of grace has been allowed to see the glorious gospel of Christ while the rest of the Jews have been blinded to gospel truth. Who has blinded Israel? God Himself has administered this judicial judgment. (Romans 11:8 cf. Isa. 29:10,13; Deuteronomy 29:3,4; Isa. 6:9; Matt. 13:13; John 12:40; Acts 28:26,27)

9 And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling block, and a recompence unto them:

10 Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.

11: 9-10 David, who prayed that God would destroy his own enemies, anticipated the presence of a divine judgment upon national Israel in a Messianic sense. (Romans 11:9, 10 cf. Psa. 69) The point is established: when national Israel rejected God’s way of salvation by grace and entered into a system of salvation by works (Romans 11:7a) God rejected national Israel—but not totally. With tender mercy the Lord set His affection upon some and drew those individuals to Himself as a remnant of grace. The rest were blinded by God (Romans 11:7b) so that individuals might realize that, “*When men are saved they are saved by the sovereign grace of God, and when they perish, it is by the appointment of God, (Jude 4), through their own fault*” (Romans, Robert Haldane).

No Final Fall
Romans 11:11-12

11 I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but *rather* through their fall salvation *is come* unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.

12 Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fullness?

11:11-12 The first words of Romans 11:11, “*I say then,*” are the same ones used in Romans 11:1. The apostle uses this language to introduce a new section showing that the stumbling of Israel *as a nation* is not a final fall. In fact, the present remnant of a spiritual Israel serves as an earnest or down payment that the best is yet to come.

So strongly does Paul feel about this topic that he uses a strong expression to stop any thinking that the stumbling of Israel has resulted in a fatal future. “*God forbid,*” he says that such a concept should be considered.

What then is the purpose of Israel’s stumbling? It is this: “*through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, to provoke them to jealousy*” (Romans 11:11).

Two grand objectives are achieved through the fall of national Israel from the place of prominence in the visible plan of God.

First, there is a greater manifestation of Gentile salvation and, second, the Jewish nation is stirred up to jealousy as they see spiritual and material blessings being poured out upon the Gentiles—according to grace. (Note a historical case of jealousy in Esau, (Genesis 28:69))

Being stirred up, Paul believes the Jews will want to share in the grace of God. Matthew Henry hears the Jews asking themselves, “*Shall the despised Gentiles run away with all the comforts and privileges of the gospel, and shall not we repent of our refusal, and now at last put in for a share? Shall not we believe and obey, and be pardoned and saved, as well as the Gentiles?*”

13 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:

14 If by any means I may provoke to emulation [jealousy] *them which are* my flesh, and might save some of them.

15 For if the casting away [rejection] of them be the reconciling of the world, what *shall* the receiving of *them be*, but life from the dead?

11: 13-15 Lest the Gentiles be puffed up with their own spiritual pride at the unexpected blessings of God, Paul has something to say to them as an apostle and as a pastor. (Romans 11:13) First, Paul wants everyone to know that it is still his intense desire to provoke his kinsmen according to the flesh to jealousy that some of them might be saved (Romans 11:14). Paul feels he can do this best by continuing to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. (Study Acts 18:6; 22:21; Romans 1:5; 15:15,16; Gal. 2:2,8; Ephesians 3:1, 8; 1 Tim. 2:7; 2 Tim. 4:17). So while he ministers to the Gentiles Paul hopes that some Jews might be saved. This hope was not without merit for it was grounded in God's promise that a remnant of Israel would be saved.

Second, Paul wants the Gentiles to understand that if national Israel is cast away in order that the world of the Gentiles might come to faith, that casting aside will not be final nor fatal. Indeed, the receiving of the Jews back into the Redemptive Plan of God based upon conversion is nothing but *life from the dead* for them. (Romans 11:15 cf. Isa. 26:16-19)

16 For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump *is* also *holy*: and if the root be holy, so *are* the branches.

17 And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness [strength] of the olive tree;

18 Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.

11:16-18 Two illustrations are used to further encourage the belief that Jews will be saved and received into the Church.

Firstfruit. The first illustration is that of the first fruits. The apostle argues that "*if the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy*" (Romans 11:16). The historical reference is to the Jewish practice at harvest time of offering a sheaf (or cake) to the Lord on the second day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. (Lev. 23:10, 11 cf. Num. 15:19, 21) This token offering acknowledged that the Lord was the ultimate owner of all the land's resources. The first fruits in particular belonged to Him but so did the rest of the ingathering. It was "*holy*" [i.e., consecrated] to Him. Paul's point is that if the *first fruit* be holy (the separation unto God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), the lump (the covenantal promises) sanctified the rest of the produce and so some souls will be saved. But only some will come to faith. "*Though he [Paul] was such a powerful preacher, [though he] spoke and wrote with such evidence and demonstration of the Spirit, yet of the many he dealt with he could but save some*" (Matthew Henry).

Holy root. Not only is the lump holy, which produced the "*first fruit*", but next, the apostle argues, "*if the root be holy, so are the branches*" (Romans 11:16b). The root to which Paul refers is the covenantal promise made to Abraham of a spiritual seed. Matthew Henry notes that it is "*Not the root of communication, so Christ only is the root, but the root of administration, He being the first with whom the covenant was so solemnly made*" (Genesis 12:17).

The branches are the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (Romans 11:28) Though some of the natural branches are broken off, some spiritual branches shall yet be grafted into their own olive tree. (Romans 11:24)

19 Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.

20 Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:

21 For if God spared not the natural branches, *take heed* lest he also spare not thee.

22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in *his* goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

23 And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again.

11: 19-23 There are two questions that need to be considered.

First Question. *“When shall the natural branches [of individual Jews] be grafted in again to enjoy the root and fatness of the olive tree?” (Romans 11:17b).*

Answer. Immediately. At the present hour! Right now! From the moment of apostolic writing to the present hour.

Second Question. *“How is that response established? How can someone be certain that even now Jews will come to faith?”*

Answer. When Paul wrote to the Romans, God had already rejected Israel as a spiritually special nation.

The reply of Christ to the disciples in Acts 1:69 was practically an admission that national Israel was in some sense no longer part of the covenant.

Though an exact moment of Israel’s Divine Rejection may not be pinpointed, the Divine Repulse was certainly anticipated during the earthly ministry of Christ. (Matt. 21:43) Following the resurrection, the Lord told His disciples to preach the gospel to all the nations of the earth. (Matt. 28:19-20) The Divine Rejection of Israel probably took place the day Christ was killed (Luke 19:41-44). Everything was different on the other side of Calvary.

The significant point is that when Paul wrote *The Epistle to the Romans* (c. AD 56-58) he was dealing with a present situation. In the Divine Economy, God had already officially cut off Israel as a nation to be entrusted with the gospel. Proclamation of the kingdom of heaven had been given to the Gentiles who were responding en masse to Christ thereby provoking the Jews to jealousy.

However, if the Gentiles did not continue to persevere in the goodness of God, if the Gentiles started to boast, God would not spare them either. They too would be cut off (Romans 11:21).

Furthermore, if Israel stopped abiding in unbelief, they would be grafted back in to the root of righteousness they had recently been cut off from, *for God is able to graft them in.* (Romans 11:23)

24 For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural *branches*, be grafted into their own olive tree?

11:24 To summarize the situation, in context Paul has been speaking about the rejection of ethnic Israel. He has said that Israel's repulse is neither total nor final for certain promises were made to the fathers that shall still be honored. Some Jews shall yet be saved. The evidence that God will honor His word of a spiritual seed to the patriarchs is reflected in the apostle's own salvation and the fact that if any Jew would stop abiding in unbelief they would be grafted back into the olive tree as a natural branch (Romans 11:23). While God is dealing with Israel, the Gentiles must not boast of their new spiritual privileges for if they, "*were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these [individual Jews], which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree*" (Romans 11:24).

25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.

11:25 In the discussion of these great concerns, there is a great mystery that Paul does not want the Gentiles to be ignorant of. The mystery is that "*blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in*" (Romans 11:25). The term *mystery* (Gk. *mysterion*) does not refer to something that cannot be comprehended or understood, but something that has been kept secret, either in whole, or for the most part, in order to be presently revealed. (Romans 16:25; 1 Cor. 2:7-10; Ephesians 1:9, 10; 3:36, 9, 10). Paul wants the Church of Rome to openly know that the present spiritual state of Israel is not their final condition. Their blindness is only *in part*. It will not last forever nor is it complete.

They will be grafted into the Redemptive Plan of God because the Lord will bring about a restoration of His people to favor based upon regeneration. Until the day of Divine restoration blindness [lit. hardness] “*in part is happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in Romans 11:25*. The word for hardness speaks of callousness or dullness. The Jews are under a Divine judicial hardening of the heart until all the Gentiles who have been ordained to eternal life come to faith in Christ. As soon as that full Gentile complement (*pleroma*) has come in, God will change His dealings once more with the Jews and so all Israel shall be saved (Romans 11:26).

26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:

27 For this *is* my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.

11:26-27 The diversity of scholarly opinion in understanding this section by godly commentators should lead all Bible students to guard against two extremes. The first extreme is to build a system of theology in which national Israel and *not* the Church is the focal point of interest and love (Ephesians 5:23-27). The other extreme is to reject the possibility that national Israel may yet have a new role in its own redemptive history.

What is certain is that all of the elect of all the ages shall be saved for the Divine Deliverer has come according to promise to *turn away ungodliness from Jacob* (Romans 11:26). What is also certain is that Israel did not recognize her King when He came.

The story is told of the good monarch King George V of England (1865-1936) who one day decided to visit a children’s hospital. The young people were told of his coming but not all understood just what it meant or even what the king looked like. About 4:00 p.m. a rather plain looking gentleman made his way through the wards talking to the patients and then he left. When the visitor was gone and no one else came after a while, one little boy dared to ask the nurse when the *king* was coming. *But the king did come*, was the reply. Don’t you remember the nice gentleman who patted you on the head and spoke kindly to you and everyone else on the ward. The little boy’s eyes grew big as he remembered the man. That was the king! he exclaimed. But he didn’t have his crown on! When Jesus came as the Suffering Messiah to Israel, He didn’t have His royal crown on in a visible manner and so the nation did not recognize her King. As a result, with wicked hands they took and killed their Sovereign.

“Hath He diadem as monarch
that His brow adorned?
Yea, a crown in very surety,
but of thorns.”

28 As concerning the gospel, *they are* enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, *they are* beloved for the fathers' sakes.

29 For the gifts and calling of God *are* without repentance.

11:28-29 Having killed Christ, having been placed under judicial discipline by God, Israel in general and the Israelites in particular became the enemies of Christ, and enemies of the gospel message. (Romans 11:28a cf. Phil. 3:18) Nevertheless, Israel is still “*beloved for the fathers’* [i.e., patriarchs’] *sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance*” (Romans 11:28b, 29). The gifts of God are irrevocable. The gifts of God are not to be recalled or to be altered. Paul reminds the church that the Jews are God’s enemies because they have rejected the gospel, but from the standpoint of election they are His beloved.

30 For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief:

31 Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy.

32 For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.

11: 30-32 Mercy is what both Jew and Gentiles need. Mercy is what all men need and mercy is what individuals can receive through Jesus Christ the Lord. In the city of Verden, Germany, there is a large church built many centuries ago. On one part of the stone facade of the building there is a lamb carved because of a true event. There was an accident while the Church was being constructed. A workman fell from a great height. He would have hit the ground and been seriously hurt or even killed if he had not fallen providentially onto a sheep below. The lamb was crushed by the fall and died but the workman survived. He lived to tell the story and then he did something else. He carved a lamb on the building to immortalize the sacrifice that was made on his behalf. Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God that was sacrificed for poor sinners. His redemptive work at Calvary is to be immortalized by every Christian who has fallen upon Him for mercy and grace. Come to Christ. “*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved*” (Acts 16:31). Salvation is a great act of Divine mercy.

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 [repaid] unto him again?

36 For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

11:33-36 Having argued for a present and future engrafting of ethnic Israel back into the Olive Tree of Righteousness according to God's immutability (Romans 11:29) Paul breaks forth in praise of Divine wisdom and glory. He can do no less. Indeed all such contemplation of the outworking of the Plan of Redemption elicits a wonder at the Lord's infinite mercy and grace.

It has been said that grace is for the guilty and mercy is for the miserable. But those who are guilty are also miserable. Sin makes men miserable. Mercy makes men hopeful. Though all have been placed in unbelief and helpless bondage (Romans 11:32), though all are full of guilt and shame, there is yet hope in God.

The Lord God Omnipotent will yet come and deliver souls from the pits of human depravity "*as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob*" (Romans 11:26). The Lord of Glory will give new hearts, and minds, and wills to worship Him. The Lord will yet have mercy upon those "*who have fulfilled the lusts of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath*" (Ephesians 2:3).

Why God is willing to show such mercy to desperate, depraved, despicable sinners is something that is unsearchable! His ways are beyond tracing out. No one can trace the mindset or the methods by which God carries His plans into effect. All that individuals can do is to kneel in gratitude and wonderment before infinite wisdom as it accomplishes the ends intended—the salvation of souls.

"For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been His counselor?" (Job 15:8; Jer. 23:18; Isa. 40:13, 14) Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto Him again? (Job 35:7; 41:11) For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

Commenting on this final thought William R. Newell exclaimed, "*What a prospect for a redeemed sinner! In the ages to come—ages of worship without end, in which glory will be ascribed to God, and that with ever increasing delight! And the word of eager, glad heart consent ends it all: Amen. (Romans, Verse by Verse).*" In like manner, Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse notes, "*No wonder Paul, the theologian and philosopher, sings. He insists in looking at God's wisdom through the eyes of a sinner redeemed. For he has a part in this great cosmic drama of grace. He is a participant in this display of God's wisdom. The unknown cosmic intelligences are merely observers of it.*"

Leader's Study Guide

Romans 11

Review

1. What is meant by “*his people*” in Romans 1:1?

Answer

The “*people*” of God are those whom He foreknows (Romans 11:2 cf. 8:28-30; John 8:27, 28), that is “*on whom, from the foundation of the world, He had set His love. He had made them the object of His special delight, a delight beginning in eternity, continuing in connection with their conception and birth, and never leaving them*” (Romans, William Hendriksen). Because God has foreknown Israel, souls shall be saved.

2. What prophet from the Old Testament era illustrates God keeps in every generation a remnant according to the election of grace?

Answer

The story of Elijah reflects the fact that God keeps in every generation a remnant. Thinking himself to be the last of God’s faithful servants, Elijah had to be reminded he was not alone for, “*what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.*”

3. What did the prayer of David anticipate (Rom. 11:9-10)?

Answer

When David prayed God would destroy his own enemies, he anticipated the presence of a divine judgment upon national Israel in a Messianic sense (Romans 11:9, 10 cf. Psa. 69).

4. What mystery does Paul want the Gentiles to be aware?

Answer

The mystery is that “*blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in*” (Romans 11:25).

5. What does sin and mercy do to the soul respectively?

Answer

Sin makes men miserable. Mercy makes men hopeful.

Reflection

1. Do you ever feel that you are in a Christian minority in the circles of life in which you move?
2. How do you feel about imprecatory prayers such as David prayed Rom. 11:9-10; Psa. 69:23)?
3. Is Paul's teaching a surprise to you about who may consider themselves the true "Israel" of God?
4. Is it healthy for Christians to meditate upon and teach others about the "severity of God" as well as His goodness? Explain.
5. Write a brief summary of God's dealings with national Israel in the past, in the present and in the future. Use *Scripture* for documentation of the points made.

Personal Application

1. Do you view the church, and yourself, as spiritual Israel? Why or why not?
2. What are some of the spiritual gifts you have received from God?
3. Have you ever tried to prove someone to jealousy as a means of presenting the gospel as Paul said he did? (Romans 11: 13-14.
4. Do you believe that Israel has an exalted future as a nation whereby she rules the world? What is the basis for your position?
5. Are you an anti-Semitic? Why do you think so many nations in the world hate the Jews?

Memory

Romans 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 counselor? 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 for ever. Amen.

Romans 12

Division II

PRACTICAL

The Righteousness of the Believer revealed in Gospel Obedience *Romans 12-16*

Introduction

It has been said that all doctrine should be practical and all practice should be doctrinal. The Apostle Paul would agree. It is a distinction in Paul's style of writing to move from a doctrinal section to a practical section. This dramatic division can be noted in *The Epistle to the Ephesians*. Chapters 1-3 are full of glorious doctrinal truths. Then in Ephesians 4:1 we read, "*I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.*"

In like manner, in *The Epistle to the Romans* Paul has been setting forth the great doctrine of justification by grace through faith. Now he speaks to the hearers to move from the doctrine to Christian duty. He wants the saints to go from revelation to responsibility or from the things that are to be believed to the things that are to be done.

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present [yield] your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which* is your reasonable service.

12:1 The mercies of God are the mercies that Paul has been explaining in Romans 1-11.

- There is the mercy of justification whereby guilty sinners are declared righteous in the sight of God through faith in the redemptive work of Christ at Calvary.
- There is the mercy of salvation whereby the heart is opened to the gospel so that the Savior is seen in all of His splendor and glory and the heart cries out, My Lord and my God!
- There is the mercy of sanctification or the process of being conformed into the image of Christ through the manifestation of the flesh.
- There is the mercy of glorification. One day sin shall cease. One day the soul shall be set free from the body of sin and then will come the resurrection day in a new heaven and new earth.

12:1 It is an amazing concept that the body presented to the Lord is even wanted by Him. The world, the flesh, and the devil have used some bodies for unholy purposes and pleasures. Some bodies are old and limited in strength and vitality. Some bodies are diseased or crippled, and yet, God invites individuals to give them to His service. From a human perspective, the reason, in part, is this:

“Christ has no hands but our hands
To do His work today;
He has no feet but our feet
To lead men in His way;
He has no tongue but our tongues
To tell men how to die;
He has no help but our help
to bring them to His side.”

Annie Johnson Flint

There is another sense to the Christians’ concept of presenting their bodies to the Lord; the word *bodies* as used in Romans 12:1 refers to the body as it relates to this world. The understanding is that God wants believers to be separated from sin and for good reason. A willful pursuit of sin in the flesh leads to eternal judgment. The Christian is to flee fornication and all manner of evil. (1 Cor. 6:18; 10:8) The Christian is to die to sin and live unto God. (Gal. 5:19; Ephesians 5:3; Col. 3:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:3; Jude 1:7) The Christian is to be a *living sacrifice* unto the Lord.

12:1 The concept of a *living sacrifice* stands in contrast to all the Old Testament dead sacrifices. No animal ever went in a willing manner to death, but they had to die. Unlike that, the Christian is to be alive unto God with the assurance that the presentation if done properly will be holy and acceptable in His sight. Not only that, but an initial, dramatic, and definite presentation of the body to God for His service is very reasonable. It is reasonable because it is unreasonable to pursue a path that will result in ultimate and eternal damnation.

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove [demonstrate] what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

12:2 The word “*conformed*” means, to “*be pressed into a mold*”. Though the world wants to make every Christian a copy of the first Adam, fallen and depraved, the apostolic counsel is not to allow that to happen. Rather, “*be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind*” (Romans 12:2). The antidote to sin, the solution to worldliness is a transformed mind. The mind is transformed spiritually in several ways: through reading the Word of God (Psalm 119), by the power of the Holy Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:23), by an act of the renewed will (1 Pet. 3:15), and by the knowledge of the truth (John 17:17).

12:2 Concerning the will of God, a distinction can be made between the decretive will of the Lord, and His preceptive will. God’s *decretive* will determines whatsoever comes to pass. (Psa. 115:31; Dan. 4:17, 25, 32, 35; Acts 2:23; Ephesians 1:5, 9, 11).

The decretive will includes every raindrop that falls, every sparrow that dies, every hair on the head, and even every sin that is committed. Nothing happens in God's universe outside of the divine decree (cf. Genesis 6:18; 7:15-24; Matt. 10:29; Acts 2:22, 23). In contrast, God's *preceptive* will is His will by precept or command. It is His moral will. It is the will of God in the things which pleases Him.

For example, God commands all men everywhere to repent. (Acts 17:30) That is His preceptive will; repentance pleases the Lord. However, we know that not all men will repent. Therefore, the preceptive will, the moral will of God, will not always be fulfilled. But the decretive will of God will always be honored (Romans 9:19) though it be inscrutable. While no person can fully understand the decretive will of God—any more than the nature of God may be fully comprehended. (Job 9:10; Romans 11:33)—there is a holy obligation to submit to the Lord in reverent obedience, knowing that He does all things well for His will is good, acceptable, and in the end, perfect. (Isa. 45:12, 13; Romans 9:16-23; 12:2)

3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of *himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

12:3 Having pleaded with the saints to present their bodies to the Lord for spiritual service, the apostle explains why this should happen. There should be an ethical outworking of the righteousness of God because of the grace that has been bestowed. Because God has been good, it is only right for the redeemed to act in a gracious manner with all due humility. It has been said that humility is not thinking how lowly one is; humility is not thinking of self at all. According to the Bible, humility is not thinking of one's self more highly than one ought to think (Romans 12:3)

Humility is having a sober and realistic evaluation of one's gifts and abilities with a willingness to serve in the sphere that the Sovereign has ordained. Biblical humility allows for individuals to think well of themselves in the sense that a person can know if he or she is intelligent, capable, well organized, personable, attractive, a good singer, etc. There is nothing wrong with being aware of one's talents and abilities. But there are limits to just how highly a person is to admire or love themselves and not go beyond what natural grace and Divine gifts allow.

Remembering that God, "*hath dealt to every man the measure of faith*" will help to restrain the natural arrogance of the heart. This should not be all that difficult for ultimately there is nothing in life that a person has not been graciously given by the Lord. There is no such thing as a self-made man or woman. God has given all things in life—wisdom, health, opportunity, time, education, and resources—without which no one would be a success by any standard. In the Church, the Christian is to restrain from exalting one's self or debasing one's spiritual gift either. We are not to ignore the fact that God has given to each person a spiritual gift that is to be used. There is such a thing as feigned humility. It is possible to hold the grace and gifts of God in contempt by refusing to function in the Church Body as God intended. The apostolic exhortation comes to show true humility in a spirit of essential unity.

4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

5 So we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

12:4 The unity of the body of Christ is self evident in the fact that, “as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another” (Romans 12:4,5). Only God is truly independent. Only God is self-sufficient. All else in creation is dependent and interdependent. The Church is no exception. The Church comes together from diverse sources, denominational distinctives, and doctrinal differences, to form one spiritual body in Christ. The vital unity of Christians with one another is possible because of the gift of the Holy Spirit (John 15:26), and beyond that, the gifts the Holy Spirit brings to bestow in order for Christian service to take place. (1 Cor. 12:1-12)

6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of faith;

12:6 The “*proportion of faith*” is the objective standard of the Word of God. By the historic faith of the Church (Jude 14) should all prophets be measured.

7 Or ministry, *let us wait* on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;

8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, *let him do it* with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

12: 7-8 As there are temporary spiritual gifts so there are permanent gifts. Among the permanent gifts are ministry, teaching, exhortation, giving, ruling, and the showing of mercy.

- **Ministry.** God has ordained that certain individuals be allowed to minister the Word of Truth to others.
- **Teaching and exhortation.** While teaching is addressed to the understanding; exhortation is addressed to the conscience and feelings. Ideally, these are always united.
- **Giving.** This refers to the ability to give with a cheerful spirit to the Lord’s work without any ulterior motives. (cf. Acts 5:1-11)
- **Ruling.** Not everyone by temperament or testimony should be in leadership positions. The Lord equips those who should lead with wisdom, discernment, and insight.

- **Showing mercy.** While all Christians are called upon to be kind, there are individuals who have unusually tender hearts in order to show great mercy to those who are in need of financial, emotional, or spiritual help. These are just some of the spiritual gifts of grace.

Commandments for Christian Conduct
Romans 12:9-12

9 *Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.*

12:9 In a series of time-honored phrases, the Apostle Paul continues to explain what it means to live out the ethics of the righteousness of God. The commandments are presented in trilogy forms.

- Let love be without dissimulation. When Paul says that love is to be without hypocrisy, he is teaching that love is to be genuine (1 Pet. 1:22). There are those who pretend to love by having a smile on the lips but there is hatred in the heart. An invisible sword is drawn to destroy when the opportunity comes. (Psa. 57:4) Christian love is more authentic and is reflected in outward expression according to the terms of 1 Corinthians 13:113 and Luke 10:25-37. In summary form, biblical love is not an impulse of the feelings as it is a self-giving expression of right attitude and right actions at the right time. Such self-giving love is like God's love that has no regard for the worthiness of the recipient or object of care.
- ***Abhor that which is evil.*** The Bible teaches that there is a time to love and there is a time to hate. (Eccl. 3:8) In particular, there is a time to hate evil and injustice.
- ***Cleave to that which is good.*** The ground or soil out of which a righteous hatred of evil grows is a love for that which is good. "*There is a love that hates evil*" (Dr. S. Lewis Johnson)

The heart is to seize on that which is decent and holy in order to perform the will of God.

10 *Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;*

12:10

- ***Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another.*** One day, during the course of His ministry, the Lord's mother and His brothers sought Him out to speak to Him. When the announcement came, Christ turned to the present audience and asked, "*Who is my mother? And who are my brethren? And He stretched forth His hand toward His disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother*" (Matt. 12:48-50). In honor, the Lord preferred those who believed in Him with all their hearts.

11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

12:11

- ***Not slothful in business***, [i.e., *Not lagging in diligence*]; ***fervent in spirit; serving the Lord***. There is a natural progression of thought in this trio of exhortations. Christians are to be distinguished by a *diligence* in devotion that does not fall short or lag behind enthusiasm given to other things in life such as work or recreation. There is to be a spiritual *fervency*, which is maintained by the ministry of the Word of God (Luke 24:32). A life of diligence and fervency will result in *service* for the Lord. One biblical example of all of this is Apollos. His story is told in Acts 18. Apollos was a Jew who had been born at Alexandria. He was a naturally gifted man who could persuade audiences with his words and knowledge of the Scriptures. Being instructed in the things of the Lord Apollos *was fervent in the spirit* to convince others.

When Aquilla and Priscilla heard Apollos speak, they two were impressed, but realized that he needed to understand the *Word of God* more perfectly. After receiving more instruction in the faith, Apollos went forth to serve the Lord more earnestly than ever before. He did not lag behind even the apostles in his zeal to win souls to the Savior. May all Christians be like Apollos.

There is a wonderful story that involves Sir Winston Churchill. In the early days of World War II, after the fall of France, and after the evacuation of soldiers from Dunkirk, Mr. Churchill went before the English Parliament to explain the situation of the country. Things appeared to be rather desperate. The government was told plainly that Adolph Hitler was in total control of Western Europe. “*The whole free world*”, said the Prime Minister, “*is now dependent upon England*”. Then he paused and said: “*Gentlemen, I find that rather exciting*”. Every Christian should find it rather exciting to be able to serve the Lord.

12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

12:12

- ***Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer***. With these words the apostles expresses the inner workings of the Christian heart. It is to be a heart filled with joy, patience, and prayer. Joy is not a matter of circumstance for Christian joy can be found in the midst of tragedy such as disease or death. Rather, joy is the grasp that one has been given by the Holy Spirit on the meaning of any situation. (John 15:11; John 16:21,22,24) “*The Christian does not sink under present trials, because he is buoyed up by the hope of future glory and the divine strength which is imparted to him through prayer. Those who are without God in the world are necessarily destitute of hope, for hope belongs only to those who know God*”. (Ephesians 2:12 *Romans, Geoffrey B. Wilson*) Those who know the Lord always have hope and with hope comes the ability to endure the sufferings of time all the while being sustained by prayer. One night long ago, in a cell in the city of Philippi in Macedonia, two men, Paul and Silas sang songs to the Lord and prayed after being arrested and beaten for their faith. Heaven heard and rewarded such faith for later that same night several new names were written down in glory. The Savior gave His servants souls for their labors, and it was sufficient. (Acts 16:16-34)

13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

12:13 As the apostle continues to set forth a series of concrete ethical concepts for Christian believers, it must not be forgotten that the foundation on which these injunctions rest is doctrine. In Romans 1-11 the great doctrinal truths have been set forth. Then we come to Romans 12:1 and to the transitional word, *therefore*. Paul writes, “*I beseech you therefore brethren*”. What does he mean? Paul means that because of certain doctrines, a particular type of behavior is necessitated for the Christian and a principle is established: doctrine is important. Benjamin Breckenridge Warfield wrote, “*What after all is peculiar to Christianity is not the religious sentiment and its working, but its message of salvation; in a word, doctrine. To be indifferent to doctrine is but another way of saying we are indifferent to Christianity*” (*The Light of Systematic Theology*). Christian doctrine naturally leads to a Christian behavior that is both ethical and practical as the following injunctions reveal.

- ***Distributing to the necessity of [the] saints.*** In the ancient world, the unity between the social classes was not as agreeable as it is today. Generally speaking, people were either rich or poor, with the majority being numbered among the poor. The message and ministry of Christ mandated that the rich should look after the needs of those less fortunate (1 Tim. 6:17-19). Specifically, those Christians who had been given generous resources by God were to look out for the needs of other saints. One way to honor this gospel duty was to be hospitable.
- ***Given to hospitality.*** Since travel was difficult and uncomfortable at this time in history, families who lived great distances apart would often agree themselves to establish Guest Friendships. The idea was to provide lodging to traveling members who were well known or related. With the passing of time and the emergence of a new generation, a way was found to continue the cultural exchange by issuing a sign of recognition. Half of a token would be given to one household and half to another. In the course of travel, individuals could then present the token and, if the two halves tallied or matched, a place of rest was virtually guaranteed.

14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

12:14

- ***Bless them, which persecute you: bless, and curse not.*** As loving hospitality was to be provided for the saints, so graciousness was to be extended to those who showed no hospitality but open hostility. Now, it would be nice if the persecution of the saints was restricted in administration to those outside the family of faith, but that is not the case. The enemy has come to sow tares among the wheat. (Matt. 13:25) Not only does the world hate the Christians (John 15:18) but the world, along with the flesh, and the devil has come into the Church to persecute the saints. (Zech. 13:6) As a result, much persecution of the saints comes from other professing Christians. The result in Christendom as a whole is great turmoil and division. If there is to be any peace in local assemblies and local communities then the practice of blessing the perpetrators of persecution must begin.

While it is not easy, it is the stated will of God, the example of Christ, (Luke 23:34; Matt. 6:15) and the exhortation of the apostle.

15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

12:15

- ***Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.*** If the believer can endure persecution then surely there is the ability to adjust to the moods and tragedies of others so that there is rejoicing with those who rejoice and weeping with those who weep. Of the two facets of the soul's sensitivity, the second injunction is easier to perform than the first. One of the early church fathers, Chrysostom (c. 347-407) noted that it was easier to weep with them who weep because nature has prepared the heart to enter into the sorrows of others, but envy stands in the way of rejoicing with those who have been blessed by God. The petulant heart can actually resent the blessings of God on others (John 21:17-22). But the gracious heart will want to honor those whom the Lord has been pleased to honor. (Phil. 4:10; 2 John 4; 3 John 3)

16 *Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.*

12:16

- ***Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.*** The Law of Selflessness and Harmony is brought into view with these apostolic words as believers are told to be humble. For some, that is very hard to do. The story is told that D.L. Moody once met a man on the street who said to him. "*You know, Mr. Moody, I am a self-made man.*" Mr. Moody replied, "*Young man, you have just relieved the Almighty of a great responsibility*". There is room in most of us for less thinking *about high things* and more thinking of humble thoughts. (John 1:26,27; Phil. 2:4-8)

17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

12:17

- ***Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.*** When the heart is humble, there will be less inclination to repay in kind those who have wounded with their words and actions. There is such a thing as the Law of Non-hostility. Of course, this does leave the sheep of God open to the preying wolves both practically and doctrinally. (Matt. 7:15; Mark 10:16; Luke 10:3; Acts 20:29) Those who love, embrace, and defend the doctrines of grace know something of the hostile nature of wolves. Nevertheless, when the wolves attack and justice is needed to right any wrongs, the justice is to be administered by the Divine Being who promises to intervene for it is written, "*Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord*".

Because God will do what is right, the believer is to make gracious provisions for his enemies. If they are hungry, food is to be provided. If they are thirsty, liquid refreshment is to be given. The reason for this is so that the soul of the saint will not be soiled by the filth of the flesh. In the spiritual warfare, evil can only be overcome by doing well to the enemies of the Cross. Oh, may the Lord grant the supernatural strength of the Holy Spirit for this gospel obedience as a love response to saving grace.

18 If it be possible, as much as lieth [depends on] in you, live peaceably with all men.

19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome [conquer] evil with good.

“Teach me to love Thee
as thine angels love,
One holy passion filling all my frame—
The baptism of the heaven
descended Dove;
My heart an altar,
and thy love the flame.”
Spirit of God,
Dwell Thou within My Heart

George Croly, 1854

Leader's Study Guide

Romans 12

Review

1. List four mercies of God.

Answer

Four mercies of God include the following.

- There is the mercy of justification whereby guilty sinners are declared righteous in the sight of God through faith in the redemptive work of Christ at Calvary.
 - There is the mercy of salvation whereby the heart is opened to the gospel so that the Savior is seen in all of His splendor and glory and the heart cries out, "*My Lord and my God!*"
 - There is the mercy of sanctification or the process of being conformed into the image of Christ through the manifestation of the flesh.
 - There is the mercy of glorification. One day sin shall cease.
2. Explain the distinction between the decretive will of God and preceptive will.

Answer

The decretive will includes every raindrop that falls, every sparrow that dies, every hair on the head, and even every sin that is committed. Nothing happens in God's universe outside of the divine decree. (Genesis 6:18; 7:15-24; Matt. 10:29; Acts 2:22, 23). In contrast, God's *preceptive* will is His will by precept or command.

3. List four spiritual temporary service gifts.

Answer

Four spiritual temporary service gifts include ministry, teaching, giving, ruling, and showing mercy.

4. Using the form of trilogies list the commandments to Christians found in Romans 12:9-21.

Answer

The following list of trilogies can be found in Romans 12:9-21.

- Let love be without dissimulation
- Abhor that which is evil
- Cleave to that which is good

- Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love
- Not slothful in business
- Fervent in Spirit

- Serving the Lord
- Rejoicing in hope
- Patient in tribulation

- Continuing instant in prayer
- Distributing to the necessity of the saints
- Given to hospitality

- Bless them which persecute you
- Bless and Curse not
- Rejoice with them that do rejoice

- Weep with them that weep
- Be of the same mind one toward another
- Mind not high things

- Condescend to men of low estate
- Be not wise in your own conceits
- Recompense to no man evil for evil

- Provide things honest in the sight of all men
- If it is possible, live peaceably with all men
- Avenge not yourselves

- If your enemy is hungry, feed him
- If your enemy is thirsty give him to drink
- Be not overcome of evil but overcome evil with good

5. Define “*dissimulation*.”

Answer

The word “*dissimulation*” means to be without hypocrisy.

Reflection

Please answer the following questions with judgment day honesty. Simply mark “*Yes*” or “*No*” at the end of each question as it applies to your own heart. This is not a test but a means of self-examination.

1. Do you have the spiritual gift of prophecy? Yes ___ No ___
2. Do you have the spiritual gift of faith? Yes ___ No ___
3. Do you have the spiritual gift of ministry? Yes ___ No ___
4. Do you have the spiritual gift of teaching? Yes ___ No ___
5. Do you have the spiritual gift of exhortation? Yes ___ No ___
6. Do you have the spiritual gift of giving? Yes ___ No ___
7. Do you have the spiritual gift of ruling? Yes ___ No ___
8. Do you have the spiritual gift of showing mercy? Yes ___ No ___
9. Do you have the spiritual gift of cheerfulness? Yes ___ No ___
10. Do you love people without dissimulation or hypocrisy? Yes ___ No ___
11. Do you hate that which is evil? Yes ___ No ___
12. Do you cleave or embrace that which is good? Yes ___ No ___
13. Are you kind and affectionate toward others? Yes ___ No ___
14. Are you slothful in your business dealings? Yes ___ No ___
15. Are you fervent in your spiritual life? Yes ___ No ___
16. Are you serving the Lord? Yes ___ No ___
17. Do you rejoice in hope over the circumstances of life? Yes ___ No ___
18. Are you patient in times of tribulation and suffering? Yes ___ No ___
19. Do you have a consistent prayer life? Yes ___ No ___
20. Do you help those saints who are in need? Yes ___ No ___
21. Do you open your home for hospitality? Yes ___ No ___
22. Do you rejoice with those who are rejoicing? Yes ___ No ___
23. Do you weep with those whose hearts are hurting? Yes ___ No ___

24. Do you strive to be of like mind with others rather than find a way to argue and criticize? Yes ___ No ___
25. Are you a humble person? Yes ___ No ___
26. Do you entertain proud notions of yourself in the privacy of your mind? Yes ___ No ___
27. Do you try to take revenge on your enemies? Yes ___ No ___
28. Would you feed your enemy? Yes ___ No ___
29. Do you try to overcome evil with good? Yes ___ No ___
30. Does an evil practice have a secret place in your life? Yes ___ No ___

Personal Application

1. Have you ever formally presented your body to God in an act of dedication?
2. Is there any part of your mind that is still conformed to the world? Do you love the world?
3. Have you ever wept with someone who was weeping? What was the occasion? Have you ever rejoiced with someone who was happy? What was the occasion?
4. Are you an honest person?
5. Have you ever tried to take revenge on someone who has hurt you? What did you do? Have you ever been able to show grace and mercy to someone who has hurt you? If you did, please share the details.

Memory

Romans 12: I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. 21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Romans 13

The Christian and Civil Government *Romans 13:1-7*

1 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

13:1 Having spoken of the evil that men do in Romans 12:20, 21, the natural thoughts of the apostle's readers would turn to state sanctioned evil. The early church knew much about undeserved suffering that had its ultimate origin in a sadist form of government. What, then, should be the Christian's attitude in regard to the state? Is the church to be over government, or subordinate to it? The first seven verses of Romans 14 defines the believer's duty to the state. Paul begins his exposition by showing that the state can claim a certain measure of obedience of *every soul* (Romans 13:1) because the power it enjoys has been entrusted with care from God. "*For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God*" (Romans 13:1cf. *Isa. 10:57; 45:1; Daniel 5:26*). Does this mean that the state has absolute power over people without protest? No, for under girding Paul's position is another principle: the authority of the state is a divinely delegated power and so it is not an absolute authority without redress.

2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

13:2 Because every human government is ultimately subject to God, the state has no supreme power over the souls of men. When state laws do come into conflict with the laws of God, then it is better to obey God rather than men. (Study 1 Kings 21:3; Dan. 3:18; 6:12; Mark 12:17; Acts 4:19; Acts 5:29; Heb. 11:23) While the Christian is to render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar, the things that belong to God must also be honored.

3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

4 For he is the minister [servant] of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil.

13:4 Any movement to resist an established form of government should be done with due consideration lest the Christian be found resisting God and receiving greater judgment. (Romans 13:2) Under normal conditions, believers must obey magistrates who exercise lawful authority in order to promote self-control and enhance the good of society. If wives are to be obedient to their husbands (Ephesians 5:22), and children are to be obedient to their parents (Ephesians 6:1), then Christian citizens are to obey the state's sovereignty (Romans 13:3).

If there is no general principle of obedience, even for totalitarian regimes like Rome, then there will be unrestrained anarchy for it is the natural inclination for every man to do that which is right in his own eyes. (Judges 21:25). Over all, the rulers in government do function as the ministers of God for good. (Romans 13:4) And as God's ministers they have the supreme right to administer capital punishment upon those that do evil. (Romans 13:4)

5 Wherefore *ye* must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

6 For for this cause pay *ye* tribute [taxes] also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

7 Render therefore to all their *dues*: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

13:5-7 Those who obey the laws of the land generally have nothing to fear and are able to be a good witness for God. (Romans 13:5) It would be a meaningless message to tell people to submit to God's rule and reign while defying the laws of man. Therefore, let the Christian pay his direct taxes, "*tribute to whom tribute is due,*" and even the indirect taxes as necessary, "*custom to whom custom*" all the while showing fear and honor to God. The reason for such honor to all is this: there will be another day of reckoning. One day the saints shall judge the world. (1 Cor. 6:2) In that day, the state shall perish but the city of God and the citizens of the heavenly kingdom shall remain.

8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if *there be* any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

13:8-9 The Christian is not only to render civil obedience to the state, he is to faithfully fulfill all social obligations to society (Romans 13:8). Unpaid debts should be avoided for the social stigma they bring to the cause of Christ. The guiding principle of life in all things is love. (Romans 13:10) The second half of the Divine Law is summed up in the command, "*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself*" (Lev. 19:18). Therefore, let God's people avoid adultery, murder, stealing, the bearing of false testimony, and covetousness. (Romans 13:9)

10 Love worketh no ill [evil] to his neighbour: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law.

11 And that, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed.

As the apostle brings this section to a conclusion he sets forth once more several practical reasons why Christians are to obey civil authorities, honor all personal obligations, live righteously before others, and manifest genuine love.

- **Time is short.** The Christian message has always contained an element of urgency for death is certain and eternity is real. Therefore, Christians must awaken from any form of spiritual lethargy. Some Christians are asleep doctrinally. They have no idea of the many cults that have arisen to challenge, transform, or deny the history faith. Other Christians are asleep practically. They no longer care if souls are saved. It seems that the church has forgotten that hell is not just a doctrinal truth, it is a geographical reality.

“Must I go and empty-handed?
Thus my dear Redeemer meet?
Not one day of service give Him,
Lay no trophy at His feet?”

- **Salvation is near.** One day Jesus Christ will come again the second time for all that believe. (Heb. 9:28) One day the skies will split open and reveal the Lord of lords and the King of kings (Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:16). With each year that passes, with each day that slips by the coming of Christ draws that much nearer. Robert McCheyne, the Scotch preacher, once said to some friends, “*Do you think Christ will come tonight? One after another they said, I think not. When all had given this answer, he solemnly noted, The Son of Man cometh at an hour when ye think no*”. (Luke 12:40).
- **The spiritual warfare is real.** As some put on evil under the cover of darkness, the Christian is to put on the Lord Jesus Christ like a robe of righteousness. And for any that would be tempted to deny the Lordship of Christ for salvation and sanctification, attention should be noted that whenever the terms are used in Scripture together, the focus of attention is on the Lordship of Christ (Acts 2:36). Unless there is a fundamental recognition of Jesus as Lord of one’s life there can be no hope for genuine conversion. Christ said, “*Why call ye me Lord and do not the things which I say?*” (Luke 6:46) Those who think they can live without holiness and still see God are flying in the face of the Scriptures. (Heb. 12:14) They have found a heavenly way to go to hell.

12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

13 Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.

14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to *fulfill* the lusts [desires] thereof.

13:12-14 The Salvation of St. Augustine. Because the early church took seriously the apostolic exhortations to live a holy life, a man by the name of Augustine (AD 354-430) more easily came to faith one day when he picked up the Scriptures and read the call of Christ to a life of consecration. Augustine himself has recorded the story of that dramatic moment of conversion.

He writes,

“There was a small garden attached to the house where we lodged... I now found myself driven by the tumult in my breast to take refuge in this garden, where no one could interrupt that fierce struggle in which I was my own contestant, until it came to its conclusion.

I probed the hidden depths of my soul and wrung its pitiful secrets from it, and when I gathered them all before the eyes of my heart, a great storm broke within me, bringing with it a great deluge of tears... For I felt that I was still enslaved by my sins, and in my misery I kept crying,

How long shall I go on saying 'Tomorrow, tomorrow'? Why not now? Why not make an end of my ugly sins this moment? I kept asking myself these questions, weeping all the while with the most bitter sorrow in my heart, when all at once

I heard the singsong voice of a child in a nearby house. Whether it was the voice of a boy or a girl I cannot say, but again and again it repeated the chorus, Take it and read, take it and read.

At this I looked up, thinking hard whether there was any kind of game in which children used to chant words like these, but I could not remember ever hearing them before.

I stemmed my flood of tears and stood up, telling myself that this could only be God's command to open my book of Scripture and read the first passage on which my eyes should fall...So I hurried back to the place where Alypius was sitting, for when I stood up to move away

I had put down the book containing Paul's letters. I seized it and opened it, and in silence I read the first passage on which my eyes fell: [Romans 13:13-14]

“Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.”

I had no wish to read more and no need to do so. For in an instant, as I came to the end of the sentence, it was as though the light of faith flooded into my heart and all the darkness of doubt was dispelled.

May Augustine's experience be known to all of God's people as they too put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof.

Leader's Study Guide

Romans 13

Relief

1. What biblical evidence can be appealed to in order to prove the power of the state is not absolute over the lives of its citizens?

Answer

Because every human government is ultimately subject to God, the state has no supreme power over the souls of men. When state laws do come into conflict with the laws of God, then it is better to obey God rather than men. (Study 1 Kings 21:3; Dan. 3:18; 6:12; Mark 12:17; Acts 4:19; Acts 5:29; Heb. 11:23).

2. What will result if there is no general principle of respect for the government?

Answer

If there is no general principle of obedience, even for totalitarian regimes like Rome, then there will be unrestrained anarchy for it is the natural inclination for every man to do that which is right in his own eyes (Judges 21:25).

3. Besides civil obedience what else is the Christian obligated to do in regard to society at large?

Answer

The Christian is not only to render civil obedience to the state; he is to faithfully fulfill all social obligations to society (Romans 13:8).

4. List three reasons Paul gives for holy living.

Answer

Three reasons for holy living include the following:

- Time is short
- Salvation is near
- The spiritual warfare is real

5. What passage of Scripture did Augustine attribute to illuminating his mind leading him to salvation?

Answer

Augustine believed Romans 13: 12-13 was providentially used by God to lead him to salvation. *“The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. 13 Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. 14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts [desires] thereof.”*

Reflection

1. Do you believe Christians should engage in social activism? If so, what form should that activism take?
2. Comment on Christians who either bomb abortion clinics and other institutions or encourage others to out of anger or misguided zeal.
3. Should Christians serve in the government and if not why not?
4. What should be said to those who withdraw from society as much as possible?
5. State your own attitude toward government. Include in your statement any acts of injustices you have received by government officially or help such as financial, educational or informational.

Personal Application

1. Do you believe government is part of the problems of a society or part of the solution?
2. Comment on the following thought: “*When the people are afraid of the government there is tyranny; when the government is afraid of the people there is freedom.*”
3. Do you have a sense of urgency about living out the Christian life so that you redeeming the time, live humbly and godly before God and men and try to persuade others to become a Christian?
4. Is your Christian life an honest walk before God or do you secretly engage in immoral acts?
5. Are you making provisions for the flesh? If so, what are you doing? Be specific.

Memory

Romans 13:11 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. 12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. 13 Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. 14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.

Romans 14

Six Laws Guiding the Christian Life Romans 14:1-12

1 Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, *but* not to doubtful disputations [the judging of beliefs].

14:1 Apart from salvation, there are many issues in life that concern the welfare of the soul but on which the Scriptures are silent. As a result, there are Christian individuals who have a difficult time discerning what is pleasing to God and what is not pleasing to Him. The question arises as how to deal with the doubtful things in life. The challenge comes to the Christian who is strong in the faith to help those who are weaker. As mature believers consider the merits of those things that concern the weaker believer, several principles must be kept in mind.

First, the love of Christ compels the stronger Christian in the faith to treat weaker believers with great respect. “*Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations*” (Romans 14:1). The reception of the weaker believer into the Christian fellowship is to be done in such a way that a spirit of religious superiority is not created. The spirit of the Pharisees of old does not die easily.

2 For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.

14:2

Second, the Church fellowship is not to become a debating club. Rather, respect is to be shown to all and by all. Respect can best be manifested by honoring the decisions of those who feel they are pleasing God by giving up certain things or by observing other things. *For one believeth that he may eat all things [including swine]: another, who is weak, eateth herbs [is a vegetarian]*. Those who are stronger in the faith and able to handle the law of liberty can act in a gracious manner by refraining from legitimate activities in their presence. The burden of showing graciousness in doubtful areas rest upon the stronger Christian, like Paul (Rom 15:1)

3 Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.

4 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

14:3-4

Third, the stronger Christian in the faith is to behave in such a way as to encourage the weaker believer to move towards maturity and liberty in the Lord.

This is best done by not being judgmental. *“And let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he [the weaker brother] shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand” (Romans 14:3b-4).* For purposes of illustration, the relation of master and slave is used for it would be well known. If a slave is in need of some form of correction, his own master is the one to administer it. In like manner, the servant of God, in doubtful areas or unregulated matters, is to answer to Him. Much infighting in local assemblies would immediately cease if Christians would stop trying to regulate the life of others.

5 One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

6 He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard *it*. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

14:5-6

Fourth, all Christians are to operate in faith, believing that everything said and done is for the honor of the Lord and the benefit of others. *“One man esteemeth [lit. prefers] one day above another [sabbatarians]; another esteemeth every day alike, Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth [lit. observes as sacred] the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, and give God thanks” (Romans 14:5-6).*

7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

9 For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived [lived again], that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

14:7-9

Fifth, Christians should be gracious toward each other for all believers are interdependent. *“For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself” (Romans 14:7).* Despite differences on doubtful things, there is an essential unity of the body of Christ that relies on all other parts. The Baptists and the Methodist, the Presbyterians and the Lutherans and all other expressions of the visible body of Christ still need one another. In times of a major crisis such as a world war, or a local or national emergency, this interdependency is more clearly seen as doubtful lines are crossed to embrace and comfort one another. *“Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother’s way” (Romans 14:13).*

10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? Or why dost thou set at nought [reduce to nothing] thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

14:10

Sixth, at the judgment seat of Christ, all the doubtful things will be sorted out. *“For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ” (Romans 14:10)*. It is at the final judgment that every Christian, strong and weak, shall give an account to God the Son. (Romans 14:12 cf. John 5:22) Since there will be a final day of reckoning, since time is short and eternity is real, let Christian charity prevail in non-essential matters.

11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

Rights and Responsibilities
Romans 14:13-23

13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

14 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that *there is* nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him *it is* unclean.

15 But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

14: 13-15 Having established the fact that every person shall one day kneel to be judged by the Savior, the Scriptures place a prohibition on believers judging one another in an inappropriate manner. The stronger Christian in the faith should be calm and quiet rather than engage in conversation and behavior that gives offense to a weaker Christian who has certain qualms about matters on which the Scriptures are silent. The apostle is not asking believers to do something that he has not done. Paul knows, for example, that there is nothing wrong with Jewish believers eating pork. The Old Testament rules and regulations prohibiting that particular practice have been rescinded. Still, if a person's conscience is violated with the eating of meat, then that individual should refrain from eating it and the person whose conscience is not violated with the eating of meat should not be judgmental. The larger principal at stake is this: the strong believer with his liberty should not destroy the weaker believer for whom Christ has died.

This passage is not teaching that once a person is saved they can be lost. The doctrine of the security of the believer is not in view here. *“This arresting language is not intended to suggest that any man could actually rob Christ of the fruit of His passion” (Romans, Geoffrey B. Wilson)*. Rather, the issue is whether or not the strong believer will recognize their responsibility towards their weaker brethren. (1 Cor. 8:11). David Brown notes that, *“Whatever tends to make any one violate his conscience tends to the destruction of his soul; and he who helps, whether wittingly or no, to bring about the one is guilty of aiding to accomplish the other.”*

16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of:

17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

18 For he that in these things serveth Christ *is* acceptable to God, and approved of men.

19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify [build up] another.

20 For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed *are* pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.

21 *It is* good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor *any thing* whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

14: 1-21 Paul is concerned that the liberty of the strong believer not be used in such a way that it can be spoken of in an evil manner. (Romans 14:16) While many practices are legitimate for the strong Christian, not all are expedient to perform. There is more to life than being right doctrinally. There are souls for whom Christ has died to sustain and nurture in the sphere of sanctification. Spiritual nurturing for the weak takes place most effectively when the strong believer manifests righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. These three truths will work to unite all Christians.

There is the righteousness of Christ that is imputed to the believer's account apart from good works.

There is the peace with God because of no condemnation.

And there is the joy of the Holy Spirit based on the realization that fellowship with the Father is restored. When the strong believer keeps these doctrinal concepts close to the heart and emphasizes them over personal liberties, heaven and earth will unite to approve.

The Essence of Sin

There is one final major point to observe in this section of scripture: whatsoever is not of faith is sin. While there are many definitions of sin that could be set forth, the summary of sin is lack of faith.

When Adam ate of the forbidden fruit it was because he had lost faith in the sovereignty of God. When the children of Israel made a golden calf and danced around it in the dark night of the desert it was because they had lost faith in the sustaining power of God.

When Peter sank into the cold waters of the Sea of Galilee and cried out that he was perishing it was because he had lost faith in the sustaining power of the Lord.

When the disciples fled on the day Christ was killed it was because they had lost faith in the promises and power of God. "*Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*"

When a weak believer eats something, says or does something without the faith that it is pleasing to the Lord, for that person, it is sin. Therefore, the strong believer must be careful not to insist that a person does something that will violate the conscience.

22 Hast thou faith? Have *it* to thyself before God. Happy *is* he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.

23 And he that doubteth is damned [condemned] if he eat, because *he eateth* not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

14:22-23 Summary. Graciousness is to be a mark of every genuine Christian. Spiritual graciousness is manifested, in part, when the strong believer practices the Law of Love and does not use liberty to offend weaker brethren. Graciousness is manifested when questionable matters are not argued over, but peace is promoted through the remembrance of imputed righteousness, redeeming reconciliation, and the delight of being under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Leader's Study Guide

Romans 14

Review

1. State the six laws that should guide the life of the Christian

Answer

The six laws that should guide the life of the Christian are noted.

- First, the love of Christ compels the stronger Christian in the faith to treat weaker believers with great respect
- Second, the Church fellowship is not to become a debating club.
- Third, the stronger Christian in the faith is to behave in such a way as to encourage the weaker believer to move towards maturity and liberty in the Lord.
- Fourth, all Christians are to operate in faith, believing that everything said and done is for the honor of the Lord and the benefit of others.
- Fifth, Christians should be gracious toward each other for all believers are interdependent.
- Sixth, at the judgment seat of Christ, all the doubtful things will be sorted out.

2. What prohibition does the Scripture put on believers in Romans 14:13?

Answer

The Scriptures place a prohibition on believers judging one another in an inappropriate manner

3. List three truths that can help unite Christians.

Answer

There are three truths that can help to unite Christians.

- First, is the truth that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to the believer's account apart from good works.
- There is the truth that there is peace with God because of no condemnation.
- There is the truth the Holy Spirit provides joy based on the realization that fellowship with the Father is restored

4. When is graciousness manifested by the believer?

Answer

Graciousness is to be a mark of every genuine Christian. Spiritual graciousness is manifested in part when the strong believer practices the Law of Love and does not use liberty to offend weaker brethren. Graciousness is manifested when questionable matters are not argued over, but peace is promoted through the remembrance of imputed righteousness, redeeming reconciliation, and the delight of being under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

5. What does an action become in the sight of God when it is not grounded in faith?

Answer

For the Christian any activity that is not grounded in faith is sin. *“Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.”*

Reflection

1. Reflecting over the local assemblies you have been part of, were they characterized by individuals who were critical and judgmental?
2. What can you do to make sure you are not a stumbling block to another Christian (Rom. 14:13)?
3. In what way is it possible for a Christian to violate their conscience?
4. Provide a definition and give examples to distinguish between legitimate guilt and false guilt.
5. Is it important for a Christian to be known for having a gracious spirit? Why or not why? How is a gracious spirit cultivated?

Personal Application

1. Do you have a critical spirit? Are you constantly standing in judgment on others?
2. Should Christians have a specific day of worship? When and where do you worship?
3. Do you ever meditate on the day of ultimate accountability? How do you think you life will be evaluated?
4. How much joy is there in your life? Would others say you are a joyful person? Why or why not?
5. Do you have any scruples about eating meat, a day of worship, or any other matter?

Memory

Romans 14:7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. 8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

Romans 15

Seven Principles and a Prayer ***Romans 15:1-6***

Introduction

The apostle continues to set forth the obligation of the strong believer toward the weak. Paul has been saying that the weak believer is to be readily received in the fellowship of the local congregation. (Romans 14:1)

He has argued that special care should be shown toward those who are concerned about questionable non-essential elements of the faith lest peripheral issues overshadow the greater truths of the Christian life. As a strong believer himself, Paul is very sensitive about the weak brethren, in part, because there are always so many of them.

Of course, the reception of the weak brethren into spiritual fellowship must not be construed to mean that they are never to be challenged to mature and grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Growing in gospel grace will lead every believer to enjoy the religious liberties that faith brings. So the weak brethren should be challenged. There is grave danger in showing too much leniency toward those who are weak in understanding the gospel to the point that they become harmful to themselves and to others—as far as truth is concerned.

To confirm a person in legalism and prejudices is something that the Savior never did.

Time after time the Lord arrested erroneous thinking, but He always confronted individuals at the proper time. (Luke 14:16)

The proper time for righteous confrontation is when a particular situation demands that something be said or done that more accurately conforms to the perfect will of God.

This method of patiently waiting for a precise moment to teach a spiritual subject is in contrast to creating an environment of confrontation with leading questions guaranteed to create a debate among the brethren. That simply must not be done. (Romans 14:1) The strong believers are not to create a false standard of conduct for the weak believer or to engage in theological arguments that are of no profit.

In context, Paul does not seem to worry about the weak believer taking advantage of the strong believer as he does the reverse. Therefore, the apostle has set down point after point to establish the principles to guide the conduct of the strong believer toward the weak. By way of summary review seven great principles may be restated.

- The strong believer is to gently and graciously receive the weak believer who is concerned about questionable matters. (Romans 14:1)
- The strong believer is not to belittle, think harshly of, nor pass ultimate judgment upon the weak believer (Romans 14:3, 10).
- The strong believer is never to put before the weak believer any issue or situation that would tempt the weak believer to violate a personal principle and practice of faith. (Romans 14:13)
- The strong believer is not to recklessly destroy the value system of someone for whom Christ has died. (Romans 14:15)
- The strong believer is to manifest a life of personal faith all the while remembering that, *“If a person be convinced that a thing is contrary to God’s law, and yet practices it, he is guilty before God, although it should be found that the thing is lawful”* (Romans, Robert Haldane). *“What so ever is not of faith is sin.”* The strong believer has a moral responsibility to bear the infirmities of the weak believer because of the example of Christ whose steps must be followed (Romans 15:13). According to prophecy (Psa. 69:9) the Lord Jesus was destined to suffer reproach, and He did. By being unswerving in His loyalty to the will of the Father, Christ attracted the hostility of those who hated God. *“The reproaches of them that reproached thee [Father] fell on me.”* And a powerful point is made: if Christ can suffer with the weak, then Christians in the Church can certainly be long-suffering with the weak as well.
- The strong believer is to take the leadership role in pursuing conversations and a code of conduct that leads to peace and righteousness and joy in the Holy Spirit (Rom 14:19).

1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

2 Let every one of us please *his* neighbour for *his* good to edification.

3 For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

15:1-4 To find strength for gospel obedience in the showing of mercy to the weak believer, the strong believer is to consider not only the sufferings of Christ, but the scriptures as well. *“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope”* (Romans 15:4). The hope that comes from a study of the *Scriptures* is a quiet confidence that a life of love, lived in faith, while being gracious to the weak brethren, will be rewarded. But the Christian must go to the *Scriptures* to find this great hope and therein lies one of the great tragedies of Christendom.

5 Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

6 That ye may with one mind [without reservation] *and* one mouth glorify [praise] God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

15:5-6 There is only one way for believers to be of like mind and that is to comply with the *Word of God*, the *Bible*. It is the expressed will of God the Father that the *Scriptures* guide the practice of the professing saint, not modern parliamentary rulebooks of society. Paul knows that by studying the *Scriptures* and following the Savior, a life of selfless love will be manifested. For such selfless love Paul prays. “*Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus*” (Romans 15:5).

In this apostolic prayer, two attributes of God the Father are requested to be apparent in the lives of all Christians.

There is the attribute of patience, and there is the attribute of comfort. And there is a purpose for these two attributes. As Christians learn to be patient with one another, and exhort one another graciously, a spirit of unity will be created and a cacophony of harmonious love will ascend to heaven.

In the throne room of God there will be a wonderful symphony made with one mouth in praise to God, “*even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*” (Romans 15:6). “*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity*” (Psa. 133:1).

More Calls for Christian Unity Romans 15:7-13

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

8 Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises *made* unto the fathers:

15:7-8 Having shown that constant worship is the basis for congregational harmony (Romans 15:6), the apostle again exhorts the believers to receive one another. (Romans 15:7) With this exhortation the discussion on the problem of the *strong* and the *weak* believer (Romans 14:1-15:6) is concluded, but a wider application of the principle of graciousness is desired. Paul is now concerned that harmony exist between Jew and Gentile.

There is great drama present. For the first time in history in a significant way Jewish believers were uniting with Gentile believers to receive and honor the Lord Jesus Christ as the eternal Son of God based upon the efficacy of His redeeming work at Calvary. But tension was high because many Jews were struggling with their old customs and prejudices.

After a lifetime of honoring specific prohibitions and thinking in a negative way about a whole group of people, it was hard to suddenly reverse habits of the heart and inbred hatred. For conscientious Jews it was not easy to eat formerly forbidden foods.

It was not easy to give up worship on the Sabbath. It was not easy to love historical enemies. Nevertheless, the plan of God called for unity between Jew and Gentile as the Psalms, (Psa. 18:49 cf. 2 Sam. 22:50; Psa. 117:1) the Law, (Deuteronomy 32:43) and the Prophets anticipated. (Isa. 11:1, 10)

9 And that the Gentiles might glorify God for *his* mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.

10 And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.

11 And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud [praise] him, all ye people.

12 And again, Esaias [Isaiah] saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.

15:9-12 The first quotation from Psalm 18 has reference to the victory of David over the Gentiles whereby he is able to confess to them the source of his power and honor the name of God in their midst. David viewed victory on the field of battle as an opportunity to dispel spiritual darkness and bring light to the Gentiles.

The second quotation from Deuteronomy 32 inviting the Gentiles to share in what God had done for Israel is also an invitation to enter into the covenant blessings of the same.

The third quotation from Psalm 117 constitutes a messianic summons to all Gentiles to praise the Lord. This psalm anticipated the spread of the gospel to the ends of the earth.

The fourth quotation sets forth the messianic prediction of the lordship of Christ over all the earth including the Gentile nations. No wonder Paul called upon the Church of Rome to honor the heartbeat of heaven, and to be a harmonious part of the universal people that Christ shall rule and reign over.

13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

15:13 Having established the scriptural and doctrinal foundation for his practical exhortations for unity, the apostle turns to prayer. “*Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the God*” (Romans 15:13). What a wonderful name for the Lord, “*The God of Hope*”. Paul commends the believers to the God who is the author of the gospel hope of unity, and to the One who is able to fill them with all spiritual joy and peace so that they abound in optimism by the dynamic power of the Holy Spirit.

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 [instruct] one another.

15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort [measure], as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God,

16 That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

15:14-16 As Paul begins the lengthy process of bringing his letter to the Church of Rome to a conclusion, he says many wonderful things about the people for he does not want the believers to think that he views them as being deficient in either knowledge or Christian practice. Not at all. Rather, the apostle just wants to express confidence that those who receive his letter *will* understand the doctrine he has expounded and will *continue* to move to implement the implications of the same by personal application. Therefore, Paul praises the believers for their goodness and their ability to admonish one another to gospel duties. Finally, the apostle explains that he writes in a forceful or bold manner to them because he is simply reminding them of spiritual truths that have already been communicated.

It is this *reminding* of the saints of something they had already been taught which has led some bible scholars to conclude that the Church of Rome was founded by those who had been converted under Paul’s ministry (and not Peter’s ministry as tradition holds).

For Paul to be the original founder of the Church in Rome would not be too surprising for he was ordained to be, “*the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost*” (Romans 15:16).

17 I have therefore whereof I may glory [rejoice] through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.

18 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed,

19 Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum [Yugoslavia], I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

20 Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation:

21 But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.

15:17-22 Though once a Pharisee of the Pharisees, Paul was quite pleased to have a specialized ministry to the Gentiles. Because it was ordained of God he gloried in his calling. (Romans 15:17) Because it was unique, he would not labor where others had labored. (Romans 15:20, 21 cf. 1 Cor. 3:10). And so the years of imprisonment, the physical beatings, the false arrests, and all the other hardships Paul suffered for the Savior were nothing because they served to make, "*the Gentiles obedient*" to the gospel of Christ (Romans 15:18 cf. Isa. 52:15). From Jerusalem to Yugoslavia (Illyricum) the sweet story of the Savior was heard as a single saint went forth to spread the gospel to the ends of the earth. Signs and wonders confirmed his ministry (Romans 15:19 cf. Acts 19:11).

22 For which cause also I have been much hindered [kept] from coming to you.

23 But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you;

24 Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your *company*.

25 But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.

15: 22-25 Because of his great affection for the people of Rome, Paul anticipated a visit to the Church on his way to Spain. Up to this point his missionary labors had prevented his going to Rome. (Note Romans 1:13; 1 Thessalonians 2:17, 18) "*But now, having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you; Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you*" (Romans 15:23,24). However, before Paul could start his journey to Spain and be able to stop in Rome, he had to visit Jerusalem. "*But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister to the saints*" (Romans 15:25).

26 For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.

27 It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.

28 When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain.

29 And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

30 Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in *your* prayers to God for me;

31 That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea; and that my service which *I have* for Jerusalem may be accepted [welcomed] of the saints;

32 That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.

33 Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

15: 26-33 The reason Paul had to go to Jerusalem was to deliver to the Jerusalem church a large offering that had been taken up on behalf of the saints. “*For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem*” (Romans 15:26). Paul thought this was not only a *good* thing for the Gentile believers to do for their Jewish brethren but the *right* response for having received the gospel. (Romans 15:27) Time and again in the course of his teaching, Paul will return to an interesting theme that material possessions have no comparison to eternal values being communicated or partaken of. (Romans 11:17 cf. 1 Cor. 9:11)

To Paul, it is *right* that those who have ministered spiritual things be supported by those with carnal things. So, after performing a ministry of financial mercy the apostle planned to resume his missionary labors and go to Rome on his way to Spain. What Paul did not realize was that God had different plans for him. Oh, Paul would go to Jerusalem. He would turn over the money he had received for the poor. And he would leave the city for Rome—but not the way he had planned. Paul did not know that he would be arrested in the Holy City.

Leader's Study Guide

Romans 15

Review

1. List six principles that should guide the behavior of the strong believer toward the weak.

Answer

The following principles should guide the behavior of the strong believer toward the weak.

- The strong believer is to gently and graciously receive the weak believer who is concerned about questionable matters (Romans 14:1).
 - The strong believer is not to belittle, think harshly of, nor pass ultimate judgment upon the weak believer (Romans 14:3, 10).
 - The strong believer is never to put before the weak believer any issue or situation that would tempt the weak believer to violate a personal principle and practice of faith (Romans 14:13).
 - The strong believer is not to recklessly destroy the value system of someone for whom Christ has died (Romans 14:15).
 - The strong believer is to manifest a life of personal faith all the while remembering that, *“if a person be convinced that a thing is contrary to God’s law, and yet practices it, he is guilty before God, although it should be found that the thing is lawful”* (Romans, Robert Haldane). *“What so ever is not of faith is sin.”*
 - The strong believer has a moral responsibility to bear the infirmities of the weak believer because of the example of Christ whose steps must be followed. (Romans 15:13).
2. What is the only source God has ordained to guide His people into a unity of the mind of Christ?

Answer

There is only one way for believers to be of like mind and that is to comply with the *Word of God*, the *Bible*.

3. Is it possible that Paul established the Church of Rome? On what basis can that be supported?

Answer

It is this *reminding* of the saints of something they had already been taught which has led some bible scholars to conclude that the Church of Rome was founded by those who had been converted under Paul's ministry (and not Peter's ministry as tradition holds). For Paul to be the original founder of the Church in Rome would not be too surprising for he was ordained to be, "*the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost*" (Romans 15:16).

4. What practical reason was leading Paul to Jerusalem?

Answer

The practical reason Paul had to go to Jerusalem was to deliver to the Jerusalem church a large offering that had been taken up on behalf of the saints. "*For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem*" (Romans 15:26).

5. Where was Paul's ultimate destiny to be if all went according to plan?

Answer

Paul's destiny after Rome was Spain.

Reflection

1. Why is it so difficult for those who are suppose to be "*strong*" in the faith to have a difficult time with those who are "*weak*" to the point that arguments break out and self righteousness is displayed?
2. Are you a student of the *Old Testament* as well as the *New Testament* in order to quote *Scripture* and apply the same to your beliefs and behavior as Paul did when establishing his theological points (Rom. 15:9-12)? If not write down some practical steps you will take to become more knowledgeable of the *Old Testament*. "*For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope*" (Romans 15:4).
3. What place do "*signs and wonders*" have in the church (Rom. 15:19)?
4. Believing in the power of prayer are you an effective prayer warrior before the throne of grace (Rom. 15:30)?
5. Can you share an event in your life where you wanted to do something for the Lord and were allowed to but in a way you never expected?

Personal Application

1. Do you seek to promote Christian unity in the church? What specifically do you do?
2. How do you praise God?
3. Have you ever considered starting a new ministry so as not to build upon the foundation started by someone else? What would you like to do that would be uniquely your own ministry?
4. Do you believe in providential hindrances? Can you see any evidence of this in your life?
5. Are you in the habit of praying specifically for others? Do you tend to promise to pray for someone and then not do it?

Memory

Romans 15:4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

Romans 16

Sincere Salutations to the Believers *Romans 16:1-27*

Introduction

Phebe, Phoebe (*fe' be; radiant*), was a Christian lady who was part of the church at Cenchrea. (Romans 16:1) Cenchrea (*sen'kreeah; pulverized, granular*) which refers to a harbor of Corinth located about 8 miles E of the city. Phebe, the servant [lit. *deaconess*] made her home there. Paul commended or introduced her favorably to the Church of Rome. The apostle wanted the saints there to assist “*her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succor [comfort] of many, and myself also*” (Romans 16:2).

1 I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant [deaconess] of the church which is at Cenchrea:

16:1 In matchless grace God entrusted this epistle to the hand of a woman during difficult days. Christians throughout the centuries owe to Phebe a debt of honor, appreciation and gratitude. God watched over her to preserve this valuable manuscript that was delivered safely into the hands of the elders at Rome, and through them it was given to the whole church.

2 That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.

16:2 Having set forth the nature (Romans 15:14), power (Romans 15:19a), and extent (Romans 15:19b) of his ministry, the apostle begins the final portion of the epistle with salutations to many individuals in the Church of Rome. Only five or six are Jews (Aquila and Priscilla, Andronicus, Junias, Herodion, and maybe Mary).

First Series: Salutation to Specific Saints *Romans 16: 3-20*

3 Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus:

16:3

- **Priscilla** (*pris'sil'lah; ancient, little old woman*), with her Christian Jewish husband Aquila, met Paul in the city of Corinth when the emperor Claudius ordered all the Jews to leave Rome in AD 49. Paul honors not only their friendship, but also their personal courage in spreading the gospel of redeeming grace. They were *helpers in Christ Jesus, Who have for my life laid down their own necks* (Romans 16:3, 4).

- **Aquila** (*ac'quilah; eagle*), was a Jewish man born in Pontus. For a time he lived with his wife Priscilla in Rome. (Romans 16:3) He settled in Corinth where he worked as a tentmaker. Because he was of the same occupation, Paul lodged with him (Acts 18:13).
- When the apostle began his travels to Syria, Aquila and Priscilla traveled with him from Corinth to Ephesus (Acts 18:18, 19). At Ephesus the devout couple met Apollos and instructed him more fully in the Christian faith (Acts 18:26).

4 Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.

5 Likewise *greet* the church that is in their house. Salute my well beloved Epaphroditus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ.

16:4-5

- **Epaphroditus** (*epen'etus; praiseworthy*), was one of the first to be converted to Christ from Achaia. (Romans 16:5) Achaia (*akah'yah, lit. Asia*), was a province of Rome in NW Greece. In 140 BC the Romans divided Greece into two provinces: Peloponnesus and Macedonia. When writing to the Church at Rome, Epaphroditus was greeted by Paul and described as his beloved.

6 Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour on us.

16:6

- **Mary**, an unknown lady of great grace who labored on behalf of the apostle Paul. (Romans 16:6)

7 Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ [Christians] before me.

16:7

- **Andronicus** (*andronni'cus; conquering man*), was Paul's relative who shared a prison sentence with the apostle. (Romans 15:7)
- **Junia**, was a certain disciple at the city of Rome, AD 60 who became a Christian before Paul and suffered imprisonment for the Savior. (Romans 16:7) The labors and sufferings of Junia and Andronicus were recognized among the original Twelve Apostles.

8 Greet Amplias my beloved [dear friend] in the Lord.

16:8

- **Amplias** (*am'pleas; enlarged*), a common name among the slaves of Rome, was an early Christian companion of Paul who was fondly thought of in the Lord. (Romans 16:8)

9 Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved.

16:9

- **Urbane** (*ur' bane; of the city, polite*), was also a popular slave name. Urbane is recognized as our (Romans 16:9) rather than my (Rome. 16:3) *helper in Christ* [or fellow worker] which suggests that his spiritual gifts were widely recognized and used.
- **Stachys** (*sta'kis; an ear [of corn]*) was a disciple in the Church of Rome. Paul sent him personal greetings. (Romans 16:9)

10 Salute Apelles approved in Christ. Salute them which are of Aristobulus' household.

16:10

- **Apelles** (*apel'leze; called*) was an *approved* Christian in Rome whom Paul greeted. (Romans 16:10) His faith had been proven to be genuine by some specific trial of faith. (cf. James 1:12)
- **Aristobulus** (*aristobu'lus; best advising; best counselor*) was a Christian in Rome. Paul greeted his household, including any Christian slaves. (Romans 16:10 cf. 1 Cor. 1:2-6; 3:1) Tradition presents Aristobulus as being a brother of Barnabas. He was ordained a bishop and ministered in Britain where he died.

11 Salute Herodion my kinsman. Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord.

16:11

- **Herodion** (*hero'deon*), was a Christian at Rome, a Jewish kinsman of Paul (Romans 16:11).
- **Narcissus** (*narsis' us; a well-known flower*), was a member of the Church in Rome to whom Paul sent special greetings. (Romans 16:11)

12 Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord.

16:12

- **Tryphaena** (*trifenah; delicate*), and **Tryphosa** (*trifo'sah, dainty*) were two Christian woman of Rome to whom Paul sent a special salutation for their service for the Savior. (Romans 16:12).
- **Persis** (*pur'sis; that cuts or, divides, a horseman*), was a beloved Christian lady in Rome to whom Paul sent greetings. (Romans 16:12) She gave much spiritual labor for the cause of Christ.

13 Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

16:13

- **Rufus** (*ru'fus; red*), was one included by Paul among those in Rome to whom he sent special greetings. (Romans 16:13) His mother was also honored as being a spiritual mother to Paul. Another man by this name was the brother of Alexander and the son of Simon the Cyrenian, whom the Jews forced to help bear the cross of Christ on His way to Calvary (Mark 15:21).

14 Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them.

16:14

- **Asyncritus** (*asin'critus; incomparable or, unlike*) was a Christian in Rome whom Paul greeted in the Lord prior to his visit to the great city. (Romans 16:14) He was probably a slave.
- **Phlegon** (*fle'gon; burning*), was a Christian disciple at the church in Rome to whom Paul sent greetings. He was probably a slave.
- **Hermas** (*her'mas*), was a Christian who resided in Rome. (Romans 16:14) He was probably a slave.
- **Patrobas** (*pat'robas; life of his father*), was a Christian in the city of Rome to whom Paul sent a greeting. (Romans 16:14) He was probably a slave.
- **Hermes** (*her'mees; gain, refuge*), was a Christian in Rome to whom Paul wrote. (Romans 16:14) He too was probably a slave.

15 Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them.

16:15

- **Philologus** (*filol'ogus; fond of talk*), was a Christian disciple in Rome to whom Paul sent greeting. (Romans 16:15) He may have been the husband of Julia.
- **Julia** (*ju'leah*) is the feminine of Julius. Julia was a woman who was a disciple at the city of Rome. (Romans 16:15)
- **Nereus** (*ne' reus; a lamp*), is the name of a Roman Christian to whom Paul sent greetings, AD 60. He may have been servant of the emperor of Rome. (Romans 16:15) His sister is not named.
- **Olympas** (*olim'pas; heavenly*), was a prominent believer in the house church at Rome. (Romans 16:15)

16 Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.

17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

19 For your obedience is come abroad unto all *men*. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple [harmless] concerning evil.

20 And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

Second Series: Salutations from Specific Saints
Romans 16:21-27

21 Timotheus my workfellow, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute [greet] you.

16:21

- **Timothy** (*tim' othy; beloved of God*), was taught the Law of God by his mother and grandmother (1 Tim. 1:5; 3:15). His mother was a Jewess and his father was a Greek (Acts 16:13). Timothy was converted at Lystra when Paul made his first visit there (Acts 14:6; 2 Tim. 1:5). The apostle Paul wanted Timothy to journey with him on his missionary work. After he was circumcised by the apostle, Timothy was set apart by the laying on of hands (1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6; 4:5). He traveled with Luke and Silvanus to Phillippi (Acts 16:12), where he was entrusted with the care of a church. Timothy appears at Berea, later uniting with Paul at Athens. From Athens, Timothy was sent to Thessalonica (1 Thess. 3:2).
- He returned to Athens. His name is associated with Paul's who wrote to the city of Thessalonica (1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1) and to the Church of Rome (Romans 16:21). Timothy was also with Paul when the apostle wrote the Epistles to the Philippians, to the Colossians, and to Philemon (Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:1; Phil. 1). Paul left Timothy at Ephesus to oversee the care for the church (2 Tim. 1:4).
- **Lucius** (*lushi' us, Lat. for Lucius, surnamed the Cyrenain*), was one of the prophets and teachers who ministered at Antioch. In the year AD 45, moved by the Holy Spirit, he ordained Barnabas and Paul to the work of the ministry (Acts 13:1; Romans 16:21).

- **Jason** (*ja' sun; healing*), provided for the needs of Paul and Silas in Thessalonica. When a mob wanted to hurt Paul but could not find him, they dragged Jason before the ruler who released him (Acts 17:59).
- **Sosipater** (*sosip'atur; savior of his father*), was a kinsman of Paul who sent greetings by the letter of Paul to the church at Rome. (Romans 16:21; note Acts 20:4)

22 I Tertius, who wrote *this* epistle, salute you in the Lord.

16:22

- **Tertius** (*tur'sheus; third*), was a disciple who acted as an amanuensis [secretary] to the Apostle Paul in the writing of *The Epistle to the Romans* (Romans 16:22). He may be the same as Titius Justus of Acts 18:7.

23 Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the chamberlain [treasurer] of the city saluteth you, and Quartus a brother.

16:23

- **Gaius** (*gah'yus*) was a resident of the city of Corinth whom Paul baptized. (1 Cor. 1:14) Christians assembled in the home of Gaius. (Romans 16:23)

24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

16:24

- **Erastus** (*eras'tus; beloved*), was the treasurer [chamberlain] of the city (perhaps Corinth cf. 2 Tim. 4:20). He was one of the first converts to Christianity (Romans 16:23).
- **Quartus** (*quar'tus; a fourth*), refers to a Christian from the city of Corinth who sent greetings by way of Paul to Rome.

25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,

16:25 The revelation of the mystery (Rom. 16:25) Allowing Scripture to interpret Scripture, the *revelation of the mystery* is made manifest. “*For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, if ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to youward: How that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the Gospel: whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of His power.*”

Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: in whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him” (Ephesians 3:1-12 cf. Col. 1:26ff).

What a wonderful truth it is that God loves Gentiles as well as Jews. God loves the nations as He has loved Israel. In matchless grace the gospel goes forth calling souls to salvation. No wonder Paul says, and all who love Christ says with him, “To God only wise, be glory *through Jesus Christ, for ever. Amen.*”

26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:

27 To God only wise, *be* glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

Special Note
Six Separate Topics
Romans 16:5-25

16:5-25 Woven into fabric of the apostle’s concluding comments are six special topics that are worthy of brief consideration.

- **Home churches.** (Romans 16:5) When the New Testament expression of the Church first met to worship, they generally did so in private homes. Such a physical setting allowed for a less formal leadership structure.
- A forum was provided for an active participation by all with emphasis on the priesthood of believers. Relationships were emphasized and nurtured by singing of songs, apostolic doctrine, teaching, communion, prayer, testimonies, exhortations, and expressions of affection. (Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 12:611; Romans 16:16) The institutional church that exists today emerged with the passage of time. The local assembly of believers is generally characterized today by a formal structure (i.e. a building, legal incorporation and staff), and a paid clergy (Pastors, etc.).
- **The need for verbal and physical affection.** (Romans 16: 16) A spirit of gratitude, along with verbal and physical expressions of love, should be part of the Christian fellowship. Notice how often Paul refers to someone as my beloved, my helper etc.

- **Church Discipline.** (Romans 16:17,18 cf. Matt. 18:15-17) While church discipline is certainly commanded by the Scriptures, it must be something more than a religious judicial process against immorality and doctrinal error. Church discipline is to take place within the context of a loving and caring pastoral environment. It is to be undergirded by instruction in righteousness, and permeated by gentleness and humility on the part of those who dare to administer discipline (Matt. 7:15; 28:20; John 21:15-17; Gal. 6:1; 2 Tim. 2:14-26; Titus 2; Heb. 13:17; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Cor. 2:5-11; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14-15; Tit. 1:10-14; 3:9-11).
- **The defeat of Satan.** (Romans 16:20) The Christian is wise to acknowledge the reality of Satan, take his opposition seriously, and understand his various strategies. There is a spiritual warfare and every Christian is part of it. However, Christ has already won the ultimate victory over the greatest enemy of heaven and earth. (Heb. 2:14) Satan is a strong creature but he is not divine. He is neither omniscient nor omnipotent, nor is he omnipresent. Moreover, His ultimate destiny is the Lake of Fire. (Rev. 20:10)

A Grand Doxology
Romans 16:25-27

16:25-27 *The Epistle to the Romans* comes to an end with a doxology that also serves as a summary of the message that Paul preached in love. In this closing paragraph, we have a great doctrinal declaration: God, the only true God, is of power to stablish those who believe in Him and receive Him as their God. Paul says that God establishes them according to my Gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ. Paul, like all other God ordained, Godsent ministers, preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ – and the Gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus according to the Scriptures.

Writing to the Corinthian believers, Paul said, “Moreover brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand: By which ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless you have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures (1 Cor. 15:14). Paul had a singular subject: The death, the burial, the resurrection of Jesus according to the Scriptures” (Romans, Oliver B. Greene).

It is the gospel that calls forth the greatest praises from the souls of the saints who love the Savior and value His redemptive work at Calvary. And what a privilege it is to be used of God to tell the greatest story ever told. It is the story of Jesus and His love.

Conclusion

There is a wonderful old story about how Christ returned to heaven after the ordeal of Calvary and after His resurrection. The marks of His great sufferings were still visible. An angel approached the Lord and said to him, “*You must have suffered terribly for men down there.* Jesus said simply enough, *I did. Do they all know about what you did for them?*” asked the angel.

“No”, responded the Lord, “Not yet. Only a few know so far. Well,” said the angel, “what have you done that the rest of mankind might know?”

And Jesus replied, “I have asked Peter and James and John and the rest of the disciples and their converts to make it their business to share with others and they in turn with still others until the farthest man on the widest circle of the globe has heard the gospel.”

The angel looked skeptical, for he knew all too well the frailty of fallen humanity. “Oh”, he said, “but what if Peter and James and John and others forget? What if they grow weary in well doing? What if they grow tired of telling the story? What then? Do you not have other plans?”

And Jesus answered, “I have no other plans. I’m counting on them.”

Leader's Study Guide

Romans 16

Review

1. What role did Phoebe play in the early church?

Answer

Phoebe was a Christian lady who, by being entrusted with Paul's epistle to the Romans was viewed as a deaconess or servant of the Most High God. Her faithfulness in accomplishing her task is to be commended.

2. How are individuals who bring disruption to the body of Christ to be treated? (Rom. 16:18).

Answer

Individuals who bring disruption to the body of Christ are to be treated in a very severe manner. They are to be marked out and avoided.

3. What physical display of affection is allowed within the body of Christ? (Rom. 16:16).

Answer

A holy kiss is proper within the body of Christ (Rom. 16:16).

4. Who wrote the text for Paul?

Answer

Tertius served as Paul's secretary.

5. What is the future of Satan?

Answer

Christ has already won the ultimate victory over the greatest enemy of heaven and earth. (Heb. 2:14)

Reflection

1. Are there Christians you should write to and encourage in the faith? If so do that this week.
2. Keeping in mind the apostolic injunction in Romans 16: 16 what should the position be of a Christian missionary that goes into a culture where public displays of affection is not allowed?
3. Have you ever known of a case of church discipline? Do you think church discipline is still proper for the church in the twenty-first century? Explain.

4. Why do you think relatively few individuals become Christians who have worldly wealth and position –though some do by God’s grace (Rom. 16: 23)?
5. Should a Christian with a heathen name seek to change it? Why?

Personal Application

1. Are you a servant within the church? What do you do in a servant’s capacity?
2. Were you surprised to find out who physically wrote this epistle (see Romans 16:22)? What are some other surprises you have found in the Bible and in the Christian life? Please be specific.
3. Would you ever consider allowing a home church in your residence?
4. Do you have the gift of hospitality? When was the last time you had a Christian in your home for a time of fellowship?
5. Do you understand the mysteries of the gospel? Have you studied them?

Memory

Romans 16:24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. 25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, 26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: 27 To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

Leader's Supplemental Material

Doctrine of the Mystery

1. In biblical language a mystery may have reference to a truth known to those who are within the sphere of understanding but unknown to those who are outside the fellowship of faith.
 - Those who are Christians can comprehend the gospel. *Mark 4:11 And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables:*
 - The church can understand that national Israel is under divine judgment. *Romans 11:25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.*
 - There is the mystery of the unity of believing Jew and believing Gentile into the one body of Christ.
 - The fact that Jesus Christ is very God of very God can be affirmed by faith. There is the revelation of the mystery of the gospel. *Romans 16:25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,*
2. The *Bible* also speaks of several mysteries that are not fully comprehensible.
 - There is the wisdom of God that is declared to be mysterious. *1 Corinthians 2:7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:*
 - There is the mystery of the transformation of the body at the resurrection. *1 Corinthians 15:51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,*
 - There is the mystery of the will of God. *Ephesians 1:9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:*
 - There is the mystery of divine truth sometimes communicated by special revelation. *Ephesians 3:3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)*
 - There is the mystery of the tri-unity. *Ephesians 3:9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:*

- There is the mystery of marriage whereby the bride/wife represents the relationship of Christ with the Church.
 - ❖ *Ephesians 5:32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.*
 - ❖ *Ephesians 6:19 And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,*
 - ❖ *Colossians 1:26 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:*
 - ❖ *Colossians 1:27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:*
 - ❖ *Colossians 2:2 That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;*
 - ❖ *Colossians 4:3 Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:*
 - ❖ *2 Thessalonians 2:7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.*
 - ❖ *1 Timothy 3:9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.*
 - ❖ *1 Timothy 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.*
 - ❖ *Revelation 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.*
 - ❖ *Revelation 10:7 But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.*
 - ❖ *Revelation 17:5 And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.*
 - ❖ *Revelation 17:7 And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.*

Dear Reader,

If through this study you have been blessed or if the Lord has set your soul free from a system of salvation by works and the fear of not being found justified and righteous before God, please write to either Mt. Zion Ministries or me, Stanford E. Murrell, and let us know how you have been blessed. I would personally enjoy hearing from you and would like to encourage you in your walk with the Lord. Please address any correspondence to one of the following places.

Dr. Stanford E. Murrell
5357 Indigo Crossing Drive
Viera, Florida 32955

Email: stanfordmurrell@yahoo.com

Website: www.stanfordemurrell.com

Or write to:

Mt. Zion Ministries
2603 W. Wright Street
Pensacola, FL 32505
850-438-6666
Email: chapel@mountzion.org
Website: www.mountzion.org