Romans

This document contains the 470-page teacher notes document for 48 Sunday school lessons walking through Romans. There is a 117-page complementary document containing student handouts that can be shared with listeners to aid them with this material. Lastly, there are 45 PowerPoint presentations with 352 pages to assist with visually displaying this content.

I claim no infallibility relative to the material presented here. It is, as many have said before, beggars showing other beggars where to find bread. These 939 pages of teaching resources are provided free for you to use in the spirit of Matthew 10:8b.

As errors are found, please let me know so I can correct. The theology expressed here should not be construed as representing the theology of Stuart Heights Baptist Church (especially when I am wrong or when I am being an idiot).

The formatting is as follows:

- **bold green text are quotes from outside sources**
- **bold red text is the Scripture** (ESV is used unless otherwise noted. Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.)
- **bold blue text are Bible references**
- **bold purple text are questions to consider asking listeners while teaching this material**
- **highlighted, bold, and underlined text in the teacher notes are answers to blanks in the student handouts**
- plain black text are my comments

The audio recordings of all 48 of these teachings (over 30 hours of content) are available via our class [podcast](#).

I hope these resources assist in enabling you to teach through Romans. Feel free to contact me at jim314@yahoo.com with questions or feedback.

A final word to those who attempt to teach through Romans. This series was intense—in its duration and in its complexity of content. Romans is not easy, but God is faithful.

Grace and peace,

Jim Fleming

Hixson, Tennessee

December 2017
Romans

Introduction & Overview

Part 1: Introduction (Bible study resources & our approaches)

What resources exist to help us understand the Bible?

Pretty much all resources can be categorized into the following four groups:

God’s divine resources provide **illumination**

1. **Holy Spirit** (prayer for ears to hear, help to obey, and illumination to understand)
2. The **Bible** (different translations (focus on ESV)—including original languages)

(the line of infallibility—spend more time above the line than below it)

Man’s human resources provide **confirmation**

3. **Church** (other believers)
4. **Tools** (things other believers created)

A gentle proposal

Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Larry Robertson (Hilldale Baptist, Clarksville, TN): The Bible is a load-bearing wall in our worship. Take it out and the structure falls in on itself, which is exactly what is happening in homes and churches and denominations across America.
Our approaches

Psalm 46:10a: Be still, and know that I am God

Psalm 37:7a: Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him

1. Don’t move until you see it—when it gets difficult (and it will), lean in. Slow down. (the picture is from Searching for Bobby Fischer)

   The opposite of this approach is hurry—which implies our timeline is better than God’s. Careful. There are things He wants to tell us that do not happen if we rush.

2. Stay close to the text—you’ll be tempted to wander, but stay close to the text

   Josh Waitzkin’s philosophy vs philosophologist.
   The application for us is text vs commentologist.

   You can study the text.
   You can study the people who have studied the text.
   Distribute your time wisely.

   Make sure you have a first-hand knowledge of the text. God doesn’t want a second-hand knowledge of you—have a first-hand knowledge of His Word.

   “We fight like we’re trained.” – Billy Simmons. The fight is coming.
   Full preparation for the fight won’t happen in 38 minutes a week.

   The opposite of this approach is that we view man’s words as higher than God’s words. This puts man in the place of God. Careful. We will be tempted to go further than the text goes. Let the text be our evidence. We are going to chip away at the idea that commentaries are infallible.

Part 2: Overview (of Romans and next steps)

Who wrote Romans?

Paul wrote the Epistle (a letter) to the Romans.

Where is Romans in the Bible?

Let’s go to the contents. Romans is in the New Testament, right after the Acts of the Apostles—in a big section of little letters called the Pauline Epistles (because Paul wrote them). Romans is first because it’s the longest in that group of letters.
When and where was Romans written from?

**Probably** around 57-58 AD during his third missionary journey while at Corinth.

### ROMANS TIMELINE

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<td>16-15</td>
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<td>8-16</td>
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**Kings**

- Herod Antipas (4 BC - AD 39)
- Herod Agrippa I (AD 25-44)
- Herod Agrippa II (AD 44-100)

**Rulers in Palestine**

- Pontius Pilate (AD 26-6)
- Antonius Felix (AD 60-62)
- Porcius Festus (AD 62-64)

**Persecution**

- Roman emperors
- Tiberius (AD 14-37)
- Claudius (41-54)
- Nerva (96-98)
- Vespasian (AD 69-79)

**Conversion**

- THE APOSTLE PAUL

**Jews expelled from Rome**

- 1ST MISSION (AD 44-48)
- 2ND MISSION (AD 51-53)
- 3RD MISSION (AD 54-58)
- 4TH MISSION (AD 59-62)

**Death, Resurrection & Ascension**

- JESUS CHRIST
- 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 65 70

**EARTHLY MINISTRY**

- 26-30

**Day of Pentecost**

- ROMAN EMPIRE

**Persecution of the Church**

**The Apostle Paul**

**Jim Fleming**

stuartheights.org/sundayschool
Paul obviously writes Romans to believers in Rome—but Rome’s size is highly disputed among historians (anywhere from 0.5 million to 5 million).

What is Romans about?

Much has been written about themes or purposes of Romans.

- John Stott says it’s about freedom, justification, and faith
- Mounce says it’s about the gospel
- Schreiner says it’s about resolving conflict between Jews and Gentiles, unifying the church, and glorifying God
- Ironside says it’s about the righteousness of God

Moo: The question of the purpose of Romans has been given so many different answers because Paul says almost nothing on the subject. . . . A theme that fits 1:16–11:36 may not fit the letter as a whole. Romans may, then, have several themes without having any single, unifying topic. Conclusion: The Spirit had much to say and said it all.

How is Romans organized?

There are as many views of that as there are commentators. A helpful perspective was brought out by Julia Gregg’s resource (Schreiner): “understand how the argument unfolds.” Romans is an argument because Paul is a lawyer. Look for the arguments.

Why the ESV?

- I picked this translation because each of us has two eyes. This translation is just different enough for most of us that it will keep us from moving too quickly through the familiar text we have seen and heard for so many years.
- “Essentially literal” (it’s on the left side of the page—good for Bible study)
- The reading level is similar to the NKJV, so that’s an easy transition for us

Note: No capitalization of words describing deity (His or Him)—just keep that in mind.

Thank you, Father (let’s stand to read the text)

Let’s take a minute and thank God for what we’re about to read—Romans is the letter that sparked the Reformation. Many of us are believers today in part because of the way these words influenced those before us. Men and women died to make this letter available to us in this language we can understand. Let us not walk casually through these words. Let us not be flippant when they are read. These words are the words of life: full of Gospel-delicious-goodness. Soak them in and savor them. They are life.

Read Romans 1:1–17 (we’ll spend the next three weeks looking at those 17 verses) (Note: reading all of Romans would take about 54 minutes—45 is hurrying)
What is our schedule?

- New Year’s to Easter: **Romans 1-4**
- Easter to Labor Day: **Romans 5-11**
- Labor Day to Christmas: **Romans 12-16**

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Homework

How can we prepare for Sunday school?

- Head (orthodoxy): ready to learn
- Hands (orthopraxy): ready to serve
- Heart (orthopathy): ready to engage

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans) (with the assumption we are missing almost everything)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wednesday)
Quotes & Observations

Stephen Samsel (Stott)

Romans is a kind of Christian manifesto of freedom through Jesus Christ. Freedom from the holy wrath of God upon all ungodliness. Freedom from alienation into reconciliation. Freedom from the condemnation of God’s law. Freedom from the fear of death. Freedom from ethnic conflict. Freedom to give ourselves to the loving service of God and others.

In his ministry of reconciliation between the Jews and the Gentiles, Paul develops two things and interweaves them beautifully. The first is the justification of guilty sinners by God’s grace alone in Christ, irrespective of status or works. This is the most humbling and equaling of all Christian truths. The second is that the people of God are no longer defined by descent, circumcision or culture, but according to faith in Jesus. So “there is no difference” now between Jews and Gentiles (Romans 3:22).

Darla Skinner (Mounce)

From previous experience Paul knew that his enemies were skilled in twisting his message. Galatians is proof of that. So important were his plans for taking the gospel to the far reaches of the western empire that he could not afford to have his message jeopardized in the very place he intended to use as a base of operations. So he wrote a rather full and complete presentation of the message he had been preaching. the result is the Book of Romans—a magnificent presentation of the gospel, the good news that God has provided a righteousness based not on what we can do for ourselves but on what God has already done for us in sending his Son as a sacrifice for sin. Paul’s purpose was to set forth in a systematic fashion the doctrine of justification by faith and its implications for Christian living. The gospel had to be kept free from legalism; equally important was that it did not fall into the opposite error of antinomianism.

Olivia Swint (MacArthur)

The famous sixteenth-century Bible translator William Tyndale wrote the following words in his preface to the book of Romans: Forasmuch as this epistle is the principal and most excellent part of the New Testament, and most pure evangelion, that is to say, glad tidings, and that we call gospel, and also a light and a way into the whole scripture; I think it meet that every Christian man that not only know it, by rote and without the book, but also exercise himself therein evermore continually, as with the daily bread of the soul. No man verily can read it too oft, or study it too well; for the more it is studied, the easier it is; the more it is chewed, the pleasanter it is; and the
more groundly it is searched, the preciouser things are found in it, so great treasure of spiritual things life he had therein.

George Jackson (Murray)

The gospel as the power of God unto salvation is meaningless apart from sin, condemnation, misery, and death. This is why Paul proceeds forthwith to demonstrate that the whole world is guilty before God and lies under his wrath and curse (1:18-3:20). We might think that the apostle would have drawn the curtain of concealment over the squalor of iniquity and degradation depicted in 1:18-32. For indeed it is a shame to speak of these religious and ethical monstrosities. But Paul was a realist and instead of drawing the curtain of concealment he draws it aside and opens to view the degeneracy of human reprobation. We ask, why? It is upon that degradation that the righteousness of God supervenes, and the glory of the gospel is that in the gospel is made manifest a righteousness of God which meets all the exigencies of our sin at the lowest depths of iniquity and misery.

Julia Gregg (Schreiner)

One of my favorite thoughts from the intro was that the purpose of this commentary was to “trace the flow of thought so that the reader could understand how the argument unfolds” (xiii). I had previously not considered Romans an argument (in terms of presentation) so I found this to be a key thought in examining the book of Romans. It has already altered my initial perspective and approach (in a positive and objective sense) as I read the text. The central theme of the book is the glory of God and this is further perpetuated in the outline used for my resource which is the book of Romans broken into 8 section all centered on God’s righteousness (25). Another quote that stood out to me was “exegesis begins with a patient and humble listening to the text” (2). This removes the drive of readers to process the text in an itemized fashion and instead allow the Holy Spirit to direct learning. I really loved this thought. Other thoughts that I gained as an overview was that Paul is in fact the author even though he used a “secretary,” Tertius, to pen it, chapters 1-16 should be considered the entire text which was penned between A.D. 55-58 (there are 10 decisive observations that my author reviews supporting this thought), and there are 3 purposes to the text: resolve conflict between Jews and Gentiles, unify the church, and to glorify God.

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

Things I learned or things that got my attention this week:

- In A.D. 14 there were about 4,100,000 living in the Roman empire. This was written sometime between March A.D. 57-58.
The church was made up of both Jews and Gentiles and this was written in Corinth during Paul’s 3rd missionary journey. His eastern campaign was over. Many future religious figures/leaders such as Aurelius Augustinus, Martin Luther, and John Wesley credit the book of Romans as a life altering experience. The first chapter of my book concentrated on Romans 1:1-7 with four study questions at the end. I did not realize Paul could pack so much content into 7 verses and even though I’ve read it many times, the questions really made me dig and consider things previously glanced over. Paul addresses them as bond servants because since a Roman slave was only answerable to his master, Paul was not just a servant to the Lord but a slave only answerable to God. Using references to slave and bond servants was terminology that the Romans could relate to. My book points out that the gospel is not about Jesus but IS Jesus. From the seed of David is a fulfillment of 2 Samuel 7:13 and Jeremiah 33:17. Jesus was not born the Son of God but declared the Son of God with power. There was a time when Jesus was not born to the family of David but there was NEVER a time when he was not the Son of God. Paul did not seek the calling and did not pray for it, but when it was received he used it to the fullest. I think it’s safe to say that we as Christians seek God out and pray for His guidance and wisdom and don’t use what He gives us a fraction of how Paul used his gifts which is sad. Grace and peace are used together in Paul’s writings. He did this to unite the Greek and Jewish modes of greeting. Paul wrote this letter to enlist the cooperation and support of the church at Rome for the missionary campaign in the west, enlist prayer support of the Roman Christians, and wanted to deposit theological truth.

Sean McGarvey (Ironside)

“The epistle to the Romans is undoubtedly the most scientific statement of the divine plan for the redemption of mankind that God has been pleased to give us.” He goes on to cite Paul’s unique upbringing, qualifications, and skill set in crafting/delivering this work.

“The theme of the epistle is the righteousness of God. It forms one of an inspired trio of expositions that together give us an amazingly rich exegesis of a very brief Old Testament text. The text is found in Habakkuk 2:4 ‘The just shall live by faith.’ As quoted three times in the New Testament, there are just six words. The pronoun his being omitted. The three letters referred to are Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews, each of which is based upon this text. Romans has to do particularly with the first two words.
Its message is, ‘The just shall live by faith’ (1:17), answering the question that is raised in the book of Job, ‘How [shall] man be just with God?’ (9:2).” page 12

Galatians expounds on shall live (3:11)—in the Spirit, and Hebrews takes up by faith (10:38)—by which alone the justified believer walks. I am seeing a longitudinal Lego approach application here.

He breaks Romans into 3 sections:

1. Chapters 1-8 are doctrinal and give us the righteousness of God revealed in the gospel.

2. Chapters 9-11 are dispensational and give us the righteousness of God harmonized with His dispensational ways.

3. Chapters 12-16 are practical and set forth the righteousness of God producing practical righteousness in the believer.” page 13

Check this example of The Forum:

“Someone has aptly designated Romans as ‘The Epistle of the Forum.’ This, I think, is the most helpful. In this letter the sinner is brought into the courtroom, the forum, the place of judgment, and shown to be utterly guilty and undone. But through the work of Christ a righteous basis has been laid upon which he can be justified from every charge. Nor does God stop here, but He openly acknowledges the believing sinner as His own son, making his a citizen of a favored race and owning him as His heir. Thus the challenge can be hurled at all objectors, ‘What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?’ Every voice is silenced, for ‘it is God that justifieth’ (Rom. 8:33), and this not at the expense of righteousness but in full accord therewith. This view readily accounts for the use of legal and judicial terms so frequently found in the argument.” page 15

“You will remember how Socrates expressed himself five hundred years before Christ. ‘It may be,’ he said, addressing himself to Plato, ‘that the Deity can forgive sins, but I do not see how.’ It is this that the Holy Spirit takes up so fully in this epistle. He shows us that God does not save sinners at the expense of His righteousness. In other words, if saved at all, it will not be because righteousness has been set aside in order that mercy might triumph, but mercy has found a way whereby divine righteousness can be fully satisfied and, yet, guilty sinners justified before the throne of high heaven.” page 16

Take a look at the conclusion drawn from 1 John 1:9 with Ironside’s view through Romans: “Since Christ has died, God could not be faithful to Him nor just to the believing sinner if He still condemned the one who trusts in Him who bore ‘our sins in his own body on the tree’ (1 Peter 2:24).”
I know I am supposed to be summarizing this intro, but there’s a ton of good stuff. Ironside wraps his comments with the thought that:

“... in Romans, we have the gospel taught to saints rather than the gospel preached to unsaved sinners. I believe it is very important to see this. In order to be saved it is only necessary to trust in Christ. But in order to understand our salvation and, thus, to get out of it the joy and blessing God intends to be our portion, we need to have the work of Christ unfolded to us. This is what the Holy Spirit has done in this precious epistle. It is written to people who are already saved to show them the secure foundation upon which their salvation rests; namely, the righteousness of God. When faith apprehends this, doubts and fears are gone and the soul enters into settled peace.” page 16

Julie Fleming (Keller)

“...the righteousness of God is that righteousness by which through grace and sheer mercy God justifies us by faith.” – Martin Luther

The gospel message of Romans is that the perfection and holiness of God has been seen in the life and death of Jesus Christ; and that this perfection is offered to us, as a free gift, through the life and death of Jesus Christ.

Paul shows us not only how God in the gospel makes sinners righteous, but also how this most precious gift of God is enjoyed in our lives.

Rachel Samsel (McGee)

Who founded the church in Rome? I am going to make a rather unusual statement here: Paul is the one who founded the church in Rome, and he founded it, as it were, by long distance.

He goes on to talk about how Paul had never been to Rome when he wrote the book of Romans, yet he had moved throughout the Roman Empire winning many to Christ and then many of those people went to Rome as Rome was a tremendous city and was like a magnet drawing people there. I had not focused on Paul knowing so much about Roman Empire and writing to Rome and speaking of it like he had been there, yet he had not been to Rome itself. And I had not focused on the fact that some of the people in the church there were led to Christ by Paul or that he could have founded something “long distance.”

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

I don’t have an introduction to Romans in my book. There is however, a letter to preachers. This one line really struck me. Though we can never perfectly embody the truth we preach, we must be subject to it, long for it, and make it as much a part of our ecosystem possible.
This goes for the person listening as well. We get to live out His word and truth every day and when we continually fail He will continue to pick us up. It’s funny how one sentence can get you thinking. We have the privilege, every day, to be His. I am so grateful that He claims me all the time, not just when my words and actions are perfect. I must seek Him and live out His truth every day, even if I can’t do it perfectly.

**Jim Fleming (Moo)**

“The ‘purest Gospel,’ as Luther put it.

Minear’s thesis goes beyond the evidence.

The question of the purpose of Romans has been given so many different answers because Paul says almost nothing on the subject.

As Luther said, “[Romans] is worthy not only that every Christian should know it word for word, by heart, but occupy himself with it every day, as the daily bread of the soul. It can never be read or pondered too much, and the more it is dealt with the more precious it becomes, and the better it tastes.”

In other words, a theme that fits 1:16-11:36 may not fit the letter as a whole. Romans may, then, have several themes without having any single, unifying topic.
Romans

Greeting (Romans 1:1-7)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Read: Greeting (1:1-7)

1 Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, 2 which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, 3 concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh 4 and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, 5 through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, 6 including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

7 To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
Explain: Greeting (1:1-7)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

This text is one sentence in the ESV (reading orally is difficult because of the breathing).

- Side comment 1: If you know you’re going to read Scripture in public, practice. The reader conveys much to the listener through the manner of reading.
- Side comment 2: Paul, the lawyer king of the comma, uses extended arguments. Feel free to read Romans repeatedly to understand what Paul is saying. Jessica Norris: I do not know why but figuring out that Paul was a lawyer made me read the first 7 verses this week as if it were an opening statement at trial, laying out facts for a jury, and trying to “win” them to his team.

Stott: Letter-writing conventions vary from culture to culture. We address our correspondent first (“Dear Joan”) and identify ourselves only at the end (“Yours sincerely, John”). In the ancient world, however, the custom was to reverse the order, the writer announcing himself or herself first and the correspondent next (“John to Joan, greetings!”). Paul normally followed the convention of his day, but here he deviates from it by giving much more elaborate description of himself than usual, in relation to the gospel.

How much can you say in one sentence? This week’s text reminded me of the length of the first sentence of A Tale of Two Cities: It was the best of times, it was the worst of times . . . .

In Greek, Romans 1:1-7 would look something like this (no spaces between words, no punctuation, and everything in capital letters).

ΠΑΥΛΟΣΟΙΛΟΣΧΡΙΣΤΟΥΗΣΟΥΚΛΗΤΟΣΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΣΑΦΩΡΙΣΜΕΝΟΣΕΙΣΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝΘΕΟΥΌΠΟΡΕΠΗΓΕΙΛΑΤΟΔΙΑΗΝΠΡΟΦΗΤΩΝΑΤΟΥΕΝΓΡΑΦΑΙΣΑΓΙΑΣΠΕΡΙΤΟΥΙΟΙΑΥΤΟΤΟΥΓΕΝΟΜΕΝΟΥΕΚΣΠΕΡΜΑΤΟΣΔΑΓΙΔΚΑΤΑΣΡΚΑΤΟΥΟΡΙΣΘΕΝΤΟΥΙΟΘΕΟΥΕΝΔΥΝΑΜΕΙΚΑΤΑΠΝΕΥΜΑΓΙΩΣΥΝΗΣΕΧΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΕΩΣΜΕΚΡΙΝΗΣΟΥΧΡΙΣΤΟΤΟΥΚΥΡΙΟΥΜΩΝΔΙΟΥΕΛΑΒΟΜΕΝΧΑΡΙΝΚΑΙΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΗΝΕΙΣΥΜΦΑΝΚΟΝΠΙΣΤΕΟΣΕΝΠΗΣΙΝΟΣΕΤΕΟΜΠΟΡΤΟΥΟΝΜΑΤΟΣΑΥΤΟΥΕΝΟΙΣΕΣΤΕΚΑΙΩΜΕΣΚΑΛΗΤΟΙΗΣΟΥΧΡΙΣΤΟΥΠΗΣΙΝΟΣΟΥΣΙΝΕΝΘΡΩΜΗΓΑΠΗΤΟΙΣΘΕΟΥΚΛΗΤΟΤΣΑΓΙΟΙΣΧΡΙΣΤΟΥΚΑΙΕΙΡΗΝΗΑΠΘΕΟΥΠΑΤΡΩΣΗΜΩΝΚΑΙΚΥΡΙΟΥΗΣΟΥΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ

So . . . be grateful for your English version with its punctuation and capitalization.

Julie Fleming: Did Paul know about periods??
Let’s read the text again—this time asking the question:

**What do the words mean?**

The easiest way to answer this question is to go to an interlinear and see some definitions. Here’s the one I use ([studylight.org/isb](http://studylight.org/isb)):

**Romans 1:1**

*KJV* – Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated (5772) unto the gospel of God,

*NA* – παύλος δούλος χριστοῦ ἱσαχ, κλητὸς ἀπόστολος, ἀφωρισμένος (5772) εἰς εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ,

Clicking on one of the Greek words results in something like this:

You can see the following:

- the Strong’s number
- what the word looks like in Greek
- a transliteration (turning the Greek letters into English letters)
- a pronunciation guide
- the part of speech
- a definition
- how many times its used in other translations
- etc.
If you click on all the words, you end up with something like this (~Amplified Bible):

1 Paul [“little”], a servant [doulos, slave, bondservant] of Christ [“anointed”] Jesus [“Jehovah is salvation”], called [invited, appointed, called] to be an apostle [delegate, ambassador], set apart [set off by boundary, limited, excluded, appointed, divided, separated, severed; perfect (completed action with the results continuing) middle participle] for the gospel [gospel, good message] of God, 2 which he promised beforehand [promised of old, promised before; aorist active indicative] through his prophets [foretellers, inspired speakers, poets, prophets] in the holy [sacred, pure, consecrated, holy, saint] Scriptures [documents, Scriptures], 3 concerning his Son [child, son], who was descended [seed, offspring, remnant, issue; second aorist active participle] from David [“beloved;” ESV footnote: Or who came from the offspring of David] according to the flesh [meat, flesh, physical body, human being] 4 and was declared [marked out, bounded, appointed, decreed, specified, declared, determined, limited, ordained; the root word for set apart in 1:1; aorist middle participle] to be the Son [child, son] of God in power [dynamis; force, miraculous power, ability, abundance, might, power, strength, violence, mighty work] according to the Spirit [current, breath, breeze, spirit, soul] of holiness [sacredness, holiness] by his resurrection [standing up, resurrection, moral recovery, raising from the dead, rising again] from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord [supreme authority, controller, Mr., God, Lord, master, sir], 5 through whom we have received [taken, gotten hold of, accepted, attained, brought, caught, held, obtained, received, taken away; second aorist active indicative] grace [graciousness, acceptable, benefit, favor, gift, gracious, grace, joy, liberality, pleasure, thanks, thankworthy] and apostleship [commission, apostolate, apostleship] to bring about the obedience [attentive hearkening, compliance, submission, obedience] of faith [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity] for the sake of his name [called name, name] among all the nations [races, tribes, foreign ones, Gentiles, heathens, nations, peoples], 6 including you who are called [invited, appointed, called—same word used in Romans 1:2; present middle indicative] to belong to Jesus Christ,

7 To all those in [present middle participle] Rome [“strength”] who are loved [agapetos; beloved, dear] by God and called [invited, appointed, called—same word used in Romans 1:2, 6] to be saints [sacred, pure, consecrated, holy, saint; same word used in Romans 1:2]:

Grace [graciousness, acceptable, benefit, favor, gift, gracious, grace, joy, liberality, pleasure, thanks, thankworthy—same word used in Romans 1:5] to you and peace [peace, prosperity, one, quietness, rest, to be set at one again] from God our Father [parent, father] and the Lord Jesus Christ.
If this seems tedious—it is. This is Bible study: focusing on and meditating on words. Bible study is staring at the text and asking for help. Bible study is about thinking and thinking about the text. Bible study is not about hurrying—this is about waiting and staring. This is using a crock pot; it’s not about using a microwave.

After staring at the text, we see that we should ask more questions.

Are there any **repeated** Greek words?

- **called**
- **declared**
- **grace**

**How is ‘called’ used?** ("called" is used three times)

- Paul was called to be an apostle (1:1)
- We are called to belong to Jesus Christ (1:6)
- We are called to be saints (1:7) Ironside: We do not become saints by acting in a saintly way . . . we are constituted saints.

**How is ‘declared’ used?** (”declared” is used twice)

- Paul was set apart (declared) for the gospel (1:1)
- Jesus was declared to be the Son (1:4)

**How is ‘grace’ used?** (”grace” is used twice)

- We receive grace from Christ (1:5)
- Paul greets the Romans with grace (1:7)

Christ (4), God (4), Jesus (4), called (3), son (2), grace (2), Lord (2)

Are there any topics Paul brings up more than once?

- **Jesus** (1:1-7)
- Jesus’ **sonship** (1:3, 4)
- ???

Next, we can step back a bit and make some observations of the text.

What are some **observations** of the text?

1 **Paul, a servant** [Paul calls himself a doulos] of Christ Jesus [Paul makes a beeline to Jesus], **called** [Paul was called; Ravi Zacharias: A job is something you choose. A calling is something for which you have been chosen. God has a calling on your life.] to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God [Paul makes a beeline to the gospel; Chris Arnold: There is humility there, and a reminder that this is God’s business, not Paul’s; Rachel Samsel/McGee: Separated from something and separated to something are two different things], 2 which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures [Paul connects Jesus with the prophets of the Old Testament; Paul also had extensive knowledge of the Old Testament from his pre-Jesus days (God will use what you learned before Christ for Christ)], 3 concerning his Son, who was descended from
David [Paul connects Jesus with King David] according to the flesh 4 and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead [Paul says the resurrection and the Spirit declared Jesus to be God—the resurrection was the stamp of approval on Jesus’ life and message; MacIver: The Resurrection is God’s last and loudest proclamation, “This is My beloved Son: hear ye Him”], Jesus Christ our Lord [Paul declares Jesus to be Lord], 5 through whom we have received grace [We receive grace through Jesus] and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name [MacArthur: Although God gave His own Son to save the world (John 3:16) and does not wish for any person to perish (2 Pet 3:9) it must be recognized that the primary purpose of the gospel is not for man’s sake but God’s, for His name’s sake. Man’s salvation is simply a by-product of God’s grace; It’s main focus is to display God’s glory.] among all the nations, 6 including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ [Our salvation is connected with our calling],

7 To all those in Rome [Paul had not been to Rome, but he knew folks there] who are loved by God and called [Paul connects the ideas of love and calling] to be saints:

Grace [This is the Gentile greeting] to you and peace [This is the Jewish greeting] from God our Father [Gentiles and Jews have the same Father in God] and the Lord Jesus Christ [Gentile and Jews have the same Lord in Jesus Christ].

Stott summarizes Romans 1:1-7 well: To sum up, here are six fundamental truths about the gospel. Its origin is God the Father and its substance is Jesus Christ his Son. Its attestation is Old Testament Scripture and its scope all the nations. Our immediate purpose in proclaiming it is to bring people to the obedience of faith, but our ultimate goal is the greater glory of the name of Jesus Christ.

Apply (What is the point?)

(let’s do three for Bible study and three for Romans

1. Bible study is slow
2. Bible study asks questions
3. Bible study asks more questions

1. Paul focuses on Jesus
2. Paul focuses on the gospel
3. Paul starts with grace and peace

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

(This is a BIG shift for me—moving from “me” to “we” with the personalization. This letter was written to a group and not an individual, so the personalization is plural.)

1. Slow down and stare at the text
2. Talk (to the HS & to each other)
3. Talk more (to the HS & to each other)

1. Focus on Jesus
2. Focus on the gospel
3. Talk about grace and peace
Next week: Longing to Go to Rome (1:8-15)

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world. 9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention you—always in my prayers, asking that somehow by God’s will I may now at last succeed in coming to you. 10 For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you—12 that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith, both yours and mine. 13 I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented), in order that I may reap some harvest among you as well as among the rest of the Gentiles. 14 I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. 15 So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask the Holy Spirit for help
- Read Romans (once) and Romans 1:8-15 (a lot)
- Talk to someone in our class about Romans
- Read your resource and email Jim (jim314@yahoo.com) helpful quotes and/or insights by Wednesday

Quotes & Observations

Doug Skinner (Phillips)

Abraham Lincoln once said, “I can see how it might be possible for a man to look down upon the earth and be an atheist, but I cannot conceive how he could look up into the heavens and say there is no God.”

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

The author made it a point to focus on that Paul “knew who he was.” “Paul’s introduction introduces us to deeper and more productive levels of spiritual life.”

He breaks the verses down into:

Paul’s view of himself vs 1
Paul’s view of preaching 2-4

Paul’s view of his commission 5

Paul’s view of the Roman believers (and us) 6-7

V. 1: So we see that the key to Paul’s self image is servant-hood. At the root of his psyche this incredibly productive man views himself primarily as a slave of Christ.

Paul was not self appointed! God called him! . . . God had summoned him. . . . At the base of Paul’s self perception was the fact that his lifework was God’s doing. What a comfort-what a motivation.

V. 5: The author mentions that Paul sees his commission largely as a matter of graces. “The grace of God is infinite and eternal.”

V. 6-7: “Fellow believers we are loved by God! We need to get used to this, but we should never get over it.” I read this quote to J and I believe that he summed up my thoughts really well: “If you could ever get used to the fact that He loves you, you could get over it really fast. How could you get used to? Why does He love me?” In my opinion there is a fine line between getting used to it and becoming complacent with it.

I for one am in awe that God loves me and calls me His own. He picked me, the Savior of the world loves me; for me that’s hard to get used to. I don’t think that I want to get used to it, I want to continue to be in awe of His love for me. There are days that I don’t recognize His love for me in the way that it deserves, I am after-all human. There are also days that I am so overwhelmed with the fact that God loves me.

He finished the section with this:

**We are loved of God,**

**We are saints,**

**We are objects of His grace and unending favor**

**His peace is ours**

**Forever.**

**Karrie Harness (MacArthur Bible Study)**

In the opening statement Paul explains his job title, his MO, referenced OT for support and his declaration of who Jesus was, both from an earthly standpoint and as a divine being, how it relates to us and what we then are called to do . . . all in one breath. Gotta love commas!
Darla Skinner (Mounce)

The Old Testament continually points beyond itself to a time of fulfillment, the age to come. God made his promise “through his prophets” in the Old Testament. He entrusted his message to be written down. What the prophets wrote became “Holy Scriptures.” Here we have a brief summary of the method God chose in order to communicate with his people. Scripture originated with God. He used prophets to communicate his will, and they accomplished that purpose by writing down what God was pleased to reveal. The result was Scripture that is holy.

Sean McGarvey (Ironside)

The writer, Paul, designates himself a servant—literally, bondman—of Jesus Christ. He does not mean, however, that his was a service of bondage, but rather the wholehearted obedience of one who realized that he had been ‘bought with a price’ (1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23), even the precious blood of Christ. p. 17

Ironside writes of Paul being “separated unto the gospel of God” as others like Moses, Jeremiah, and John the Baptist being “separated from his mother’s womb” (Galatians 1:15). This separation also has facets of 1) Paul being delivered from both the people of Israel and the Gentile nations and freed to be a minister and witness, and 2) of his specific separation with Barnabas for the work of carrying the gospel to the Gentiles.

He dials in on the definition of the gospel as not a new law, not a code of morals or ethics, not a creed to be accepted, not a system of religion, and not good advice, but rather “a divinely given message concerning a divine Person, the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord. This glorious Being is true Man, yet very God. He is the Branch that grew out of David, therefore true Man. But He is also the Son of God, the virgin-born, who had no human father, and this His works of power demonstrate. To this blessed fact the Spirit of Holiness bare witness when He raised dead persons to life.” p. 19

“From Him, the risen One, Paul had received grace (not only unmerited favor, but favor against merit, for he had deserved the very opposite) and apostleship by divine call that he might make known the gospel unto all nations to the obedience of faith for Christ’s name’s sake.” p. 19

As for the “to all that be in Rome,...called...saints (v. 7)”: “Observe that they were all saints in the same way that he was an apostle, namely, by divine call. We do not become saints by acting in a saintly way, but because we are constituted saints we should manifest saintliness.” p. 19
Chris Arnold (Barclay)

So we know that Paul wanted to get to Spain, and had been planning to do so while concurrently addressing various issues within the various churches. So Galatians, Corinthians, Philemon, et.al. all seem to deal with a current ISSUE - pantheism, slavery, legalism, etc. There are also shepherding tendencies in his letters that are designated to keeping the churches on track. This may be because he had such a large hand in planting and physically living with the people in these churches. They are his “babies,” if you will.

Romans stands out immediately as being the “Introduction to Paul” letter.

He’d not been to the church in Rome and had not started it, although there does seem to be evidence of him knowing people who may have been instrumental in the early stages of the church in Rome (Priscilla, Aquila, Epaenetus, Mary, etc). So this letter would be his formal introduction. He will lay out who he is, what he is about, and why, possibly to build anticipation for his arrival. To set the stage for his work in Christ, and maybe even to build a base from which he could more easily achieve his desire to get to Spain.

So he starts out writing to a church in what is probably one of the most (if not THE most) important cities of the world . . . and he says in the style of the day, “I am Paul, I’m writing you, and we are going to talk about Jesus. We are gonna talk about him because he is the Son of God, and he loves you.”

It strikes me that Paul starts out the letter to the Romans just like we should start our prayers. Acknowledging God, Praising Him, and reaffirming our faith and belief in Him as our Redeemer. What an awesome example to show!

He also puts it in perspective. This is PAUL THE APOSTLE, about whom anticipation and excitement may well be high, and he says “I’m a servant/slave of Christ, Called to be an apostle, and set apart for the Gospel of God.” There is humility there, and a reminder that this is God’s business, not Paul’s.

Barclay said that “Paul never thought of himself as a man who had aspired to an honour, he thought of himself as a man who had been given a task.”

And he right away affirms the Birth of Christ, his descent from King David, and His Bodily Resurrection – leading to our salvation. He underscores the fulfillment of prophecy as well.

All of this is ONE sentence.
Jessica Miller (Stott)

Luther: Here the door is thrown open wide for the understanding of the Holy Scripture, that is, that everything must be understood in relation to Christ.

Nygen: So the resurrection is the turning point in the existence of the Son of God. Before that he was the Son of God in weakness and lowliness. Through the resurrection he becomes the Son of God in power.

It seems that the two expressions ‘according to the flesh’ and ‘according to the Spirit’ refer not to the two natures of Jesus Christ (human and divine), but to the two stages of his ministry, pre-resurrection and post-resurrection, the first frail and the second powerful through the outpoured Spirit. So here is a balanced statement of both the humiliation and the exaltation, the weakness and the power of God’s Son, his human descent traced to David, his divine sonship-in-power established by the resurrection and gift of the Spirit. Moreover, this unique person, seed of David and Son of God, weak and powerful, incarnate and exalted, is Jesus (a human, historical figure), Christ (the Messiah of Old Testament Scripture), our Lord, who owns and rules our lives. Perhaps we could add that Jesus’ two titles, ‘the Christ’ and ‘the Lord,’ will have specially appealed to Jewish and Gentile Christians respectively.

[On 1:16] What he is affirming is that the gospel is for everybody; its scope is universal. . . . We too, if we are to be committed to world mission, will have to be liberated from all pride of race, nation, tribe, caste and class, and acknowledge that God’s gospel is for everybody, without exception and without distinction. This is a major theme of Romans.

[On 1:17] For the proper response to the gospel is faith, indeed faith alone. Yet a true and living faith in Jesus Christ both includes within itself an element of submission (cf. 10:3), especially because its object is ‘Jesus Christ our Lord’ (4) or ‘the Lord Jesus Christ’ (7), and leads inevitably into a lifetime of obedience. That is why the response Paul looked for was a total, unreserved commitment to Jesus Christ, which he called ‘the obedience of faith.’ This is our answer to those who argue that it is possible to accept Jesus Christ as Savior without surrendering to him as Lord. It is not. Certainly the Roman Christians had believed and obeyed, for Paul describes them as being among those who are called to belong to Jesus Christ (6).

We should be ‘jealous’ (as Scripture sometimes puts it) for the honor of his name—troubled when it remains unknown, hurt when it is ignored, indignant when it is blasphemed, and all the time anxious and determined that it shall be given the honor and glory which are due to it. The highest of all missionary motives is neither obedience to the Great Commission (important as that is), nor love for sinners who are alienated and perishing (strong as that incentive is, especially when we contemplate
the wrath of God, verse 18), but rather zeal—burning and passionate zeal—for the glory of Jesus Christ.

To sum up, here are six fundamental truths about the gospel. Its origin is God the Father and its substance is Jesus Christ his Son. Its attestation is Old Testament Scripture and its scope all the nations. Our immediate purpose in proclaiming it is to bring people to the obedience of faith, but our ultimate goal is the greater glory of the name of Jesus Christ.

Tim & Mila Archer (Maclaren)

Chapter 1:1-7 The Witness of the Resurrection

vs 1-4

It is a great mistake to treat Paul’s writings, and especially, this Epistle, as mere theology. Thy are the transcript of his life’s experience.

Both (birth and ascension) are supernatural. and the Virgin Birth corresponds at the beginning to the supernatural Resurrection and Ascension, at the close. Both, such an entrance into the world and such a departure from it, proclaim at once His true humanity, and that “this is the Son of God.”

The Resurrection is God’s last and loudest proclamation, “This is My beloved Son: hear ye Him”.

Scripture not only represents Christ’s Resurrection as a divine act but also as the act of Christ’s own power. In His earthly life He asserted that His relation both to physical death and to resurrection was an entirely unique one. “I have power”, said He, “to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again”; and yet even in this tremendous instance of self-assertion, He remains the obedient Son, for He goes on to say, “This is my commandment have I received of My Father”.

If the death of Christ were not followed by His Resurrection and Ascension, the whole fabric of Christianity falls to pieces.

If we have only a dead Christ, we have not a living Christianity.

vs. 7

Here were plenty of imperfect Christians amongst them; many things to rebuke; much deadness, coldness, inconsistency, and yet none of these in the slightest degree interfered with the application of these great designations to them. So, the, “Beloved of God” and “saints” are not distinctions of classes within the pale of Christianity, but belong to the whole community, and to each member of the body.

Each man gets as much of the love of God as it is possible to pour upon him.
I need only observe, further, that the word “called” here does not mean “named” or designated”, but summoned. It describes not the name by which Christian men are known, but the thing which they are invited, summoned, and called by God to be. It is their vocation, not their designation. Now, I need not, I suppose, remind you that “saint” and “holy” convey the precisely the same idea: the one expression it in a word of Teutonic, and the other in one of classic derivation.

Either God is my center, and that is holiness; or self is my center. in more or less subtle forms, and that is sin.

There is no faith which does not lead to surrender.

Consecration may be cultivated, and must be cultivated and increased. There is a solemn obligation laid upon everyone of us who call ourselves Christians, to be saints, in the sense that we have consciously yielded up our whole lives to Him; and are trying, body, soul, and spirit, “to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord”.

Julie Fleming (Keller)

Keller starts chapter 1 in his book saying “Romans is, at its heart, a letter about the gospel.”

Verse 1 Paul introduces himself. He says he is a servant-a slave. “He has a master. He is a man under authority.” Called to be an apostle, set apart. “Paul was set apart to spread the gospel, to pursue this one overriding aim. This is what Paul will “slave” for all his life; but it is also what he will rejoice in through all his life.”

Keller says the gospel means ‘good herald’, it’s an announcement. “Paul is the herald of this announcement. The gospel is not Paul’s but it is of God.”

Verse 3: concerning his Son: “The gospel centers on Jesus. It is about a person, not a concept; it is about him, not us.”

Verse 4: declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead: “His resurrection and ascension were his path to his rightful place. It is where we see not only that he is the Son of God, but that he is now the Son of God in power.”

“The gospel is both a declaration of Jesus’ perfect rule, and an invitation to come under that perfect rule to make him ‘our Lord.’”

Verse 5: to bring about the obedience of faith- “Obedience flows out of faith; it is a consequence of saving faith, not a second condition for salvation.” “True faith in our hearts brings obedience in our lives. There will be a joyful obedience that flows from truly trusting this King.”
Verse 6-7: Paul describes the church in Rome in 4 ways, “called to belong to Jesus Christ, loved by God, called to be saints, and (they) enjoy grace and peace from God our Father and Lord Jesus Christ.”

Did Paul know about periods?? That is one crazy long sentence!

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

The gospel had been preannounced by the old testament prophets from Genesis 3:15-Malachi 4:2. Paul quoted 61 times from the old testament during his writings.

Paul was the bridge between the Jews and the Gentiles.

Christ was not born but eternally is God the Son. His humiliation came when he volunteered to be made in the likeness of man and His exaltation came when He was resurrected by the Holy Spirit of God.

Love and service, being loved and being set apart as saints always go hand in hand.

I do not know why but figuring out that Paul was a lawyer made me read the first 7 verses this week as if it were an opening statement at trial, laying out facts for a jury, and trying to “win” them to his team.

Christen Barber (Luther)

[Romans] can never be read or pondered too much, and the more it is dealt with the more precious it becomes, and the better it tastes.

It’s really interesting how the beginning of this commentary is Luther defining basic theological terms (law, sin, grace, faith, etc.) but it’s not really surprising considering this was before the Reformation, when people really started studying the Bible for themselves. He especially focuses on explaining what the law is, emphasizing that the works that fulfill the law do not necessarily have any “heart” in them. I assume this is to introduce his audience to the common theme of “not by works lest any man should boast” that is found throughout Romans, a concept that, I imagine, was foreign to the pre reformation church.

Rachel Samsel (McGee)

In regards to verse 1 where it says “separated unto” McGee points out that being separated from something and separated to something are two different things. A Christian who is separated from something and not unto Christ will have a barren life. It is not what you are separated from or no longer doing but more of who you are separated to. If you are separated unto Christ, you will have a life that appeals rather than one that turns people off. He then uses this example—Christian’s are salt. Salt makes you thirsty. Do you make anyone thirsty for Christ, the Water of Life?
Another that stood out was verse 5. “through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations,” McGee elaborates stating. “Grace is God’s method of salvation and none of us could be saved if God had not been gracious.” Then apostleship (in the Greek) means “a sending forth”. Every believer should be a witness, one sent forth with a message.

Lastly in verse 7: “grace and peace” constitutes the formal introduction in all of Paul’s letters. McGee breaks it down stating, “Grace (charis) was the gentile form of greeting and peace (shalom) was the Jewish form of greeting. Paul combined them since he was speaking to both the Jews and the gentiles as the church was made up of both.”

George Jackson (Murray)

(verse 1) “The word “gospel” is not used in the sense of the act of proclaiming; it is the message proclaimed. . . . It is a message of glad tidings from God, and it never loses its divinity, for it ever continues to be God’s message of salvation to lost men.”

“In verse 2 Paul shows his jealousy for the unity and continuity of the gospel dispensation with the Old Testament.”

(Verses 3-4) “It is quite apparent that in this passage the highest Christology is present, as also due recognition of the significance of the resurrection in the process of redemptive accomplishment, a significance likewise recognized by Peter in the Pentecost sermon, the statement of which in Acts 2:33-36 is closely akin to and elucidatory of Romans 1:4.”

Julia Gregg (Schreiner)

Not just pertaining to Romans, but an interesting note in my commentary was that Paul reshaped his greeting in all his letters to convey the gospel of “grace”, which is of distinct emphasis for him. (31) The seven verses of focus this week are the gospel according to the Son—this salutation for Paul is unique because it is the longest and most theologically complex of all of this letters. Of special note, is that this church was not established by the apostle or one of his coworkers . . . but his desire is to use this church as a “bridgehead for his Spanish mission” of spreading of the gospel. (28) In this letter, Paul is establishing a basis by which to direct his comments to this church.

One of the most outstanding quotes to me was “[Paul] remarks on the obedience of the Gentiles showing that a changed life occurs for those who embrace the gospel” (35) It reminds me of the statement- belief dictates behavior. . . . An overture of these verses is really that the gospel is not only from God but is God—it is first and last about God—therefore this salutation closes with focusing again on glorifying Him. One additional note here is the thought of the universal church—there were Jewish
Christians but Paul seems to primarily address the Gentile believers in Rome and is focused on unity of purpose—again spreading the gospel.

Stephen Samsel (Stott)

What would it be like to live as a Christian in first-century Rome? You would be in the capital city of the world empire. The greatest sports, art and politics are centered in your city. You can hear a dozen languages in your streets, and religions of all sorts blend in the stew.

Letter-writing conventions vary from culture to culture. We address our correspondent first (“Dear Joan”) and identify ourselves only at the end (“Yours sincerely, John”). In the ancient world, however, the custom was to reverse the order, the writer announcing himself or herself first and the correspondent next (“John to Joan, greetings!”). Paul normally followed the convention of his day, but here he deviates from it by giving a much more elaborate description of himself than usual, in relation to the gospel.

Leon Morris: “God is the most important word in this epistle. Romans is a book about God. No topic is treated with anything like the frequency of God. Everything Paul touches in this letter he relates to God. . . . There is nothing like it elsewhere.”

Michelle Erickson (MacArthur)

In Romans 1:1-7 Paul unfolds seven aspects of the good news of Jesus Christ. He first identifies himself as the preacher of the good news (v. 1), then he tells of the promise (v. 2), the Person (vv. 3-4), the provision (v. 5a), the proclamation (v. 5b), the purpose (v. 5c) and the privileges of the good news (v. 6-7).

The gospel which originated with God, was not a divine afterthought, nor was it first taught in the New Testament. It does not reflect a late change in God’s plan or a revision of His strategy. It was promised by God beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, that is, in what we now call the Old Testament.

A believer has no cause for self-congratulation, because he contributes nothing at all to his salvation. Human achievement has no place in the divine working of God’s saving grace.

It is not that faith plus obedience equals salvation but that obedient faith equals salvation. True faith is verified in obedience. Obedient faith proves itself true, whereas disobedient faith proves itself false. Together, faith and obedience manifest the inseparable two sides of the coin of salvation, which Paul here calls the obedience of faith.

Although God gave His own Son to save the world (John 3:16) and does not wish for any person to perish (2 Pet 3:9) it must be recognized that the primary purpose of the
gospel is not for man’s sake but God’s, for His name’s sake. Man’s salvation is simply a by-product of God’s grace; It’s main focus is to display God’s glory.

Albert Whiting (Calvin)

We must here observe, that all are not fitted for the ministry of the word; for a special call is necessary: and even those who seem particularly fitted ought to take heed lest they thrust themselves in without a call.

Concerning his own son-this is a remarkable passage, by which we are taught that the whole gospel is included in Christ, so that if anyone removes one step from Christ, he withdraws himself from the Gospel. For since he is the living and express image of the father, it is no wonder, that he alone is set before us as one to whom Our whole faith is to be directed and in whom it is to center. It is then a definition of the gospel, by which Paul expresses what is summarily comprehended in it.
Romans

Longing to Go to Rome (Romans 1:8-15)

Read: Longing to Go to Rome (1:8-15)

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world. 9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention you 10 always in my prayers, asking that somehow by God’s will I may now at last succeed in coming to you. 11 For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you— 12 that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith, both yours and mine. 13 I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented), in order that I may reap some harvest among you as well as among the rest of the Gentiles. 14 I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. 15 So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

Explain: Longing to Go to Rome (1:8-15)

In Romans, Paul writes his longest salutation (introduction) of any of his letters.

Picking up in Romans 1:8, Paul is still in his introduction but transitions from a biographical part to drawing a personal connection to the Christians in Rome.

8 First, I thank [eucharisteo; to be grateful, to express gratitude (towards), to say grace at a meal, give thanks; In all of Paul’s writings he uses a form of thanks 49 times. Where in the order of actions did Paul put giving thanks? First: coming before all others in time or order, foremost in position, rank, or importance. Thank: express gratitude, appreciation, or acknowledgment. One of the greatest assets for a Christian is the ability to boldly give thanks to God.] my God through [through: moving in one side and out of the other side, continuing in time toward completion of a process. How do we go to God? Through Jesus. John 14:6] Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world [Michelle Erickson sent John MacArthur: Some churches are famous because of their pastor, their architecture, their stained glass windows, or their size or wealth. The church in Rome was famous because of its faith.]. 9 For God is my witness [witness: one who has personal knowledge of something], whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel [gospel, good message; used in Romans 1:1] of his Son [Paul reminds them he is a servant (not just in spirit, but he was physically active as well)], that without ceasing I mention you 10 always in my prayers [prayer, worship, oratory, pray earnestly], asking that somehow by God’s will [determination, choice,
purpose, decree, volition, inclination, desire, pleasure, will] I may now at last succeed in coming to you. 11 For I long to see you, that I may impart [give over, share, give, impart] to you some spiritual gift [gratuity, deliverance, endowment, qualification] to strengthen [set fast, turn resolutely in a certain direction, to confirm, fix, establish, steadfastly set, strengthen] you—12 that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith, both yours and mine [Paul knew the importance of fellowship. Don’t fight this battle alone. Community is by design. Paul wanted to come to them to give and to get. The church is a community—live in it. Paul also shows us the borderless church (writing from Corinth to Rome and desiring to go to Spain).]. 13 I do not want you to be unaware [not to know, ignore, be ignorant, not understand, unknown], brothers, that I have often intended [determine, choose, prefer, wish, inclined, be about, delight in, desire, intend, list, love, mean, please, will] to come to you (but thus far have been prevented), in order that I may reap some harvest among you as well as among the rest [other, which remain, remnant, residue, rest, remaining ones] of the Gentiles. [Paul repeats himself in sort. Romans 1:10, 11, 12, and 13 all have a similar sound. Perhaps to reinforce to the readers in Rome that he’s been trying to come. Also, he reinforces his desire to serve alongside them. The terminology also points to the church being mixed with both Jews and non-Jews. He uses the terms brothers and later states among you only to specify as well as among the rest of the Gentiles. Chris Arnold: Romans strongly identified with and emulated the ideals of Greece. They even stole the Greek gods and gave them Roman names. So it appears that Paul was mindful of his audience and their collective history.] 14 I am under obligation [owers, persons indebted, delinquents, transgressors, debtors, sinners] both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. [Who would want to say they are a barbarian? Paul is basically referring to people that would not be members of the developed world (as it was known in 56 AD). So in other words the Gospel is for you, them, us, everyone. Chris Arnold: Paul blew down cultural and social walls and put up a new sign that said, “ALL ARE WELCOME.”] 15 So I am eager to preach the gospel [euangelizo; to announce good news, evangelize, declare, bring glad tidings, preach the gospel] to you also who are in Rome. [Jim Fleming: I love how Paul doesn’t see the preaching of the gospel as something that only unbelievers need. Believers need the gospel to be preached to them as well. God help us if we get too big for the gospel. We always need it and can scarcely get enough of it.]

Are there any repeated words?

Faith (2), gospel (2), God (2)
Apply (What is the point?)

1. Giving thanks is important and not simply a checkmark (in a prayer)
2. Active faith is active
   • it impacts nonbelievers
   • it encourages believers

Jessica Norris sent Woodrow Kroll’s comment: 7 characteristics of Paul’s prayers:

1. Prayer should be thankful
2. Prayer should be personal
3. Prayer should be continual
4. Prayer should be sincere
5. Prayer should be flexible
6. Prayer should be submissive
7. Prayer should be specific

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. What is our first priority in conversation to God? To hurry?
2. What is our reputation among other believers and among nonbelievers? Is it for faith?
3. Is our faith encouraging to others? Living life together enables this.

Next week: The Righteous Shall Live by Faith (1:16-17)

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

• Holy Spirit
• Bible: Romans (ESV)
• Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS
• Tools: bit.ly/romans2017

Our process

• Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
• Read (Romans)
• Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
• Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)
Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

The author once again breaks down the verses into sections:

- Paul’s thoughts on the Roman Faith (8-10)
- Paul’s First Ministry Motivation: Mutual Encouragement (11-12) “He is not in it for what he could do for himself but what he could do for them.”
- Paul’s Second Ministry Motivation: A Sense of Obligation (14-15)
- Paul’s Third Ministry Motivation: Confidence in the Power of the Gospel (16-17)

Paul says that he is eager to preach the gospel to those in Rome. I love this! We should all be eager to serve God every day.

He tells a story about Linus throwing a stick for Snoopy and while Snoopy’s first instinct is to chase the stick he pauses and decides not to. “When I’m reminded of the gospels power to change lives, I am motivated to stop ‘chasing sticks’ and get back to what is really important.”

We must never be ashamed . . . the wonder is that God is not ashamed of us.

Chris Arnold (Barclay)

So, Paul starts out praising and complimenting the church in Rome. My first thought is: Why? Barclay states that Paul was being a good teacher and cultivating growth through praise, rather than compelling performance through criticism. And, indeed, it shows that Paul loved the church and wanted it to flourish. Vs 10 underscores Paul’s longing to be with the church. Barclay seems to think that Paul was treading softly in order to avoid “trespassing” upon the Roman church’s religious turf. Vs 14 struck me as interesting. What did he mean he was under obligation to the Greeks and the Barbarians.

I did some research, mostly on Bible.org (strikes me as a Wikipedia of the Word). Apparently there was a large contingent of Jews in Rome prior to the rise of the Roman Church. As early as 59 BC, Cicero remarked that the Jews were populous and they stuck together: maintaining their cultural identity, language, and faith (and maybe even fostering some separatist/revolutionary ideals) even while being in Rome “proper.” So there was a strong Jewish element in the city already.

Also, Peter is given much credit in the founding of the early Roman Church. Given the early History between Paul and Peter, maybe it isn’t too much of a leap to say that Paul may have been mindful that some folks hold grudges, even when the two people with who the religious debate originally started have gotten over it and moved on. But that’s speculative.
Anyway, There are also Multiple ethnicities present in Rome. Romans strongly identified with and emulated the ideals of Greece. Heck, they even stole the Greek gods and gave them Roman names. So it appears that Paul was mindful of his audience and their collective history.

The thing that struck me, personally, is that Paul was CONSTANTLY thinking and praying ahead. When so many of us pray for things of the moment, those we know, and personal desires and concerns, Paul is praying for others, and making it known that he is praying for them. What a great example of humility and selflessness, that puts a figurative arm around a shoulder and says “You are not alone in this journey.” And when he mentioned his obligation to both the Greek and the Barbarians….it meant everyone. Paul blew down cultural and social walls and put up a new sign that said “ALL ARE WELCOME.”

I also read obligation a couple of ways:

Beholden: for the assistance, grace, and favor shown to him by both God and man…. 
Duty: It’s his calling to do God’s work, and his purpose to preach the Word.

Darla Skinner (Mounce)

Perhaps there is no need to choose between God’s direction and the circumstances of life, since God works through everyday circumstances to carry out his will.

Doug Skinner (Phillips)

Amid all the ruins of her cities we find none of a hospital, none I believe of an orphan school in an age that made many orphans. The pious aspirations and efforts of individuals never seem to have touched the conscience of the people. Rome incarnate had no conscience.

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

Paul wanted to visit Rome badly and couldn’t travel anywhere within the Roman empire without encountering Christians who were talking about what God was doing in Rome. He is homesick for Rome even though he had never been there. He wanted to visit Rome as a stopover on his way to Spain. He had a lifelong dream to visit Spain because no one had laid a foundation there yet.

3 reasons Paul wanted to visit Rome:

1. He wanted to build them up and be a blessing and to “impert some spiritual gift.”
2. He wanted to be “encouraged together with them.” He wanted lodging, food, and fellowship with them on his way to Spain.
3. He also wanted to evangelize to Rome.
Paul’s prayer life is intertwined with his life of service. “Prayer first, preaching second.” His reasons for preaching was because he was under obligation, he was eager, and he was not ashamed.

Paul viewed himself as a debtor the whole world. He deliberately proclaimed that the gospel was for everyone. He did this because there were many Jewish believers who thought the gospel was not for the Gentiles.

My favorite quote from my book this week: “Although the gospel is for everyone, there is a restriction placed on that universality. That restriction is faith.”

7 characteristics of Paul’s prayers:

1. Prayer should be thankful
2. Prayer should be personal
3. Prayer should be continual
4. Prayer should be sincere
5. Prayer should be flexible
6. Prayer should be submissive
7. Prayer should be specific

Justin Harness (Wiersbe)

As I’m reading this passage and the commentary by Wiersbe that coincides, I can’t help but think about my shortcoming as a follower and one who should carry the gospel to all people. Wiersbe writes “Paul felt an obligation to all men, just as we need to feel a burden for the whole world.”

How different would our community, our state, or our nation would look if we all had that burden? As I say that I look in the mirror at me first.

Jim Fleming (Moo)

While referring to Paul’s acknowledgement of mutual encouragement in Romans 1:12 (that the Romans “could contribute anything to his own Christian walk”), Moo notes, “Nevertheless, it is unparalleled in Paul’s other letters.”

Moo cites Luther’s comment about Paul being hindered in preaching to the Romans in Romans 1:13 with this nugget: “I have been burdened with a large number of places where preaching had to be done.”

Non-Moo observations:

Paul started what appeared to be a numbered list (“First” in Romans 1:8), but never got around to a second.
I love how Paul prays for folks he doesn’t know. I pray for lots of people I know well, but I struggle praying for those I don’t know.

Paul seems very humble here—there’s no sense of “I am Paul, hear me roar.”

I also love how Paul doesn’t see the preaching of the gospel as something that only unbelievers need. Believers need the gospel to be preached to them as well. God help us if we get too big for the gospel. We always need it and can scarcely get enough of it.

**Julia Gregg (Schreiner)**

This section is an expression of the apostolic commission with reference to the church at Rome.

2 themes: thanksgiving and prayer for a visit

Paul’s thanksgiving is connected to his desire to visit Rome

Paul’s mantra—Don’t just win converts—strengthen and edify those believers already in Rome.

The gospel includes every aspect of Christian existence (*Phil 1:27*)

Two quotes that were of special interest to me:

- **What inspires and fortifies other believers is when they perceive faith in others.** (p. 52)

- **Preaching the gospel for Paul involved more than initial conversion—his goal . . . was to bring about obedience of faith among the Gentiles.** (p. 53)

**Karrie Harness (MacArthur Bible Study)**

An apostle did not start the church in Rome, but it was known throughout the world. To me this is a wonderful example of believers coming together to support, encourage and grow with one another.

To be known throughout the world, they either had to be really good or really bad (I’m going with good based on documented history ;)), but how/why were they so great?

**Without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers:** Paul wanted the Roman Christians to know he was praying for them, and praying for an opportunity to visit them (I may find a way in the will of God to come to you).

“No wonder that they prospered so well when Paul always made mention of them in his prayers. Some churches would prosper better if some of you remembered them more in prayer.” (Spurgeon)
Michelle Erickson (MacArthur)

The letter to Rome reveals that Paul not only had the zeal of a prophet, the mind of a teacher, and the determination of an apostle, but also the heart of a shepherd.

In verses 8-15 Paul’s words suggest nine marks of true spiritual service: a thankful spirit (v. 8), a concerned spirit (v. 9-10a), a willing and submissive spirit (v. 10b), a loving spirit (v. 11), a humble spirit (v. 12), a fruitful spirit (v. 13), an obedient spirit (v. 14), an eager spirit (v. 15).

Paul’s thankfulness was intimate, first of all because of his spiritual closeness to God. I thank my God, he declared. No pagan would have made such a statement, nor would have most Jews referred to God with a personal pronoun.

Some churches are famous because of their pastor, their architecture, their stain glass windows, or their size or wealth. The church in Rome was famous because of its faith.

Sean McGarvey (Ironside)

If someone could spoof Daughtry’s “I’m Coming Home” with “I’m Coming, Rome” for Sunday, that would be spectacular!

Ironside turns a virtual blindside to this passage. Two pages. He makes a point to dig on the Catholic church in this limited space:

“Both scripture and history are silent as to who founded the church in Rome. Certainly Peter did not. There is not the remotest reason for connecting his name with it. The boast of the Roman Catholic Church that it is founded on Peter as the rock and that the Roman Bishop is the successor of St. Peter is all the merest twaddle.” (p. 20)

Merest Twaddle, by the way, makes a great name for a band.

On the “from faith to faith” of verse 17:

“It is really ‘out of faith unto faith’ That is, on the principle of faith to those who have faith. In other words, it is not a doctrine of salvation by works, but a proclamation of salvation entirely on the faith principle. This had been declared to Habakkuk long centuries before when God said to the troubled prophet, ‘The just shall live by faith.’ This is the text of the entire epistle, as we have already seen, and of Galatians and Hebrews likewise.” (p. 21)

“Justification by faith alone is the test of orthodoxy. But no mind untaught by the Holy Spirit will ever receive it, for it sets the first man aside altogether as in the flesh and unprofitable in order that the Second Man, the Man of God’s counsels, the Lord Jesus Christ, may alone be exalted.” (p. 21)

Jesus is better. Not being on call this coming Sunday is also good.
Tim & Mila Archer (Maclaren)

Romans 1:11-12 Paul’s Longings

I. There are 3 things to note:
   • The manly expression of Christian affection
   • The lofty consciousness of the purpose of their meeting
   • The lowly sense that there was much to be received as well as much to be given

II. He “Paul” had never been in Rome when he wrote these words; he had no personal relations with the believers there…But still his heart went out towards them, and he was not ashamed to show it.

III. Now that expression “a spiritual gift” “in the New Testament has a variety of applications.
   • Sometime it refers to what we call miraculous endowments
   • Sometimes it refers to what we may call official capacity
   • But here it is evidently neither the on nor the other of these more limited and special thing, but the general idea of a divine operation upon the human spirit which fills it with Christian graces “knowledge, faith, love”.

IV. Lessons to take away
   • First, no Christian teacher has any business to open his mouth, unless he is sure that he has received something to impart to men as a gift from the Divine Spirit.
   • Second, received the gift that I have, under the limitations already spoken of, to bestow? There are some of you who have listened to my voice ever since you were children, “some of you, though not many, have heard it for well on to thirty years.

V. Apostle corrections
   • If his language were not so transparently sincere, and springing from deep interest in the relationship between himself and these people, we should stat that it was exquisite courtesy and beautiful delicacy.
   • But it moves in a region far more real than the region of courtesy, and it speaks the inmost truth about the conditions on which the Roman Christians should receive—viz. that they should also give.

VI. The impact...
   • If you have ice in the pews, that brings down the temperature up here. It is hard to be fervid amidst people that are all but dead.
   • He did not many works because of their unbelief
• Icy indifference, ill-natured interpretations, carping criticisms, swift forgetfulness of one’s words, all these things kill the fervor of the pulpit
• ON the other hand, the true encouragement to give a man when he is trying to do God’s will, to preach Christ’s Gospel, is not to pat him on the back and say, “What a remarkable sermon that was of your! What a genius! What an orator!” not to go about praising it, but to come and say, “Thy words have led me to Christ, and from thee I have taken the gift of gifts.”
• I may come to you ever more and more with the lofty and humbling consciousness that I have a message which Christ has given to me, and that you may come more and more receptive – not of my words, God forbid—but of Christ’s truth.

VII. Debtors to all men

• “I am a debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise.” Romans 1:14.
• The indebtedness referred to is no peculiarity of the Apostolic order, but attaches to every believer. Every servant of Jesus Christ, who has received the truth for himself, has received it as a steward, and is, as such, indebted to God, from whom he got the trust, and to the men for whom he got it.
• Now, first, let me say that we Christians are debtors to all men by our common manhood.
• We are not sponges to absorb, but we are pipes placed in the spring, that we may give forth the precious water of life.
• That is the Christian truth that underlies the modern Socialistic idea, and, what ever the from in which it is ultimately brought into practice as the rule of mankind, the principle will triumph one day; and we are bound, as Christian men, to hasten the coming of its victory. We are debtors by reason of our common humanity.
• We are debtors by our possession of the universal salvation.
• Christ draws men to Himself for their own sakes, blessed be His name! but not for their own sakes only. He draws them to Himself, that they, in their turn, may draw others with whose hands theirs are linked, and so my swell the numbers of the flock that theirs gathers round the one Shepherd.
• So to all men we are bound, as much as in us is, to carry the Gospel. The distinction that is drawn so often by the people who never move a finger to help the heathen either at home or abroad, between the home and the foreign field of work, vanishes altogether when we stand at the true Christian standpoint.
• We are debtors by benefits received; the best thing that we can give is the thing that all of us can help to give—the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
• We are debtors by injuries inflicted; is it Christian to impose our yoke on unwilling tribes who have as deep a love for independence as the proudest of us all, and as good a right to it. Brethren, we are debtors to all men. Let us do our best to influence national action in accordance with the brotherhood which has been revealed to us by the Elder Brother of us all…
Read: The Righteous Shall Live by Faith (1:16-17)

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”

Explain: The Righteous Shall Live by Faith (1:16-17)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.
Are there any literary/structural observations?

This passage is two sentences, it starts with the word “For” (which connects prior thoughts), and in most of your translations, the last part of Romans 1:17 looks differently than the rest of the text (it’s because he’s quoting the Old Testament—specifically, Habakkuk 2:4).

Moo: This chain of subordinate clauses is tied both to what comes before it and what comes after it (note the “for” in both v. 16 and v. 18); from the standpoint of syntax alone, this means that the main statement of the sequence is Paul’s assertion of desire to preach the gospel in Rome (v. 15). Some interpreters accordingly question the common opinion in vv. 16-17 state the theme of the letter. Isolating these verses as the theme of the letter, it is argued, betrays a preoccupation with theology at the expense of the argumentative and syntactical flow of the text.

However, the rest of the letter is a fleshing out of these ideas and is almost universally accepted to be one of the major themes of Romans.

What do the words mean?

16 For [a word that explains what came before] I am not ashamed [present (right-now-continuous) middle (the subject acting in his own interest) indicative (statement of fact); not ashamed] of the gospel [euangelion; gospel, good message; used in Romans 1:1, 9; note: some of your translations have “of Christ” here as well—that phrase does not appear in the text used as the basis for the ESV], for [a word that explains what came before] it is [present (right-now-continuous) middle (the subject acting in his own interest) or active (the subject performs the action) indicative (statement of fact)] the power [dynamis; force, miraculous power, ability, abundance, meaning, might, miracle, strength, violence, mighty work; same word used in Romans 1:4] of God for [to, unto] salvation [soteria; rescue, safety; deliver, health, salvation, save, saving] to everyone [all, any, every, the whole] who believes [present (right-now-continuous) active (the subject performs the action) participle (note: “is believing” might be a more literal way to translate this); pisteuo; have faith (in, upon, or with respect to, a person or thing), credit, to entrust, believe, commit], to the Jew [the Jewish people] first [first in time, place, order, or importance] and also [and (‘also’ isn’t there)] to the Greek [non-Jewish people]. 17 For [a word that explains what came before] in it the righteousness [dikaiosyne; equity, justification, righteousness] of God is revealed [present (right-now-continuous) middle (the subject acting in his own interest) indicative (statement of fact); to take off the cover, disclosed, revealed] from faith [pistis; persuasion, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, the system of religious truth, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity] for [to or into] faith [pistis; persuasion, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, the system of religious truth,
assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity], as it is written [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) middle (the subject acting in his own interest) indicative (statement of fact); just as it is written/described (in Habakkuk 2:4)], “The righteous [dikaios; equitable, innocent, holy, just, righteous] shall live [future (anticipated action) active (the subject performs the action) indicative (statement of fact); live] by faith [pistis; persuasion, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, the system of religious truth, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity].”

Are there any repeated words?

Faith! This passage is all about faith. And, there are several words that will be seen again over and over throughout Romans: gospel [euangelion], power [dynamis], salvation [soteria], believes [pisteuo], righteousness [dikaiosyne], and faith [pistis]. Paul is playing tee-ball with Romans 1:16-17; he is setting the stage for the rest of the letter. God (2), faith (2)

Are there any repeated topics?

Not really, but there is a structure to the text that implies a lot of cause and effect relationships.

What are some observations of the text?

16 For I am not ashamed [Paul’s desire to preach the gospel to those in Rome is explained by him not being ashamed. We do what we are not ashamed of. We don’t do what we are ashamed of. Stephen Archer: Paul was not ashamed of the gospel. Not because he was used to looking a little odd, but because his foundation was in the work of Christ on the cross. Paul set his identity towards Christ and cared more about everyone else’s standing before God than he did about what they thought of him.] of the gospel [The gospel is a good message (not just good news—it is a message) from God to mankind. The gospel is the good message of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ for God’s glory and our salvation.], for it is [present tense (right-now-continuous)—this implies the gospel is working right now and is necessary right now. Many of us have a past tense view of the gospel—meaning it was good for the day of our conversion, but that’s insufficient. The gospel is powerful and working and active in the life of a believer right now—today—in this moment. For many of us, our idea of the gospel is peanut-butteringly deficient. The gospel was active and working before you ‘got saved,’ while you were ‘getting saved,’ and right now it is ‘keeping you saved.’] the power of God [The gospel is by God, about God, for God, and in the interest of God—which implies the gospel is not about man—we benefit, but we are not the beginning, subject, or ending of the gospel—those roles belong exclusively to God. Keller: Paul is saying that the gospel is
not merely a concept or a philosophy. The message of the gospel is what God has done and will do for us. The gospel is therefore a power. He doesn’t say it brings power or has power, but that it actually IS power. It is powerful because it does what no other power on earth can do: it can save us, reconcile us to God, and guarantee us a place in the kingdom of God forever.] for salvation [Maclaren: That is a strange embodiment of divine power. Yes, and because so strange, it is so touching, and so conquering. The power that is draped in weakness is power indeed.] to everyone who believes [the reason I am not a universalist (meaning all will eventually be saved) is due to those two words—‘who believes.’ Again, notice that our salvation is a right-now salvation. Our salvation assumes we continue to believe. Salvation is an always-on concept. Spread the peanut butter thick—this is a rich idea.], to the Jew first [God’s plan is Jews first, everybody-else second.] and also to the Greek [Praise the Lord for this “and”—without it, we would be lost. We are the Greeks—we are the non-Jews. I’m fine being second—because second gets into the family.]. 17 For in it the righteousness of God [What is “the righteousness of God?” Stott: The righteousness of God can be thought of as a divine attribute (our God is a righteous God), or activity (he comes to our rescue), or achievement (he bestows on us a righteous status). All three are treated and have been held by different scholars, sometimes in relation to each other. For myself, I have never been able to see why we have to choose, and why all three should not be combined. . . . In other words, it is at one and the same time a quality, an activity and a gift. Robertson: “A God kind of righteousness” . . . By “righteousness” we shall see that Paul means both “justification” and “sanctification.”] is revealed [It is impossible to see clearly now, but one day—God’s full righteousness will be uncovered and revealed and we will see how the gospel displayed His righteousness. I think this may also be a reference to the tabernacle and temple where God’s holiness was hidden behind a veil. But one day . . .] from faith for faith [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in Romans 1:5, 12], as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.” [Moo: Though not explicit here, another focus of Romans is the insistence that faith is in no sense a “work.” Therefore, although we must never go to the extreme of making the person a totally passive instrument through whom believing occurs—for Paul makes clear that people are responsible to believe—we must also insist that believing is not something we do (in the sense of “works”) but is always a response, an accepting of the gift God holds out to us in his grace (see especially 4:1-8). As Calvin puts it, faith is “a kind of vessel” with which we “come empty and with the mouth of our soul open seek God’s grace.”]
What were Martin Luther’s observations on this text?

This is an important question as Luther’s interactions with this text are what (by his own account) spurred on his own salvation and eventually led to the entire Protestant Reformation. We can debate the impact of the Protestant Reformation on Baptists but the impact on the body of Christ is nearly immeasurable.

Martin Luther (1483-1546). This selection is taken from The Preface to the Complete Edition of Luther’s Latin Writings. It was written by Luther in Wittenberg, 1545:

Meanwhile, I had already during that year returned to interpret the Psalter [Psalms] anew. I had confidence in the fact that I was more skillful, after I had lectured in the university on St. Paul’s epistles to the Romans, to the Galatians, and the one to the Hebrews. I had indeed been captivated with an extraordinary ardor [passion] for understanding Paul in the Epistle to the Romans. But up till then it was not the cold blood about the heart, but a single word [or phrase] in Chapter 1, “In it the righteousness of God is revealed” that had stood in my way. For I hated that word “righteousness of God,” which, according to the use and custom of all the teachers, I had been taught to understand philosophically regarding the formal or active righteousness, as they call it, with which God is righteous and punishes the unrighteous sinner [meaning man had no righteousness].

Though I lived as a monk without reproach, I felt that I was a sinner before God with an extremely disturbed conscience. I could not believe that he was placated by my satisfaction. I did not love, yes, I hated the righteous God who punishes sinners, and secretly, if not blasphemously, certainly murmuring greatly, I was angry with God, and said, “As if, indeed, it is not enough, that miserable sinners, eternally lost through original sin, are crushed by every kind of calamity by the law of the Decalogue [Ten Commandments], without having God add pain to pain by the gospel and also by the gospel threatening us with his righteousness and wrath!” Thus I raged with a fierce and troubled conscience.

Nevertheless, I beat importunately [persistently] upon Paul at that place, most ardently [passionately] desiring to know what St. Paul wanted. At last, by the mercy of God, meditating day and night, I gave heed to the context of the words, namely, “In it the righteousness of God is revealed, as it is written, ‘He who through faith is righteous shall live.’” There I began to understand that the righteousness of God is that by which the righteous lives by a gift of God, namely by faith. And this is the meaning: the righteousness of God is revealed by the gospel, namely, the passive [received] righteousness with which merciful God justifies us by faith, as it is written, “He who through faith is righteous shall live.” Here I felt that I was altogether born again and had entered paradise itself through open gates. There a totally other face of the entire
Scripture showed itself to me. Thereupon I ran through the Scripture from memory. I also found in other terms an analogy, as, the work of God, that is what God does in us, the power of God, with which he makes us wise, the strength of God, the salvation of God, the glory of God. And I extolled my sweetest word with a love as great as the hatred with which I had before hated the word “righteousness of God.” Thus that place in Paul was for me truly the gate to paradise.

Translation: Martin Luther got saved by studying (and staring at) Romans 1:16-17. And this changed everything for him—no longer could he tolerate a system of indulgences—because it was not about money—it was about faith.

Dave Barber: No wonder Martin Luther’s world got rocked! He was this massive “system” of the Catholic Church that was a “machine” built to receive every other method or effort to make man right with God and they completely missed it. . .

**Apply (What is the point?)**

1. The gospel is the power of God
2. The gospel is for right now
3. Romans 1:16-17 is __________

**Personalize (What do we do with that?)**

1. **Believe** the gospel
2. Believe the gospel right now
3. Memorize Romans 1:16-17

**Next week: God’s Wrath on Unrighteousness (1:18-32)**

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. 19 For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. 20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. 21 For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

24 Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, 25 because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

26 For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; 27 and the men
likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

28 And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. 29 They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, 30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, 31 foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. 32 Though they know God’s righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)
- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

The Bible is for everyone, salvation is for everyone, Jesus is for everyone.

We live by faith. This weekend at the women’s retreat we talked about drinking when we aren’t thirsty and eating when we aren’t hungry. Staying full on the word of God at all times, not just when we are crying out for help or when we are praising Him. “Not being ashamed of the gospel” but living on it, through it, around it, and in it all the time.

Chris Arnold (Barclay)

Paul Says a LOT in a short period of time here. He spends a lot of words to say who he is, and to establish the greeting of his letter to the Romans. He writes in typical “Paul Verbiage,” complete with commas and sentences that twist and turn.

Until here.

This is like when I was in college way back in the medieval times and there were a lot of people talking all at the same time. When the professor just walks in and starts writing
on the board the little tap-tapping of the chalk on the board always cut through the noise and got everyone’s attention.

Paul just throws it out there for everyone to see. And the way he says it is unequivocal: “My message is the Gospel, and the Gospel of Christ contains the means for salvation and eternal life for EVERYBODY.”

He just made his thesis statement right there.

Barclay called the faith Paul spoke of as multifaceted, but the phrases he used which I liked the best were “indestructible hope” and “total and absolute trust.”

**Darla Skinner (Mounce)**

That the righteousness providing life is based solely on faith is central to the New Testament teaching on salvation. *Sola fide* became the central theme of the Reformation in the sixteenth century. Whenever ecclesiastical teaching begins to compromise with the pagan notion that righteousness can be earned, there needs to be a clear reaffirmation that God’s righteousness comes from faith, not works. “Just as it is written” translates the Greek verb in the perfect tense (*gegraptaı*). This emphasizes the permanence and authoritative nature of Scripture. If it is true that Scripture is “holy” (see Rom 1:2)—and it is—then it follows that it is also true and unchanging. While the application of God’s word requires an understanding of contemporary culture, it is not true that it must change with the passing scene. Truth remains. Its relevance to a particular point in time requires an informed and sensitive application.

**David Barber (his college notes)**

Most of the time it is the simple things that we get caught up by. The whole deal of the Gospel (which is the whole deal of our existence) is that it is attained by Faith. I think what Paul is saying, in what it seems to be universally seen as the summary statement of Romans, is quite literally:

From start to finish
From beginning to end
The whole deal
The entire essence
The point of the Gospel
The only thing we should concern ourselves with
The only thing we can concern ourselves with
Is that we receive salvation by **Faith** (Insert George Michael ear worm here . . .”I gotta have Faith . . .”

No wonder Martin Luther’s world got rocked! He was this massive “system” of the Catholic Church that was a “machine” built to receive every other method or effort to make man right with God and they completely missed it. . .

So I am going to spend the rest of this week (in actuality the rest of my life) thinking, pondering, chewing on, marveling over the enormity, simplicity and beauty of God “one upping” all of man’s effort with one word/concept . . . Faith

I have always love it when one simple thing confounds the status quo, “the system,” or what people take as the norm.

Just some thoughts (and somewhat ramblings) about why I love what God does in **Romans**.

**Jessica Miller (Stott)**

The reasons these affirmations are so striking is that they are in direct antithesis to the attitude of many in the contemporary church. People nowadays tend to regard evangelism as an optional extra and consider (if they engage in it) that they are conferring a favor on God; Paul spoke of it as an obligation. The modern mood is one of reluctance; Paul’s was one of eagerness or enthusiasm. Many of us today would have to confess, if we are honest, that we are ashamed of the gospel; Paul declared that he was not.

The NIV *I am bound* in the RSV ‘I am under obligation’ should probably be translated ‘I am [a] debtor’ (AV).

It is in the second sense that Paul is in debt. He has not borrowed anything from the Romans which must repay. But Jesus Christ has entrusted him with the gospel for them.

It was because of his sense of debt to them that he could write: **That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are at Rome** (15).

Similarly, we are debtors to the world, even though we are not apostles. If the gospel has come to us (which it has), we have no liberty to keep it to ourselves. Nobody may claim a monopoly of the gospel. Good news is for sharing. We are under obligation to make known to others.

Such was Paul’s first incentive. He was eager because he was in debt. It is universally regarded as a dishonorable thing to leave a debt unpaid. We should be as eager to discharge our debt as Paul was to discharge his.
He knew the message of the cross was ‘foolishness’ to some and ‘a stumbling block’ to others, because it undermines self-righteousness and challenges self-indulgence. So whenever the gospel is faithfully preached, it arouses opposition, often contempt, and sometimes ridicule.

Reflecting on the apostle’s three personal affirmations in verses 14-16, we have seen that his eagerness to evangelize in Rome arose from the recognition that the gospel is an unpaid debt to the world and the saving power of God. The first gave him a sense of obligation (he had been put in trust with the good news), and the second a sense of conviction (if it had saved him, it could save others). Still today the gospel is both a debt to discharge and a power to experience. Only when we have grasped and felt these truths shall we be able to say with Paul, ‘I am not ashamed . . . I am under obligation . . . So I am eager to share the gospel with the world.’

Thus the righteousness of God can be thought of as a divine attribute (our God is a righteous God), or activity (he comes to our rescue), or achievement (he bestows on us a righteous status). All three are treated and have been held by different scholars, sometimes in relation to each other. For myself, I have never been able to see why we have to choose, and why all three should not be combined. . . In other words, it is at one and the same time a quality, an activity and a gift.

It seems legitimate to affirm, therefore, that ‘the righteousness of God’ is God’s righteous initiative in putting sinners right with himself, by bestowing on them a righteousness which is not their own but is. ‘The righteousness of God’ is God’s just justification of the unjust, his righteous way of pronouncing the unrighteous righteous, in which he both demonstrates his righteousness and gives righteousness to us. He has done it through Christ, the righteous one, who died for the unrighteous, as Paul will explain later. And he does it by faith when we put our trust in him, and cry to him for mercy.

Many explanations this phase have been proposed, some more ingenious than others. I mentioned what seemed to me to be the foremost plausible. The first relates to faith’s origin, as Bengel puts it: ‘from the faith of God, who makes the offer, to the faith of men who receive it’. More simply, it is ‘from God’s faith (better, faithfulness) to our faith’. God’s faithfulness always comes first, and ours is never other than a response. This was Karl Barth’s understanding. Secondly, the spread of faith by evangelism may be in Paul’s mind: ‘from one believer to another’. Thirdly, he may be alluding to faith’s growth, ‘from one degree of faith to another’ (cf. 2 Cor. 3:18, RSV). Fourthly, it may be faith’s primacy which is being stressed. In this case the expression is purely rhetorical and has been rendered, for example, *by faith from first to last* (NIV) for ‘by faith through and through’.
Jessica Norris (Kroll)

My reading concentrated solely on verse 17 which I thought was odd because he then states that you cannot make sense of verse 17 without verse 16.

- Paul is quoting the prophet Habakkuk in verse 17. He likens it to a mother that tells their child to do something and that “being told once should be enough” when dealing with righteousness. Habakkuk 2:4 “Behold, as for the proud one, his soul is not right within him; but the righteous will live by his faith.” Habakkuk 2:4 and Romans 1:17 are telling us that through the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed. With these two verses, we have now been told twice. Paul later goes a 3rd time to repeat this in Galatians 3:11 and even though Paul didn’t write Hebrews, we are told again in Hebrews 10:38, so how many times does God have to tell us in His word that he expects us to live a faithful life?
- The theme of verse 17 is that we cannot live joyfully before God and others unless we live righteously before God and others.
- There is nothing we can do to obtain righteousness because it is a gift from God through the person of Jesus. Righteousness is not God’s attribute. It implies that this righteousness is the way God treats us as a result of our response in faith to the gospel.

Jim Fleming (Moo)

This chain of subordinate clauses is tied both to what comes before it and what comes after it (note the “for” in both v. 16 and v. 18); from the standpoint of syntax alone, this means that the main statement of the sequence is Paul’s assertion of desire to preach the gospel in Rome (v. 15). Some interpreters accordingly question the common opinion in vv. 16-17 state the theme of the letter. Isolating these verses as the theme of the letter, it is argued, betrays a preoccupation with theology at the expense of the argumentative and syntactical flow of the text.

It is also possible to view the individual elements of vv. 16-17 as each summing up different parts of the letter.

Though not explicit here, another focus of Romans is the insistence that faith is in no sense a “work.” Therefore, although we must never go to the extreme of making the person a totally passive instrument through whom believing occurs—for Paul makes clear that people are responsible to believe—we must also insist that believing is not something we do (in the sense of “works”) but is always a response, an accepting of the gift God holds out to us in his grace (see especially 4:1-8). As Calvin puts it, faith is “a kind of vessel” with which we “come empty and with the mouth of our soul open seek God’s grace.”
Julia Gregg (Schreiner)

The largest observation for me was the connection between thoughts . . . these verses are Paul’s affirmation that he is prepared to profess the gospel publicly and bear witness to its saving power—he is unashamed because the power of the gospel is that it results in salvation . . . an effective work to call sinners to a saving grace. Also present in the text is a tension between divine sovereignty and human responsibility. (61) One does not merely trip into salvation mistakenly or inadvertently—it is a conscious choice. Another gripping thought was the forensic sense of text in that Paul identifies that God does not make people righteous or guilty . . . he declares them as such (65); therefore righteousness has a forensic dimension in that it is not intrinsic to the nature of man but is gifted in salvation (covered by the blood). Righteousness becomes the divine act of God when it transforms the lives of believers. Finally, as is the theme of this book, the ultimate reason that God declares those righteous who put their faith and trust in Jesus is because it glorifies His name. . . . The more I read the more I realize Paul is building a case in many ways and continues to tie back to the cornerstone in unique ways.

Julie Fleming (Keller)

Keller starts out this section talking about being ashamed of or offended by the gospel. “The gospel, by telling us that our salvation is free and undeserved, is really insulting. This offends moral and religious people who think their decency gives them an advantage over less moral people.” He goes on to say that “we are so wicked that only the death of the Son of God could save us, trying to be good and spiritual isn’t enough, and that our salvation was accomplished by Jesus’ suffering and serving not conquering and destroying and following him means to suffer and serve with him.”

It took me a while to think about these. The first one still bothers me. Once in college someone asked me if I deserved to be saved and I was ready to say yes! They were like, no you don’t. When I sit down and think about it, I think, sure, I’m a good person. I don’t do “bad” things. I deserve this. And then all I can think about it what you’ve said over and over . . . what we are/what we have to offer is but filthy rags. I’m not ashamed of the gospel. I’m more embarrassed that I don’t know enough about it to be comfortable enough to talk about it. I can talk about you all day long because I know you, but I can’t talk about Jeremy Fisher because I know nothing about him other than who he is. I can’t share the gospel because I don’t really know the gospel. I just know who he is.

Verse 16: it is the power of God. Keller says that “Paul is saying that the gospel is not merely a concept or a philosophy. The message of the gospel is what God has done and will do for us. The gospel is therefore a power. He doesn’t say it brings power or has power, but that it actually IS power. It is powerful because it does what no other
power on earth can do: it can save us, reconcile us to God, and guarantee us a place in the kingdom of God forever.”

everyone who believes: ”Paul says that the gospel’s power is boundless and boundaried at the same time. He says it is to everyone. It came to the Jew first, through Jesus, but it is for the Gentile as well- everyone and anyone. Yet he also sets a limit on it. It is for everyone WHO BELIEVES.”

Verse 17: For in it the righteousness of God is revealed. Keller asks ”What is it about the gospel which makes it so powerful, which gives it this life-remolding quality? Because ‘FOR’ in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed. The gospel is about the Son—but here we see the achievement of the gospel, that in it “a righteousness from God is revealed.” ”Right standing is received from God, offered to us by his Son.”

from faith for faith. ”Righteousness is from faith for faith, in which case the teaching is: God’s faithfulness [to His promises, and in the life and death of Jesus Christ] always comes first, and ours is never other than a response.” (John Stott) ”We do not become righteous by faith and then maintain it through our own goodness. Paul tells us that we have been given righteousness, rather than merely declared not guilty.”

”The gospel is the power of God. It reveals God’s righteousness, and is the way we receive his righteousness. This is what reverses our attitude to sharing the gospel. The opposite of being ashamed is not willingness; it’s eagerness.”

Rachel Samsel (McGee)

One thing I liked that McGee said about verse 16 was: I am a debtor—that is admission; I am ready—remission; I am not ashamed—submission. These are the three “missions” of Paul. Admission, remission and submission.

Another quote I liked about verse 17 was: ”The just shall live by faith.” ”Justification by faith means that a sinner who trusts Christ is not only pardoned because Christ died, but he also stands before God complete in Christ. It means not only subtraction of sin, but addition of righteousness.”

Sean McGarvey (Ironside)

Looks like I had already given you what Ironside had for these two verses:

On the ”from faith to faith” of verse 17:

”It is really ‘out of faith unto faith.’ That is, on the principle of faith to those who have faith. In other words, it is not a doctrine of salvation by works, but a proclamation of salvation entirely on the faith principle. This had been declared to Habakkuk long centuries before when God said to the troubled prophet, ‘The just shall live by faith.’
This is the text of the entire epistle, as we have already seen, and of Galatians and Hebrews likewise.” (p. 21)

“Justification by faith alone is the test of orthodoxy. But no mind untaught by the Holy Spirit will ever receive it, for it sets the first man aside altogether as in the flesh and unprofitable in order that the Second Man, the Man of God’s counsels, the Lord Jesus Christ, may alone be exalted.” (p. 21)

Stephen Archer

Context

In Roman history, someone who interpreted omens and signs from the gods was called an Augur. According to Wikipedia: The augur was a priest and official in the classical Roman world. His main role was the practice of augury, interpreting the will of the gods by studying the flight of birds: whether they are flying in groups or alone, what noises they make as they fly, direction of flight and what kind of birds they are. This was known as ‘taking the auspices.’ The ceremony and function of the augur was central to any major undertaking in Roman society—public or private—including matters of war, commerce, and religion.

Other major religious figures would have been:

- Magistrates who lead local ceremonies for Greek gods.
- Pharisees who were the religious figures for the Jews
- Sadducees who were another religious group of the Jews
- Pharaoh’s were gods themselves and had priests as their go between.

In all of the above cases, the religious leaders were prominent figures in the particular societies. The success of the religious leaders showed the success of the nation. Not only that, but if their omen came true, they would receive great rewards from the kings and generals. However, if the religious leader gave a bad omen, and things went awry, the religious leader would be stoned, beaten, or even killed.

Paul is claiming to be an apostle of Jesus Christ. He is one who has seen Jesus Christ and was a direct convert from Jesus Christ Himself. He is a man who is put in the place of helping people to know God. Yet, Paul is a man in chains. To any normal human being, this would be counterintuitive to whom they should follow.

Observations

Why would someone be ashamed? The following is what some modern “Christians” are saying about the gospel.

Joel Osteen: But Hebrews 10:30 says, “God is a just God. He will repay the compensation owed to us. He will settle the cases of His people.” You may have
been through things you don’t understand, but get ready because the Creator of the universe is adding up all the deficits. If you will allow Him to work in your life, He will bring you out increased, promoted, vindicated and better than you were before.

Kenneth Copeland: If you’re like most Christians, you want to live a better life. You want better health, better finances, better relationships and better life experiences. We’ve all been there at some time or another. BUT we have good news for you because there is always hope in Jesus, God and His WORD! The moment you accepted Jesus as LORD of your life, all the promises of God and the power of God became available to you, so you can overcome any situation you will ever face.

Jessee Duplantis: Many Christians believe that prosperity is about possessions. That’s the reason a lot of folk get so riled up about the prosperity message. The simple truth is that the prosperity message is not a money message. Prosperity is an obedience message. God gives the power to get wealth, but the manifestation of obedience to that power is money. God gives the power to get healed, but the manifestation of obedience to that power is healing. God gives the power for us to get saved, but the manifestation of obedience to that power is salvation.

Does this message of Christ sound like something to be ashamed of?

Not at all. In fact, the Bible is the worst propagating book in all of history and Christianity is the worst propagating religion of all time. Consider the following:

1 Corinthians 11:23-33: with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to fall, and I am not indignant? If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness. The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, the who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. At Damascus, the governor under King Aretas was guarding the city of Damascus in order to seize me, but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall and escaped his hands.

Or
Hebrews 12:35-38: Women received back their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated— of whom the world was not worthy—wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

Lastly, the words of Christ, Himself.

Matthew 5:11-12: Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely hon my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Does this sound like something that people would be willing to follow?

What is the gospel?

G2098 - the glad tidings of the kingdom of God soon to be set up, and subsequently also of Jesus the Messiah, the founder of this kingdom. After the death of Christ, the term comprises also the preaching of (concerning) Jesus Christ as having suffered death on the cross to procure eternal salvation for the men in the kingdom of God, but as restored to life and exalted to the right hand of God in heaven, thence to return in majesty to consummate the kingdom of God.

Greg Gilbert defines the gospel as: God, Man, Christ, Response.

God – Existing in three parts: Father, Son and Spirit created the world. On the sixth day he created his magnum opus, man.

Man – God created man (Adam) and woman (Eve) sinless and good. He placed them in a garden and told them that they were allowed to eat of all of the trees. There was only one law, they couldn’t eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam was the best chance we had at salvation and he failed. This brought sin into the world. Sin is anything that separates us from God. While most of the time we see the effects of sin, sin is truly a bent of our hearts. This is when we place ourselves on the throne of our hearts and serve ourselves. We needed saving and couldn’t do it ourselves.

Christ – Thus, the second person in the trinity, Christ, came in to the world. He lived a perfect and sinless life. Jesus was crucified on a cross as the atonement for our sins. Not only did he die, but after three days the Father raised him back to life as a way of validating Christ’s work on our behalf.
Response – The third part of the trinity works in the hearts of humans in order to turn their hearts to Christ. We don’t know who’s hearts he is working in, so it is our responsibility to reach all people for the gospel.

Thus, the gospel work is Trinitarian. It is not about us and the works we do. It is all focused on the work of the trinity in our lives.

What does Jew first, Greek second all about?

Historically, God chose the Jews first. This occurred when He visited Abraham and said that “All nations would be blessed through his offspring.” He chose them from all of the other nations. He could have chosen the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Edomites, the Samarians. Literally, he could have chosen any other nation of the world that He created. Yet, He chose the Jewish people.

Next, He brought them out of the land of Egypt. God could have allowed them to stay and to remain slaves in the land of Egypt, but he chose to listen to their cries and to bring them out of Egypt.

Third, even after Israel rebelled against God and were taken into slavery, he brought them out of those nations once against to become the national of Israel.

Finally, when Jesus came to earth, he did not go to the Romans, the Egyptians, the Babylonians, Assyrians, or any other powerful nation. Jesus came to the Jews. He offered salvation to them first. When they rejected Him, salvation was then sent out to the rest of the world.

Why would Paul quote Habakkuk in this instance?

Habakkuk 2:4: Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him, but the righteous shall live by his faith.

Why not quote Ezekiel 18:9? [If a man] walks in my statutes, and keeps my rules by acting faithfully—he is righteous; he shall surely live, declares the Lord GOD.”

Ezekiel 18:9 shows a man whose heart has been affected by the grace of God as one who desires to walk according to the statutes of the Lord. Our actions do not obtain us grace. However, “out of our heart does our mouth speak.” Thus, to say that the man in Ezekiel is righteous because of his actions would not be correct. “All of our ‘righteous deeds’ are as ‘douche bags.’”

Why isn’t the righteousness of God revealed in the law?
Galatians 2:1: I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.

Galatians 3:10-14: For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.” Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for “The righteous shall live by faith.” But the law is not of faith, rather “The one who does them shall live by them.” Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”—so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

Galatians 3:24: So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith.

Galatians 4:4-5: But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

What is revealed from faith for faith?

Genesis 15:6: And he [Abraham] believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

Galatians 3:6: just as Abraham “believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”

In the new testament time, there were very few people who spoke and read in Hebrew. What ended up happening was that the Old Testament was translated from Hebrew into Greek. This is called the Septuagint. The Greek word for believe in the Septuagint in Genesis 15:6 and in Galatians 3:6 comes from the same Greek word “pistis” which means believe or faith. Thus, Abraham had faith and it was counted to him as righteousness.

Inasmuch as Abraham’s faith was the beginning of the promise of the gospel to the Jews, his faith was given to encourage those later on in the history of the Jews and Gentiles. We can look back to the faith of Abraham and be encouraged by his faith before he had received any signs of the promise.

Application

First, for unbelievers, are you trying to rest in your own work? Thinking that one day you will stand before God and your good works will outweigh your bad works? You wrestle with yourself thinking, “I’m not as bad as Hitler, or I’m not in jail, so I must be
doing OK. Like Paul said in the passage today, the righteous shall live by faith. Compared to Christ and His work on the cross, all of our righteousness are as filthy rags. As such, we have no hope apart from Christ.

Second, for Christians, how often do you attempt to rest in our works thinking that God will look on us with my grace today than He did yesterday? Jesus Christ and His work on the cross was sufficient enough for us. God doesn’t look on us as though we are sinners. He looks on us as though we are His children. Zephaniah 3:17 says “The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.” God doesn’t just hum a tune. No, he exults over us with loud singing. Now, I don’t bring this up to take the centrality of the gospel off of God and place it back on us as though God delighting is us is the moral of the story. No, but his delight over us should free us from our self-doubt and insecurities and Jesus Christ has paid for all of our sins; past, present and future.

Finally, how many times are we afraid to share the gospel with someone because we might look a little weird? We reason to ourselves that it was easy for Paul to do, he was used to looking a little strange, right? Paul was not ashamed of the gospel. Not because he was used to looking a little odd, but because his foundation was in the work of Christ on the cross. Paul set his identity towards Christ and cared more about everyone else’s standing before God than he did about what they thought of him.

Penn Gillette of Penn & Teller tells a story about a man who saw him after one of his shows. He said the man walked up to him and wanted to share the gospel with him. Penn listened to the man and graciously thanked him for his time, but he wasn’t really interested. But that thought never left him. Later, he posted a video online telling the story and he asked a question I will never forget. If we, as Christians, truly believe that there is a holy and righteous God and we truly believe that one-day people will stand before him and give an account to him for all of their actions, how much do we have to hate a person not to tell them?

I don’t tell this story to guilt you into telling a person about Jesus. I am the least to point that out. I only tell the story to help us think of things in terms of eternity. What is a momentary bit of uncomfortability in light of eternity? Sharing the gospel is as easy as God, man, Christ, response.

**Stephen Samsel (Stott)**

Main point of the study I’m reading through is that there is nothing to be ashamed of unless you’ve felt tempted to be ashamed. Here is the text from my book: I once heard James Stewart of Edinburgh, in a sermon on this text, make the perceptive comment
that “there’s no sense in declaring that you’re not ashamed of something unless you’ve been tempted to feel ashamed of it.”

Tim & Mila Archer (Maclaren)

Romans 1:16

To preach the Gospel in Rome had long been the goal of Paul’s hopes. He knew its power well, and was not appalled. The danger was an attraction to his chivalrous spirit. He believed in flying at the head when you are fighting with a serpent, and he knew that influence exerted in Rome would thrill through the Empire.

*Their “Rome’s” notion of power was sharp swords and iron yokes on the necks of subject peoples. But the history of Christianity, whatever else it has been, has been the history of the supremacy and the revolutionary force of ideas.

I. What Paul thought was the Gospel

• Here is, in the briefest possible words, his summary; the universality of sin, the awful burden of guilt, the tremendous outlook of penalty, the impossibility of man rescuing himself or living righteously, the Incarnation, and life, and Death of Jesus Christ as a sacrifice for the sins of the world, the hand of faith grasping the offered blessing, the indwelling in the believing souls of the Divine Spirit, and the consequent admission of man into a life of sonship, power, peace, victory, glory, the child’s place in the love of the Father from which nothing can separate.

II. What Paul thought the Gospel was

• And over against this carnal might Paul lifts the undissembled (to conceal the true motives) weakness of the Cross, and declares that it is stronger than man, “the power of God unto salvation.” That is a strange embodiment of divine power. Yes, and because so strange, it is so touching, and so conquering. The power that is draped in weakness is power indeed.

III. What Paul felt about this Gospel

• His restrained expression, “I am not ashamed,” is the stronger for its very moderation.

• Think of what was arrayed against him . . . venerable religion, systematized philosophies, bitter hatred and prejudice, material power and wealth. These were the brazen armor of Goliath, and this little David went cheerily down into the valley with five pebble stones in a leathem wallet, and was quite sure how it was going to end. And it ended as he expected. His Gospel shook the kingdom of the Roman, and cast it in another mold.
I know that the Christian Church has sinfully and tragically failed to present Christ adequately to the world. But for all that, “Ye are My witnesses’ saith the Lord”; and nobler manners and purer laws have come in the wake of this Gospel of Jesus Christ. And as I look round about upon what Christianity has done in the world, I venture to say, “Show us any system of religion or of no religion that has done that or anything the least like it, and then we will discuss with you the other evidences of the Gospel.”
Romans

God’s Wrath on Unrighteousness (Romans 1:18-32)

**Introduction**

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Let’s read the text that leads into this week’s text: Romans 1:1-17

**Read: God’s Wrath on Unrighteousness (1:18-32)**

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. 19 For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. 20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. 21 For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.
24 Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, 25 because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

26 For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; 27 and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

28 And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. 29 They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, 30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, 31 foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. 32 Though they know God’s righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

**Explain: God’s Wrath on Unrighteousness (1:18-32)**

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

**Are there any literary/structural observations?**

An easy trap to fall into in Bible study is focusing on portion of a passage we want to focus on at the expense of the major point an author is making.

If you look at a passage as literature (which it is) and work towards the main point, then the supporting arguments and evidences become clearer in light of the main point.

**So, what is the main point of today’s text? Is it the evils found in Romans 1:21-32?** No

Let me ask it another way: **What caused the evils found in Romans 1:21-32?** Look at the verse before. **Why?** Look at the verse before. **Why?** Look at the verse before. **Why?** Romans 1:18: **who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.**

Suppression of the truth is the issue eventually resulting in the sins of Romans 1:21-32.

Sometimes it’s helpful to study the text as literature before moving to the smaller components to ensure we don’t focus too much on the ramifications of a root issue.
What do the words mean?

18 For [a word that explains what came before] the wrath [desire, violent passion, abhorrence, punishment, anger, indignation, vengeance, wrath] of God is revealed [present (right-now-continuous) middle (the subject acting in his own interest) indicative (statement of fact); to take off the cover, disclosed, revealed; the same word used in Romans 1:17] from heaven against all ungodliness [impiety, wickedness, ungodliness] and unrighteousness [legal injustice, moral wrongfulness, iniquity, unrighteousness, wrong] of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress [present (right-now-continuous) active (the subject performs the action) participle (can add an -ing); to hold down, have, hold fast, possess, retain, seize on, stay, take, withhold] the truth [truth; What truth? (that’s about to be made clear)]. 19 For what can be known [well known, acquaintance, known, notable] about God is plain [present (right-now-continuous) middle (the subject acting in his own interest) indicative (statement of fact); adjective; shining, apparent, public, external, appeared, known, manifested, open, outward] to them, because God has shown [aorist (simple occurrence without regard for the amount of time taken to accomplish the action) active (the subject performs the action) indicative (statement of fact); verb; rendered apparent, appeared, manifestly declared, showed] it to them. 20 For [a word that explains what came before] his invisible attributes [invisible things], namely, his eternal [eternal, everlasting] power [dynamis; force, miraculous power, ability, abundance, meaning, might, miracle, strength, violence, mighty work; same word used in Romans 1:4, 16] and divine nature [divinity, godhead], have been clearly [present (right-now-continuous) middle (the subject acting in his own interest) indicative (statement of fact); beheld fully, distinctly apprehended, clearly seen; this is seeing 20-20] perceived [present (right-now-continuous) middle (the subject acting in his own interest) participle (can add an “-ing”); exercised in the mind, observed, comprehended, heeded, considered, perceived, thought, understood; this is fully understood], ever since the creation [original formation, building, creation, creature, ordinance] of the world, in the things that have been made [product, fabric, workmanship (we will come back to this concept later in this passage)]. So they are [present (right-now-continuous) middle (the subject acting in his own interest) infinitive (verbal noun: “to” plus the word)] without excuse [indefensible, without excuse, inexcusable; an open-and-shut case in a courtroom]. 21 For [a word that explains what came before] although they knew [second aorist (simple occurrence without regard for the amount of time taken to accomplish the action) active (the subject performs the action) participle (can add an “-ing”); perceived, resolved, can speak about, sure, understood] God, they did not honor [aorist active indicative; ender glorious, glorify, honor, magnify] him as God or give thanks [eucharisteo; aorist (simple occurrence without regard for the amount of time taken to accomplish the action) active (the
subject performs the action) indicative (statement of fact); to be grateful, to express gratitude (towards), to say grace at a meal, give thanks; same word used in Romans 1:8][aorist (simple occurrence without regard for the amount of time taken to accomplish the action)] to him, but they became futile [aorist (simple occurrence without regard for the amount of time taken to accomplish the action)] middle (the subject acting in his own interest) indicative (statement of fact); rendered foolish, wicked, idolatrous, became vain] in their thinking [discussion, internal consideration, external debate, dispute, imagination, reasoning, thought], and their foolish [unintelligent, wicked, foolish, without understanding] hearts were darkened [aorist (simple occurrence without regard for the amount of time taken to accomplish the action)] middle (the subject acting in his own interest) indicative (statement of fact); obscured, darkened. 22 Claiming [present (right-now-continuous) active (the subject performs the action)] participle (can add an -ing); asserting, affirming, professing, saying] to be wise [present (right-now-continuous) middle (the subject acting in his own interest) infinitive (verbal noun: “to” plus the word)], they became fools [aorist (simple occurrence without regard for the amount of time taken to accomplish the action)] middle (the subject acting in his own interest) indicative (statement of fact); became insipid, became fools, made foolish, lose savor; think of a meal that is flat and could be so much better with some seasoning—this is a life without Christ, 23 and exchanged [aorist (simple occurrence without regard for the amount of time taken to accomplish the action)] active (the subject performs the action) indicative (statement of fact); made different, changed] the glory [very apparent glory, dignity, glory, honor, praise, worship] of the immortal [undecaying in essence or continuance, incorruptible, immortal] God for images [likeness, statue, profile, representation, resemblance, image] resembling [form, abstractly resembling, like, shaped similarly] mortal [decayed, perishable, corruptible] man and birds [flying animals, birds] and animals [quadrupeds, four-footed beasts] and creeping things [reptiles, small animals, creeping things, serpents].

24 Therefore [a sequencing word] God gave them up [aorist (simple occurrence without regard for the amount of time taken to accomplish the action)] active (the subject performs the action) indicative (statement of fact); surrendered, yielded up, entrusted, transmitted, betrayed, brought forth, cast, committed, delivered, gave over, gave up, hazarded, put in prison, recommended] in the lusts [longings for what is forbidden, concupiscence, desires, lusts] of their hearts to impurity [uncleanliness, impurity], to the dishonoring [present (right-now-continuous) active (the subject performs the action)] infinitive (verbal noun: “to” plus the word); rendering infamous, maltreating, despising, dishonoring, suffering shame, treating shamefully] of their bodies among themselves, 25 because they exchanged [changed, exchanged] the truth about God for a lie [falsehood, lie] and worshiped [aorist (simple occurrence without regard for the amount of time taken to accomplish the action)] active (the subject performs the action) indicative (statement of fact); venerated, adored,
worshipped] and served [aorist (simple occurrence without regard for the amount of time taken to accomplish the action) active (the subject performs the action) indicative (statement of fact); ministered, rendered religious homage, served, did the service, worshipped] the creature [original formation, building, creation, creature, ordinance; same word used in Romans 1:20] rather than the Creator [aorist (simple occurrence without regard for the amount of time taken to accomplish the action) active (the subject performs the action) participle (can add an -ing); fabricator, founder, creator, maker], who is [present (right-now-continuous) middle (the subject acting in his own interest) indicative (statement of fact)] blessed [adorable, blessed] forever [for an age, in perpetuity, for the duration of the world, present age, future age, eternal, forever, without end]] Amen [firm, trustworthy, surely, so be it, amen, verily].

26 For [a word that explains what came before] this reason [What reason? Suppressing the truth] God gave them up [aorist (simple occurrence without regard for the amount of time taken to accomplish the action) active (the subject performs the action) indicative (statement of fact); surrendered, yielded up, entrusted, transmitted, betrayed, brought forth, cast, committed, delivered, gave over, gave up, hazarded, put in prison, recommended; same word used in Romans 1:24] to dishonorable [infamous, indignity, disgraceful, dishonorable, reproach, shameful, vile] passions [suffering, passions, inordinate affections, lusts]. For their women exchanged [changed, exchanged] natural [physical, instinctive, natural] relations [employment, sexual intercourse, use] for those that are contrary [near, beside, in the vicinity of, proximity with, opposed to, against, contrary to] to nature [growth, natural production, native disposition, usage, kind, nature; the opposite of full requirement contracts]; 27 and the men likewise [similarly, likewise, so] gave up [second aorist (simple occurrence without regard for the amount of time taken to accomplish the action) active (the subject performs the action) participle (can add an “-ing”); sent forth, forsook, laid aside, left, omitted, put away, yielded up] natural [physical, instinctive, natural; same word used in Romans 1:26] relations [employment, sexual intercourse, use; same word used in Romans 1:26] with women and were consumed [inflamed deeply, burned] with passion [excitement of the mind, longing after, lust] for one another, men committing [present (right-now-continuous) middle (the subject acting in his own interest) participle (can add an -ing); working fully, accomplishing, finishing, doing, performing, working out] shameless acts [indecencies, pudenda, shame, unseemly] with men and receiving [present (right-now-continuous) active (the subject performs the action) participle (can add an -ing); receiving, taking] in themselves the due [necessary, what must be met] penalty [requital, correspondence, recompense] for their error [fraudulence, straying from orthodoxy or piety, deceit, deception, delusion, error].
28 And since they did not see fit [aorist (simple occurrence without regard for the amount of time taken to accomplish the action) active (the subject performs the action) indicative (statement of fact); test, approve, allow, discern, examine, like, prove, try] to acknowledge [present (right-now-continuous) active (the subject performs the action) infinitive (verbal noun: “to” plus the word); recognition, full discernment, acknowledgement, knowledge] God, God gave them up [aorist (simple occurrence without regard for the amount of time taken to accomplish the action) active (the subject performs the action) indicative (statement of fact); surrendered, yielded up, entrusted, transmitted, betrayed, brought forth, cast, committed, delivered, gave over, gave up, hazarded, put in prison, recommended; same word used in Romans 1:24, 26] to a debased [unapproved, rejected, worthless, castaway, reprobate] mind [mind, understanding] to do [present (right-now-continuous) active (the subject performs the action) infinitive (verbal noun: “to” plus the word); make, do] what ought not to be done [present (right-now-continuous) active (the subject performs the action) participle (can add an “-ing”); reached, became, convenient, fit]. 29 They were filled with [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) middle (the subject acting in his own interest) participle (can add an “-ing”); replete, crammed full, leveled off, furnished, satisfied, executed, finished, verified, accomplished, completed, ended, expired, filled up, fulfilled, perfected, supplied] all manner of unrighteousness [legal injustice, moral wrongfulness, iniquity, unrighteousness, wrong; same word used in Romans 1:18], evil [depravity, malice; plots, iniquity, wickedness], covetousness [avarice, fraudulency, extortion, covetousness, greediness], malice [badness, depravity, malignity, trouble, evil, maliciousness, naughtiness, wickedness]. They are full [replete, full] of envy [ill will, jealousy, envy], murder [slay, murder], strife [quarrel, wrangling, contention, debate, strife, variance], deceit [decoy; trick, wile, craft, deceit, guile, subtlety], maliciousness [bad character, mischievousness, malignity], They are gossips [secret calumniators (persons who make false and defamatory statements), whisperers], 30 slanderers [talkative against, slanderers, backbiters], haters of God [hateful to God, impious, haters of God], insolent [insulters, maltreaters, despiteful, injurious], haughty [appearing above others, haughty, proud], boastful [braggart, boaster], inventors [discoverers, contrivers, inventors] of evil [worthless, depraved, injurious, bad, evil, harm, ill, noisome, wicked], disobedient [unpersuadable, contumacious (stubbornly or willfully disobedient to authority), disobedient] to parents, 31 foolish [unintelligent, wicked, foolish, without understanding; same word used in Romans 1:21], faithless [not agreed, treacherous to compacts, covenant-breakers], heartless [to not cherish affectionately, hard-hearted towards kindred, without natural affection], ruthless [merciless, unmerciful]. 32 Though they know [second aorist (simple occurrence without regard for the amount of time taken to accomplish the action) active (the subject performs the action) participle (can add an “-ing”); to know upon some mark,
recognize, become fully acquainted with, perceive acknowledge] God’s righteous decree [equitable deed, statute, decision, judgment, justification, ordinance, righteousness] that those who practice [present (right-now-continuous) active (the subject performs the action) participle (can add an -ing); perform repeatedly, habitually, execute, accomplish, collect, fare, commit, deeds, do, exact, keep, require, use arts] such things deserve [present (right-now-continuous) middle (the subject acting in his own interest) indicative (statement of fact); deserve, suitable, due reward, meet, worthy] to die, they not only do [present (right-now-continuous) active (the subject performs the action) indicative (statement of fact); make, do] them but give approval [present (right-now-continuous) active (the subject performs the action) indicative (statement of fact); to think well of, assent to, feel gratified with, allow, assent, be pleased, have pleasure] to those who practice [present (right-now-continuous) active (the subject performs the action) participle (can add an -ing); perform repeatedly or habitually, execute, accomplish, collect, fare, commit, do, exact, keep, require] them.

Are there any repeated words?

God (12), men (4), things (3), exchanged (3), unrighteousness (3), natural (2), relations (2), nature (2), give (2), evil (2), foolish (2), women (2), hearts (2), truth (2), practice (2)

Are there any repeated topics?

Plain, shown, clearly perceived, revealed, uncovered

What are some observations of the text?

18 For the wrath of God [God’s wrath is real and it is justified. Jessica Norris: God’s attitude towards the sin of humankind is not one of tolerance. We are sinners and we have offended a holy God. His wrath is not only just, but it is righteous. MacArthur: Orge (wrath) refers to a settled, determined indignation, not to the momentary, emotional, and often uncontrolled anger (thumos) to which human beings are prone. Where did this wrath go? It was poured out on Christ at the cross for His children, but for all others, it still burns hot. God is entitled to His anger—because it is justly present. Mounce: People cannot turn their backs on God with impunity. There is entitlement for God in salvation.] is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men [Robertson: The basis of ethical conduct rests on the nature of God and our attitude toward him, otherwise the law of the jungle], who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth [The root cause of this passage is the suppression of truth. One observation for Christians may be that we should do all we can to uncover the truth and make it plain. One way to think about suppressing truth would be the removal of our freedom of speech and freedom of the press. If we no longer had a free press, then the government could publish whatever it wanted and there would be no other
viewpoint able to be expressed. While some think that they can suppress God’s truth, one of the problems with attempting to suppress God’s truth is that God has direct access to every heart—so attempting to remove His freedom of speech (His ability to communicate true facts about His own existence) will never be completely successful.]

19 For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown [rendered apparent, appeared, manifestly declared, manifested, shewed] it to them [God Himself communicates to all men His existence. Asking what happens to the one who has never heard the gospel is a poor question because God Himself has answered it: God Himself communicates to all men His existence. There is no entitlement for man in salvation. Man is not entitled to a not guilty verdict.].

20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived [Paul is a lawyer and he has just made an airtight case against mankind. Clearly means sees with 20-20 vision. Perceived means fully understood. The conclusion is clear: man is guilty, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse [Moo quoting Berkhof: Man becomes guilty because something essential does reach him.].

21 For although they knew [Robertson: to know by personal experience] God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory [see Psalm 106:20; Jeremiah 2:11] of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things [Amy Valovcin on Hughes: He mentions that the things that they worshiped showed a progressive degeneration, ending in crawly things. Moo: This verse graphically portrays the folly of idolatry that lies at the heart of all religions that are not based on a relevant response to the revelation of the one true God.].

24 Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves [Robertson: The words sound to us like clods on the coffin as God leaves men to work their own wicked will], 25 because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie [Bengel: The price of mythology] and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

26 For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; 27 and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error [Error here links back to the suppression of truth in Romans 1:18. Robertson: This debt will be paid in full.].

28 And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind [Wiersbe: God revealed his wrath not by sending fire from heaven but
by abandoning sinful men to their lustful ways] to do what ought not to be done. 29 They were filled with [Christians have the fruits of the spirit—this list is almost the anti-fruits of the spirit (they are certainly at minimum the opposite of the fruits of the spirit); Keller: This passage prompts us to look for places where we are envious, slanderous, disloyal, lusting, and so on. These things are the indication that we are worshiping an idol; that something other than God has become our functional master. Robertson: Composite photograph of the God abandoned soul] all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, 30 slanderers [gossips and slanderers may sound out of place in this list, but many times gossip and slander are how suppression begins], haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, 31 foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. 32 Though they know God’s righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

Jessica Norris: When I read through the verses before reading my book, it made me so incredibly sad because it hits so close to home with the terrible state our world is in now. Looking around and what is happening in our society makes me wonder how God can even put up with it. It proves that he is a loving and merciful God that gives us grace as the evildoers of this world drag His name and all that we as Christians stand for through the mud. It is heartbreaking for the Christian, I cannot imagine how heartbreaking it must be for God.

Apply (What is the point?)
1. God’s wrath is **real**
2. God’s communication is **thorough**
3. There are **consequences** for suppressing truth

Wiersbe: Having held down God’s truth and refusing to acknowledge God’s glory, man was left without a god, and man is so constituted that he must worship something.

Personalize (What do we do with that?)
1. Don’t rush past God’s wrath (settle there and simmer in the reality)
2. Stop trying to do God’s job (arguing that God exists)
3. Uncover truth (proclaim and herald what the unrighteous suppress)

Granted, this last point can be difficult—especially when someone rejects the message, but don’t take the rejection personally.

In next week’s text (and for a few weeks), we shift from comments for all mankind and Paul works specifically on Jewish issues.
Next week: God’s Righteous Judgment (2:1-11)

1 Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things. 2 We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who practice such things. 3 Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God? 4 Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God’s kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? 5 But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed.

6 He will render to each one according to his works: 7 to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; 8 but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. 9 There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, 10 but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. 11 For God shows no partiality.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

While these verses do not paint a pretty picture the picture is all too clear.

“This is not my message—it is the Spirit’s message given through the apostle Paul to the church at Rome (and to us.)” Boo-yah! These were hard verses to read, but we
cannot pick and choose what we want (and what we’d rather not hear) from God’s word. It is living and breathing and it is for right now.

vs. 18-25

“The idea of a God of wrath and judgement is offensive to modern man’s sensibilities.”

He talks about how there are two basic words for anger in the Greek. Thumus which is more like red hot anger and orge (used in the verse) which means a settled and abiding condition. “The wrath of God is perfect, settled, controlled.”

“The wrath of God is a counterpart to the righteousness of God.” (vs 17 . . . the righteous of God is revealed)

“The suppression of truth is not passive . . . all who are without Christ are in the constant process of holding down the truth.” We hold it down because we are unfamiliar, we are ashamed, scared or unsure. We hold it down because it messes with the way we are living now and we would rather hold it down than have to face it.

He mentions that the things that they worshiped showed a progressive degeneration, ending in crawly things. “You can not get any lower than this.”

“The wrath of God against our sin was seen when Christ suffered alone for our sin.” Beautiful!

vs. 24-32

“God allows men and women to go as far down as they desire. His wrath is shown in the removal of His restraining power.” God allows us to make our path. We need to stop obsessing about ourselves and put Christ back where He belongs.

vs. 32 “We need to be careful what we watch and applaud.” “Be careful little ears what you hear.” Said in my best Puggle teacher voice.

It struck me that disobedient to parents was listed (right after inventors of evil). With all the depravity that is mentioned, Paul still calls this point out. In God’s eyes sin is sin.

Darla Skinner (Mounce)

People cannot turn their backs on God with impunity. They exchanged the majesty of God for images made by their own hands, so God “gave them over . . . to sexual impurity.” The verb has a certain judicial quality. The NIVSB note on 1:24 says, “God allowed sin to run its course as an act of judgment.” God’s wrath mentioned in Romans 1 is not an active outpouring of divine displeasure but the removal of restraint that allows sinners to reap the just fruits of their rebellion. F. Godet writes that God “ceased to hold the boat as it was dragged by the current of the river.”
George Jackson (Murray)

Last week we saw God’s righteousness revealed; and that through the Gospel. This week we see God’s wrath revealed. I read this text and it is clear as Paul emphasized the Gospel to Christians he also he reminds us (Christians) to meditate on God’s wrath. Yes, that’s not popular nor something I readily say “YAY” too. That is not God’s problem but mine.

The more I have contemplated God’s wrath and its reason, my sin and His holiness, the more I appreciate the love I found (and continually find) in the Gospel. God’s wrath was great and it was greatly satisfied by the sacrifice of Christ. John Newton said it this way:

John Newton: Although my memory’s fading, I remember two things very clearly: I am a great sinner and Christ is a great Savior.

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

Before you can appreciate good news, you must know that there is bad news. God’s attitude towards the sin of humankind is not one of tolerance.

Condemnation of sinners does not rest on the depth of their knowledge of God but on what they make of that knowledge. All people have sufficient knowledge of God to make them responsible to God. (The chapter went on to say some things that I’m not sure that I agree with which caused discussion between Jeremy and me. The logical side of my brain had a difficult time dealing with what this guy was saying because I understand what he was saying spiritually but maybe disagree with his approach.)

“Immoral people hate what God stands for, and they hate His intrusion into their lives. They hate the twinge of guilt they get when they first do what they know is wrong, and then they keep on hating Him long after they have lost their feelings of guilt and have simply abandoned themselves to the consequences of their sin.”

As long as people suppress the truth, they will never experience the truth. “God makes sure a Bible, a gospel tract, a missionary or someone or something crosses the unbeliever’s path. But those that suppress the truth that they had about God, do not receive additional light that leads to salvation and instead receive only condemnation.” (This caused more discussion in our house and again, I understand what he is getting at but don’t like his approach. I think this is an easy statement to make for folks that live in “civilized” societies but have some issues with those that live in places that are completely unknown, especially hundreds to thousands of years ago when transportation to these unknown/unavailable lands wasn’t readily available.)
“God gives them over. They are simply too sinful to know what sinful is. This gallery of iniquity was not only true of the first century but reads much like our newspapers today.”

When I read through the verses before reading my book, it made me so incredibly sad because it hits so close to home with the terrible state our world is in now. Looking around and what is happening in our society makes me wonder how God can even put up with it. It proves that he is a loving and merciful God that gives us grace as the evildoers of this world drag His name and all that we as Christians stand for through the mud. It is heartbreaking for the Christian, I cannot imagine how heartbreaking it must be for God.

Justin Harness (Wiersbe)

Before I talk about Wiersbe’s commentary, my first observation is that verse 18 pretty much sums up the rest of this portion of scripture. “The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.” As Wiersbe says, “God revealed his wrath not by sending fire from heaven but by abandoning sinful men to their lustful ways.” Tragic to say the least.

He sums up this section in saying that there are basically 4 stages in humankind’s tragic devolution:

1. Intelligence - vv. 18-20
2. Ignorance - vv. 21-23
3. Indulgence - vv. 24-27
4. Impenitence - vv. 28-32

Jim Fleming (Moo)

Moo quoting Friederich Schiller: The history of the world is the judgment of the world.

Moo thinks that perhaps this passage is a foretaste of future judgment (which makes me wonder if judgement doesn’t always progress toward less and less direct interaction with God).

Verse 23: Moo: This verse graphically portrays the folly of idolatry that lies at the heart of all religions that are not based on a relevant response to the revelation of the one true God.

Verse 23: Moo: People who have turned from God are fundamentally unable to think and decide correctly about God and his will.

Moo quoting Berkhof: Man becomes guilty because something essential does reach him.
Paul makes it clear that, rather than being a help to people in their search for God, the evidence of nature and conscience (cf. 2:14-16) serves only to render them “without excuse” before the wrathful God. My concern here is that almost all of the commentators talk about ‘conscience’ as opposed to God’s direct communication with mankind in informing us of His existence.

Calvin: It is therefore in vain that so many burning lamps shine for us in the workmanship of the universe to show forth the glory of its Author. Although they bathe us wholly in their radiance, yet they can of themselves in no way lead us into the right path. Surely they strike some sparks, but before their fuller light shines forth these are smothered. . . . But although we lack the natural ability to mount up unto the pure and clear knowledge of God, all excuse is cut off because the fault of dullness is within us.

Julie Fleming (Keller)

Once again Paul is stepping on my “I’m not as bad as them” belief. Gee, can’t wait for chapter 2!

This week I mainly have quotes from Keller that stood out to me, explained something, or just made me think. I don’t have a verse-by-verse explanation.

Keller starts this chapter by asking the question, “Why is a received righteousness the only way to be in right standing with God?” He says 1:18-3:20 will show us why we need God to give us righteousness—why we can’t earn, deserve or attain it ourselves.

The gospel is necessary not simply to make me happy, but because there is such a thing as “the wrath of God” that I face. If you don’t understand or believe in the wrath of God, the gospel will not thrill, empower or move you.

Verse 18: God’s wrath “IS being revealed.” “It does not say ‘The wrath of God will be revealed. It is seen now, today. This prompts two questions: WHY is it being revealed? and HOW is it being revealed?”

What draws God’s anger is ‘godlessness and wickedness’. The first speaks to a disregard of God’s rights, a destruction of our vertical relationship with him. The second refers to a disregard of human rights to love, truth, justice etc., a destruction of horizontal relationships with those around us. It is a breaking of what Jesus said were the greatest two commandments: to love God, and to love our neighbor.

We are ‘tellic’ creatures-purposed people; we have to live for something. There has to be something which captures our imagination and our allegiance, which is the resting place of our deepest hopes and which we look to calm our deepest fears. Whatever that thing is, we worship it, and so we serve it.
Verse 24 tells HOW God’s wrath is being revealed in the present. He “gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts.” The things we serve will not free us; rather, they control us. The main problem of our heart is not so much desires for bad things, but our over-desires for good things, our turning of created, good things into gods, objects of our worship and service.

This made me think. It made me think if my husband, kids, house etc. were the things that I worshiped and served.

This is the wrath of God: to give us what we want too much, to us over to the pursuit of the things we have put in place of him.

In the gospel, we find that, godless and wicked though we naturally are, in Christ we are loved and accepted and blessed. It is as we understand the gospel-as we appreciate that our Lord is also our Savior-that we are led to find freedom in praising the Creator.

If we do not worship God, we will worship something else-sexual gratification, increasing our possessions, keeping rules; and none of these are more (or less) serious than the others.

See, once again, he’s stepping.

We only grasp the gospel when we understand as Paul did, that WE are the worst sinner we know (1 Tim. 1:15) and that if Jesus came to die for us, there is no one that he would not die for.

Here again, I had to think, do I really believe that I’m the worst sinner I know? I’m still thinking about this. I know I’m a sinner, but am I the WORST one I know??

Keller talks about how God’s people should respond to these verses. “There is a God who made it all, and made us in his image, to know and reflect his character. And the same God has, in wrath, given us what we have chosen: life without him, worshiping things which cannot satisfy. In the beauty of the world, we are to see God’s existence. In the brokenness of the world, we are to see God’s justice. As we do, we run back to the place where we see God’s mercy: the cross.”

We are to read these verses in light of 1:16-17, knowing that we do not need to fear God’s wrath because we have received his righteousness.

This passage prompts us to look for places where we are envious, slanderous, disloyal, lusting and so on. These things are the indication that we are worshiping an idol; that something other than God has become our functional master.
Michelle Erickson (MacArthur)

A person cannot appreciate the wonder of God’s grace until he knows about the perfect demands of God’s law, and he cannot appreciate the fullness of God’s love for him until he knows something about the fierceness of God’s anger against his sinful failure to perfectly obey the law. He cannot appreciate God’s forgiveness until he knows about the eternal consequences of the sins that require a penalty and need forgiving.

Orge (wrath) refers to a settled, determined indignation, not to the momentary, emotional, and often uncontrolled anger (thumos) to which human beings are prone.

A disease has to be recognized and identified before seeking a cure means anything. In the same way and for the same reason, Scripture reveals the bad news before the good news. God’s righteous judgement against sin is proclaimed before His gracious forgiveness of sin is offered. A person has no reason to seek salvation from sin if he does not know he is condemned by it. He has no reason to want spiritual life unless he realizes he is spiritually dead.

God’s wrath is not like human anger, which is always tainted by sin. God’s wrath is always and completely righteous. He never loses His temper.

But it is foolish, not to mention unbiblical, to measure God by human standards and to discount the idea of His wrath simply because human anger is always flawed by sin.

God’s anger is not capricious, irrational rage but is the only response that a holy God could have toward evil. God could not be holy and not be angry at evil. Holiness cannot tolerate unholiness.

Sean McGarvey (Ironside)

“The apostle now proceeds to show the need of such a revelation and piles proof upon proof, evidence upon evidence, and Scripture upon Scripture to demonstrate the solemn fact that man has no righteousness of his own, but is both by nature and practice utterly unsuited to a God of infinite holiness whose throne is established on righteousness. . . . Man is guilty, hopelessly so, and can do nothing to retrieve his condition. If God has not a righteousness for him his case is ended.” (p. 22)

“Paganism and idolatry are not steps in human evolution as man advances from slime to divinity.” (p. 23)

Regarding verse 20: “One word in the original is rendered by four words in English: ‘Things-that-are-made’ is Poima, and from this we get our word poem. Creation is God’s great epic poem, every part fitted together like the lines and verses of a majestic hymn. In Ephesians 2:10 we find the same word again. ‘We are his workmanship [His
poem] created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that
we should walk in them.’ This is God’s greatest poem: the epic of redemption.” (p. 23)
Marinate on that for a bit.

“If people change the truth of God into a lie and worship and serve the creature rather
than the Creator, the whole order of nature is violated. For apart from the fear of God
there is no power known that will hold the evil desires of the natural heart in check. It is
part of the very nature of things that flesh will be manifested in its worst aspects when
God gives men up to follow the bent of their unholy lusts.” (p. 24)

“The apostle’s picture of heathenism is still true, the following clipping bears witness:
‘A Chinese teacher once told a missionary that the Bible could not be so ancient a
book after all, because the first chapter of Romans gave an account of Chinese
conduct, such as the missionary could only have written after full acquaintance with the
people. The mistake was not an unnatural one, but it is a heathen’s testimony to the
truth of the Bible.’” (p. 24) Of course, we could replace the word “Chinese” with
“American” here, and our options beyond that are hardly limited.

Tim & Mila Archer (Maclaren—but Wiersbe since Maclaren was silent on
this passage)

The title for this chapter is, “When God Gives Up.” What a sad thought! It brings the
thought of hopelessness.

Paul’s theme is the righteousness of God. This is not an original thought. Paul followed
the basic Bible pattern: First Law and condemnation, then grace and salvation.

The Gentile World is Guilty

This section doesn’t teach evolution, (that man started low and climbed high), but
devolution. he started high and, because of sin, sank lower than the beasts. Four
Stages mark man’s tragic devolution.

1. Intelligence vv. 18-20

    Human history began, knowing God.

    Men knew truth about God, but turned from the truth and rejected God.

2. Ignorance vv. 21-23

    Man knew God, but did not want to know God or honor Him as God. The result was
an empty mind and a darkened heart.

    Having held down God’s truth and refusing to acknowledge God’s glory, man was
left without a god, and man is so constituted that he must worship something.
3. Indulgence vv. 24-27

From idolatry to immorality in just one short step. . . . The result of this self-deification was self-indulgence; and here Paul mentions a vile sin that was rampant in that day and his become increasingly prevalent in our own day; homosexuality.

4. Impenitence vv. 28-32

When man began to feel the tragic consequences of his sins, you would think he would repent and seek God; but just the opposite was true. Man did not even want to retain God in his knowledge. Now, they’ve abandoned themselves to sin.

Men not only committed these sins in open defiance of God, but encourage others and applauded them when they sinned. How far man has fallen...

Dan Crawford, British missionary to Africa, said, “The heathen are sinning against a flood of light”. There is desperate need for us to carry the Gospel to all men, for this is the only way they can be saved.
Romans

God’s Righteous Judgment (Romans 2:1-11)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

![Pie chart showing typical Bible study time]

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Let’s read the text that leads into this week’s text: Romans 1:1-32

Read: God’s Righteous Judgment (2:1-11)

1 Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things. 2 We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who practice such things. 3 Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God? 4 Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God’s kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? 5 But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed.
6 He will render to each one according to his works: 7 to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; 8 but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. 9 There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, 10 but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. 11 For God shows no partiality.

**Explain: God’s Righteous Judgment (2:1-11)**

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

**Are there any literary/structural observations?**

Paul shifts from “they” in Romans 1 to “you” in Romans 2. This literary technique is called a diatribe and it’s used when you want to illustrate a larger truth by writing to one person. [Side note about outlines and mismatched commentary sections.]

Most Biblical scholars believe the “they” in Romans 1 are primarily Gentiles and the “you” in Romans 2 are primarily Jews. In my view, the theological points Paul makes in Romans 2 are not dependent upon a Jewish audience, so I won’t hold too tightly to it.

**What do the words mean?**

1 **Therefore** [a word that connects what comes before] you have [present (right-now-continuous) middle (the subject acting in his own interest) indicative (statement of fact)] **no excuse** [indefensible, without excuse, inexcusable; an open-and-shut case in a courtroom; same word used in Romans 1:20], O man, every one of you who judges [krino; present (right-now-continuous) active (the subject performs the action) participle (can add an -ing); distinguish, decide, try, condemn, punish, avenge, conclude, condemn, damn, decree, determine, esteem, judge, sue, ordain, call in question, sentence, think; shows up three times in Romans 2:1]. **For in passing judgment** [krino; present (right-now-continuous) active (the subject performs the action) indicative (statement of fact)] on another you condemn [katakrino: down + krino; present (right-now-continuous) active (the subject performs the action) indicative (statement of fact); judge against, sentence, condemn, damn] **yourself, because you, the judge** [krino], practice [present (right-now-continuous) active (the subject performs the action) indicative (statement of fact); perform repeatedly, habitually, execute, accomplish, collect, fare, commit, deeds, do, exact, keep, require, use arts; same word used in Romans 1:32] the very same things. 2 **We know** [present (right-now-continuous) active (the subject performs the action) indicative (statement of fact); present active indicative; see, know, are aware, behold, consider, know, look, perceive, see, are sure, tell,
understand] **that the judgment** [krima; avenge, condemned, condemnation, damnation, go to law, judgment] of **God rightly falls** [present (right-now-continuous) middle (the subject acting in his own interest) indicative (statement of fact)] on **those who practice** [present (right-now-continuous) active (the subject performs the action) participle (can add an -ing); perform repeatedly, habitually, execute, accomplish, collect, fare, commit, deeds, do, exact, keep, require, use arts; same word used in Romans 1:32; 2:1] **such things.** 3 **Do you suppose** [logizomai; present (right-now-continuous) middle (the subject acting in his own interest) indicative (statement of fact); taken inventory, estimated, concluded, esteemed, imputed, numbered, reasoned, reckoned], **O man— you who judge** [krino; present (right-now-continuous) active (the subject performs the action) participle (can add an -ing)] **those who practice** [present (right-now-continuous) active (the subject performs the action) participle (can add an -ing); perform repeatedly, habitually, execute, accomplish, collect, fare, commit, deeds, do, exact, keep, require, use arts; same word used in Romans 1:32; 2:1, 2] **such things and yet do** [present (right-now-continuous) active (the subject performs the action) participle (can add an -ing)] **them yourself—that you will escape** [flee out, escape] the **judgment** [krima; avenge, condemned, condemnation, damnation, go to law, judgment; same word used in Romans 2:2] of **God?** 4 **Or do you presume** [present (right-now-continuous) active (the subject performs the action) indicative (statement of fact); think against, disesteem, despise] on the **riches** [wealth, fullness, money, possessions, abundance, richness, valuable bestowment, riches] of his **kindness** [usefulness, moral excellence, gentleness, goodness, kindness] and **forbearance** [self-restraint, tolerance, forbearance] and **patience** [longanimity, forbearance, fortitude, longsuffering, patience], not knowing [present (right-now-continuous) active (the subject performs the action) participle (can add an -ing); not to know, ignore, be ignorant, not understand, unknown; same word used in Romans 1:13] that **God’s kindness** [employment, usefulness (in manner or morals), *bitterness*, easiness, goodness, graciousness, kindness] is meant to lead [present (right-now-continuous) active (the subject performs the action) indicative (statement of fact); to lead, to bring, to drive, to go, to pass time, to induce, to bring forth, to carry, to let go, to keep, to lead away, to be open] you to **repentance** [compunction for guilt including reformation, reversal of decision, repentance]? 5 **But because of your hard** [callous, stubborn: hard] and **impenitent** [unrepentant, impenitent] **heart you are storing up** [amassing, reserving, laying up, keeping in store, heaping treasure together] **wrath** [desire, violent passion, abhorrence, punishment, anger, indignation, vengeance, wrath; same word used in Romans 1:18] for yourself on the **day of wrath** [same word used earlier in this verse] when **God’s righteous judgment** [just sentence, righteous judgment] will be **revealed** [disclosed, appeared, coming, lightened, manifested, revealed, revelation].
6 He will render [future (anticipated action) active (the subject performs the action) indicative (statement of fact); give away, deliver, give, repay, perform, recompense, render, requite, restore, reward, sell, yield] to each one according to his works [works, toils, effort, occupation, act, doing, labor; same word used in Romans 2:6] seek [present (right-now-continuous) active (the subject performs the action) participle (can add an -ing); seek, worship, plot, desire, endeavor, enquire, require, seek after] for glory [very apparent glory, dignity, glory, honor, praise, worship; same word used in Romans 1:23] and honor [value, money paid, valuables, esteem dignity, honor, preciousness, price] and immortality [incorruptibility, unending existence, immortality, incorruption, sincerity], he will give eternal [perpetual, eternal, for ever, everlasting] life; 8 but for those who are self-seeking [intrigue, faction, contentious, strife] and do not obey [disbelieve (willfully and perversely), not believe, disobedient, obey not, unbelieving] the truth, but obey [present (right-now-continuous) middle (the subject acting in his own interest) participle (can add an “-ing”); convinced, assented, rely, agreed, assured, believed, have confidence in, contented, make friend, obeyed, persuaded, trusted, yielded] unrighteousness [legal injustice, moral wrongfulness, iniquity, unrighteousness, wrong; same word used in Romans 1:18, 29], there will be wrath [desire, violent passion, abhorrence, punishment, anger, indignation, vengeance, wrath; same word used in Romans 1:18; 2:5] and fury [passion (as if breathing hard), fierceness, indignation, wrath]. 9 There will be tribulation [pressure, affliction, anguish, burden, persecution, tribulation, trouble] and distress [narrowness of room, calamity, anguish, distress] for every human being [breath, spirit, soul, life] who does [present (right-now-continuous) middle (the subject acting in his own interest) participle (can add an “-ing”); works fully, accomplishes, finishes, fashions, causes, does, performs, works out] evil [worthless, depraved, injurious, bad, evil, harm, ill, noisome, wicked; same word used in Romans 1:30], the Jew [the Jewish people] first [first in time, place, order, or importance] and also [and (‘also’ isn’t there)] the Greek [non-Jewish people; exact phrase as in Romans 1:16], 10 but [a word that contrasts what came before] glory [very apparent glory, dignity, glory, honor, praise, worship; same word used in Romans 1:23; 2:7] and honor [value, money paid, valuables, esteem dignity, honor, preciousness, price; same word used in Romans 2:7] and peace [peace, prosperity, one, quietness, rest, to be set at one again; same word used in Romans 1:7] for everyone who does [present (right-now-continuous) middle (the subject acting in his own interest) participle (can add an “-ing”); toils, effects, engages in, commits, labors, trades, ministers, works] good [benefit, good, well; same word used in Romans 2:7], the Jew [the Jewish people] first [first in time, place, order, or importance] and also [and (‘also’ isn’t there)] the Greek.
[non-Jewish people; exact phrase as in Romans 1:16; 2:9]. 11 For God shows [present (right-now-continuous) middle (the subject acting in his own interest) indicative (statement of fact); is] no partiality [partiality, favoritism, respect of persons].

Are there any repeated words?

God/God’s (5), Judgement (4), practice (3), things (3), wrath (3), kindness (2), judge (2), Greek (2), honor (2), patience (2), glory (2), obey (2), one (2), Jew (2), first (2)

Are there any repeated topics?

What are some observations of the text?

1 Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things [Amy Valovcin: We cannot turn God’s attention away from our sin by calling out others. Keller: My heart is by nature just like theirs; it just shows itself differently.]. 2 We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who practice such things. 3 Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God? [Hughes: God knows instantly and effortlessly everything about us. . . . And His judgment will be perfect.] 4 Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God’s kindness is meant to lead you to repentance [Robertson: The very kindness . . . of God is trying to lead . . . thee to a right-about face, a change of mind and attitude . . . instead of a complacent self-satisfaction and pride of race and privilege.].? 5 But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed [Schreiner: Instead of storing up for themselves eternal reward, the Jews were storing up eschatological wrath.].

6 He will render to each one according to his works [Proverbs 24:12b]: 7 to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; 8 but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury [Murray: The impossibility of leniency resides in the fact that the judgement of God is according to truth and therefore knows no respect of person.]. 9 There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, 10 but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek [Robertson: The Jew is first in privilege and in penalty. Maclaren: Paul affirms that God’s election of the Jews made their responsibility and accountability even greater.]. 11 For God shows no partiality.
Apply (What is the point?)

1. God will judge our hypocrisy
2. God’s judgment is coming
3. God’s judgment is impartial

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. Repent of our sin

I’ll leave you with some words from Chris Arnold: We all fall into the “comparison game.” Who’s doing better professionally? Who has a better car? A bigger house? I’m not as bad as >insert name here<. I don’t run around on my wife. I’m not hooked on >whatever<.

God doesn’t compare us to each other. He compares us to the law: His Word. Since we can’t stand up to His word we set our sights lower and miss the mark.

And that’s why we need Jesus.

Next week: God’s Judgment and the Law (2:12-29)

12 For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. 13 For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified. 14 For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. 15 They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them 16 on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

17 But if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast in God 18 and know his will and approve what is excellent, because you are instructed from the law; 19 and if you are sure that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, 20 an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth— 21 you then who teach others, do you not teach yourself? While you preach against stealing, do you steal? 22 You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? 23 You who boast in the law dishonor God by breaking the law. 24 For, as it is written, “The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.”

25 For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. 26 So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? 27
Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. 28 For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. 29 But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

We all sin and we all must be accountable for what we do. We must not think that by pointing out other peoples’ sins we will somehow distract God from what we do ourselves. Thinking that since other people do it, it somehow makes our sin better or not so bad is a slippery slope. Thinking that other peoples’ sins are “bigger” than ours does not negate our sin. “Such thinking suggests that since we are human we are under moral obligation to sin, and that God is under moral obligation to forgive us.”

We deserve the wrath that God displayed at the cross, but because he is merciful and loving the righteous get His forgiveness.

He talks about God’s perfect judgement even on the religious. “God sees sin in their hearts that they do not see—and condemns them.” He talks about how we can twist our sins into something they are not. We didn’t really commit adultery, we just thought about it. We didn’t steal, we just thought about it. We somehow think that because we didn’t actually commit the sin that we are better than those that do. We all have a tendency to forget our own sin because we are to busy pointing out others sins to God. “God sees all this! He is not deceived by our indulging in self-righteous delusion by renaming our personal sins.” Ouch! Talk about heart prick!

He talks about how sinners can justify their sins by thinking that since they are continually blessed by God that He must be okay with the way they are living. “He also draws people to repentance through ‘kindness and forbearance and patience.’ No one
should assume that he is all right with God because life is easy for him at a given time. God calls people through sunshine as well as through rain.”

“God knows instantly and effortlessly everything about us. A man may be a ‘good’ person—upright, outwardly moral, sure of his goodness. But when he dies without Christ, Christ will say to him ‘you have no excuse (Romans 2:1).’ And His judgment will be perfect.”

God will be perfect and impartial in His judgement. There is nothing we can do to sway God on this, all will be judged. “Apart from the blood of Christ He will not be moved.”

Extremely eye opening verses. No matter the sin, no matter the sinner, God knows our hearts and sees our true intentions behind everything we do and say. No matter who we are, how eloquent we sound, no matter our position or our power. . . God will judge all. We cannot turn God’s attention away from our sin by calling out others. We cannot change God’s mind about our sin by praying about the severity of other peoples’ sins. What a merciful God we serve, that He loves us through all of this.

Chris Arnold (Barclay)

Barclay says that Paul is directly talking to the Jews here. Since the tail end of chapter one outlines the “grim and terrible picture” of the heathen/gentile world, Barclay states that the Jews were essentially sitting back and saying “Yeah! They are bad sinners,” but ignoring that the Jews were just as guilty of sin. Barclay seems to feel that the Jews felt a “special privilege” by virtue of their Jewish heritage. But “Paul is pointing out forcibly to the Jew that he is just as much a sinner as the Gentile is and that when he is condemning the Gentile he is condemning himself. He will be judged, not on his racial heritage, but by the kind of life that he lives.”

I find it interesting that Barclay juxtaposes the Jewish belief of “favored son” status with the righteous judgment of God. Righteous is partially defined as “acting in accord with divine or moral law.” It also means “morally right or justifiable.”

So, as I read it, Paul is saying that there is a group of people who are comparing themselves to each other and each is trying to argue their own holiness and sanctity, irrespective of the law, and based upon their own perceptions of who they are (the “I’m a good person” argument). But Paul states that God’s law has defined sin, not man’s ideas. Since the law defines the crime, and since the punishment meted out by God is righteous, then the logical conclusion is that any punishment is in accordance with the law; which Paul has ALREADY argued is for EVERYBODY—Gentile and Jew. Since the law applies to everyone equally, then the punishment for breaking the law is meted out to all offenders equally. This completely destroys any relativism or cultural bias. No one gets a pass because of who they are in the community.
And people are thinking that because God doesn’t always smite with a thunderbolt the sinner at the spot of his sin, that he must have a sliding scale. Paul states that God’s delay in disciplining people is because of His mercy and love and is a call for repentance (more flies with honey than vinegar). He also states that God will reward each for his deeds . . . in God’s own time and in an appropriate manner.

We all fall into the “comparison game.” Who’s doing better professionally? Who has a better car? A bigger house?

I’m not as bad as >insert name here<.
I don’t run around on my wife.
I’m not hooked on >whatever<

God doesn’t compare us to each other. He compares us to the law: His Word. Since we can’t stand up to His word we set our sights lower and miss the mark.

And that’s why we need Jesus.

**Darla Skinner (Mounce)**

But in the immediate context Paul was not teaching how we are made right with God but how God judges the reality of our faith. Faith is not an abstract quality that can be validated by some spiritual test unrelated to life. God judges faith by the difference it makes no person actually lives. A.M. Hunter is right in saying that “a man’s destiny on Judgment Day will depend not on whether he has known God’s will and whether he has done it.” that is why Jesus taught that those who respond to the needs of hungry, thirsty, the stranger, the sick, and the prisoner will be rewarded with eternal life; but those who fail in these down-to-earth tasks will “go away to eternal punishment” (Matt 25:31-46).

**George Jackson (Murray)**

God’s truth and equity govern his judgments and there are special privileges for none.

The impossibility of leniency resides in the fact that the judgement of God is according to truth and therefore knows no respect of person.

There is no wrath of God except as the reaction of his justice and truth against sin.

It’s good to consider the wrath of God. We cannot properly study the work of Christ without properly studying the wrath of God.

Is it mean to sentence a criminal? We have all sinned. We’re all criminals. God’s wrath is the enactment of the sentence. It’s a just sentence. God’s wrath isn’t mean. It’s just. How marvelous that Christ took that wrath, that judgement.
Jessica Norris (Kroll)

Paul is “calling out” those that were judging others and those that were unable to see their own sins. In the previous chapter Paul spent a lot of time discussing people sinning outwardly which is much easier to identify and therefore judge. I see this running rampant in today’s church as well showing that little to nothing has changed in the thousands of years since Paul penned these words. In Romans 2, Paul begins discussing those that sin inwardly which is bad enough but then are judging the others on top of that.

I like the reminder of how sin is sin no matter how big or small and my author made comparisons to each:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outward Sin</th>
<th>Inward Sin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adultery</td>
<td>Lust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stealing/Theft</td>
<td>Covet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murder</td>
<td>Hate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Author notes: In the Old Testament the Jews followed the Old Testament laws. Although the Gentiles did not follow the same laws, they intuitively did things that were similar and found in the Jewish law. Their morals grew from their hearts which is not true for the Jews. When the Gentiles did not follow their own self-imposed code, their conscience kicked in which caused them to feel guilty. The Gentiles excused their sin by making excuses and/or defenses for their acts. “Being moral is insufficient to be righteous.” God demands both.

Julia Gregg (Schreiner)

Overall thought that emerged for me this week is “sounding brass and tinkling cymbal.” Just because the practices . . . appear righteous—Christianity is a matter, truly, of the heart. It is then the heart should drive the actions. Action without connection is merely a performance. Paul seems to be speaking to the judgmental Jews who condemn the Gentile believers for a lack of performance/good works; while the Jews continue to maintain the show with no connection. Paul reminds them that it is God, the ultimate judge who sees the heart and that they (Jews) will be without excuse. Despite the old saying- possession is 9/10th of the law . . . Paul emphasizes here that this is not the case in Christianity for the believer. The connection for theses verses, especially verse 1 is that Paul is emphasizing the truth of gospel is a heart issue—this is essential, because simple knowledge of the law is not enough . . . the Jews were guilty of self-deception and inconsistency (page 108) rendering them just as guilty as the Gentiles who were committing transgressions. “Instead of storing up for
themselves eternal reward, the Jews were storing up eschatological wrath.” (page 109)

To whom much is given much is required. [Luke 12:48] Quite honestly this has been a favorite for years but its meaning has deepened from the shallow and direct perspective I took it to mean 20 years ago. Knowledge brings awareness which then begs for wisdom in lifestyle and choices . . . it also brings burden because once you see “it” you cannot unsee it which demands responsibility. (Reminds me of The Green Mile movie—the power John Coffey has borne a heavy burden of responsibility.) In verses 6-11 as the focus moves to works- it is not the works themselves that matter but the nature of the works . . . heart—motive! Even though Jews were comfortable with judgment based on works—Paul deepens this thought by reminding them that God is impartial and no respecter of persons when giving reward “according to works.” The critical element here is that God examines the heart and not necessarily the “work.” We all fall short of God’s righteousness—Paul reminds the Jews that do as well—in spite of their works-based approach to the gospel. Paul does seem to agree with James (page 115) that participation in good works are necessary for the coming age—but this is more about spreading the gospel. Overall—it must be “lived-out.”

Julie Fleming (Keller)

To pass judgment is to believe that others are worthy of God’s judgment while you are not.

My heart is by nature just like theirs; it just shows itself differently.

Verses 9-10 repeat the teaching of verses 7-8, with one difference. Twice he says: ‘first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.’ That is ‘God does not show favoritism’ (v 11). Judgement is impartial. What matters is not who we are, but what we do: what matters is not our family or cultural background-Jewish, Christian, church-going, completely cut off from the Bible, and so on—but how we decide to relate to God.

Rachel Samsel (Mc Gee)

These verses talk about God’s judgement for man. A few things that stood out that also summarize are below.

First, verse 1 talks about how God will judge man and judge our sin. Some Jews were even being hypocritical because they were judging the Gentiles for their sin, yet the Jews sins were the same. And God will not excuse this, he will judge all sin and also will judge the hypocrisy. He also touches this again in verse 3.

Second, God’s judgement is according to the truth. You can’t argue with the truth and God knows how they have lived better than anyone.
Thirdly, God is not biased. No favorites. No “teacher’s” pets. God judges according to the law and will judge the same. Jew or Gentile.

Lastly, He does not like those with selfish hearts, those who are stubborn or those with hardened hearts and the storing up of wrath will be judged. He does however reward for good deeds. But that is NOT what gets you to Heaven but he does acknowledge them.

Sean McGarvey (Ironside)

“To praise virtue while practicing vice may enable one to get by with his fellows, but it will not deceive Him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.” (p. 25)

“Men are inclined to consider that God is condoning their ways, if ‘sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily’ (Eccl. 8:11), whereas He waits in longsuffering mercy that men may have opportunity to face their sins and own their guilt, thus finding mercy.” (p. 25) How beautiful that we have a Father who is patient! I wish I had exercised this kind of patience so many times rather than just jumping in with course correction and punishment. I regret these moments. I wonder how many times when I could have exercised wisdom in patience that a sense of guilt would have led one of my kids to seek forgiveness and our relationship could have been made deeper in that moment. His Fathering vs mine: mine sucks.

“Properly, I believe, we should consider verses 7-15 as parenthetical, not merely 13-15, as indicated in the Authorized Version. In these verses great principles of judgment are laid down that should forever silence the caviler who would charge God with unrighteousness because some have light and privileges that others do not enjoy. . . . Men will be judged by the light they have had, not by the light they never knew.” (p. 26) I think that arguing against God’s nature and attempting to find flaws in His character just points back to our own depravity and trying to justify our shortcomings by either saying 1) “At least I’m not as bad as. . . .”, 2)“He does ____ also”, and 3)“At least I’m not doing ____”, rather than admit the shortcomings and have it settled in our minds that He is God and we are not. His is a job for which I am in no way adequately educated, equipped, or able to endure. Remember “Bruce Almighty”? (Morgan Freeman, you are a freckled genius!)

Stephen Mays (Stott)

One can almost envisage him as he dictates his letter, suddenly picking out the complacent individual who has been enjoying the exposure of those sins he ‘has no mind to,’ and telling him that he is no better than anyone else. He imagines an interruption by some objector, and turns to refute his objection, first squashing it with ‘By no means!’ (‘Perish the thought!’) and then giving a reasoned to reply to it. He
starts a new phrase of his argument with such a rhetorical question as ‘What shall we say?’ or ‘What then?’ and all the time his thought races ahead of his words, so that his words have to leap over a gap to catch up with his thought.

He preached the equality of all human beings, he acknowledged the pervasive character of evil (‘all vices exist in all men, though all vices do not stand out prominently in each man’).

Stephen Samsel (Stott)

We even gain a vicarious satisfaction from condemning in others the very faults we excuse in ourselves. Freud called this moral gymnastic “projection,” but Paul described it centuries before Freud. This device enables us simultaneously to retain our sins and our self-respect.

Tim & Mila Archer (Maclaren—but Wiersbe since Maclaren was silent on this passage)

When God Gives up: Romans 2:1-11

It would not be an easy task to find the Jews guilty, since disobedience to God was one sin they did not want to confess. The Old Testament prophets were persecuted for indicting the Israel for her sins, and Jesus was crucified for the same reason.

Paul summoned for witnesses to prove the guilt of the Jewish nation; two are covered in this week’s study.

A. The Gentiles (2:1-3)

Jewish national and religious pride encourage them to despise the religious pride and encouraged them to despise the “Gentile dogs” and have nothing to do with them. They thought that they were free from judgment because they were God’s chosen people. But Paul affirms that God’s election of the Jews made their responsibility and accountability even greater.

B. God’s Blessing (2:4-11)

The blessings they received from Him gave them greater responsibility to obey Him and glorify Him. It is not the judgment of God that leads men to repentance, but the goodness of God; but Israel did not repent.

God judges according to deeds, just as He judges according to truth. Ex:

- David committed some terrible sins; but the total emphasis of his life was obedience to God.
- Judas confessed his sin and supplied the money for buying a cemetery for strangers; yet the total emphasis of his life was disobedience and unbelief.
• True saving faith results in obedience and godly living, even though there may be occasional falls.

C. God’s Law (2:12-24)

D. Circumcision (2:25-29)
 Romans

God’s Judgment and the Law (Romans 2:12-29)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Let’s read the text that leads into this week’s text: Romans 1:1-2:11

Read: God’s Judgment and the Law (2:12-29)

12 For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. 13 For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified. 14 For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. 15 They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them 16 on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

17 But if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast in God 18 and know his will and approve what is excellent, because you are instructed from the law; 19 and if
you are sure that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, 20 an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth— 21 you then who teach others, do you not teach yourself? While you preach against stealing, do you steal? 22 You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? 23 You who boast in the law dishonor God by breaking the law. 24 For, as it is written, “The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.”

25 For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. 26 So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? 27 Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. 28 For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. 29 But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.

**Explain: God’s Judgment and the Law (2:12-29)**

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Today, we’re going to review, “How to Get a Grasp on My Bible” from Growth Track 2.

1. **Hear** (listening to the Bible being read)
2. **Read** (reading the Bible ourselves) → Read (the “what does it say?”)
3. **Study** (asking and answering questions)
4. **Memorize** (hiding the Bible our hearts)
5. **Meditate** (thinking about the Bible to apply the Bible to our lives)
6. **Apply** (living the Bible out in community)
   - What did it mean to the original hearers? **Interpretation** → Explain (“what does it mean?” structure, words, repetitions, topics, observations, etc.)
   - What is the underlying timeless principle? **Implication** → **Apply** (“so what is the point?”)
   - Where or how could I practice that principle? **Implementation** → **Personalize** (“now what do we do with that?”)

We will walk through this process, but only part today because this text is too big.

**Are there any literary/structural observations?**

Last week we saw that Paul shifted from “they” in **Romans 1** to “you” in **Romans 2**. Paul continues his usage of the “you” pronouns (called a diatribe) in this passage—and even clarifies in **Romans 2:17** that he is speaking specifically to Jewish believers.
What do the words mean?

12 For all who have sinned [second aorist active indicative; missed the mark and not share in the prize, erred, sinned, offended, trespassed] without the law [lawlessly, without the law] will also perish [future middle indicative; be destroyed fully, perish, lose, die] without the law [lawlessly, without the law; same word used earlier in Romans 2:12], and all who have sinned [second aorist active indicative; missed the mark and not share in the prize, erred, sinned, offended, trespassed; same word used earlier in Romans 2:12] under the law [nomos; regulation, law of Moses, law; this word will be repeated 19 times in this passage] will be judged [krino; future middle indicative; distinguish, decide, try, condemn, punish, avenge, conclude, condemn, damn, decree, determine, esteem, judge, sue, ordain, call in question, sentence, think; showed up three times in Romans 2:1, 3] by the law [nomos]. 13 For it is not the hearers [listeners, hearers] of the law [nomos] who are righteous [equitable, innocent, holy, just, righteous; same word used in Romans 1:17] before God, but the doers [performers, doers (used of poets)] of the law [nomos] who will be justified [future middle indicative; rendered just, rendered innocent, freed, justified, righteous]. 14 For when Gentiles [non-Jewish, Gentiles, heathens, nations, peoples], who do not have [present active participle; have, hold] the law [nomos], by nature [growth, natural production, native disposition, usage, kind, nature; used in Romans 1:26] do [present active subjunctive (probability or possibility); make, do] what the law [nomos; used in Romans 2:12, 13, 14] requires, they are [present middle indicative; have, hold] a law [nomos;] to themselves, even though they do not have [present active participle] the law [nomos]. 15 They show [present middle indicative; indicate, do, show] that the work [works, toils, effort, occupation, act, doing, labor; same word used in Romans 2:6, 7] of the law [nomos] is written [inscribed, written] on their hearts [heart, thoughts, feelings, mind], while their conscience [co-perception, moral consciousness, conscience] also bears witness [present active participle; symmartyreο (with + martyr); to testify jointly, corroborate by concurrent evidence, testify unto, bear witness with], and their conflicting thoughts [computations, reasonings, imaginations, thoughts] accuse [present active participle; object, accuse, be a plaintiff, charge with some offense] or even excuse [present middle participle; give a legal plea of oneself, exculpate, answer for, make a defense, excuse, speak for self] them 16 on that day when, according to my gospel [gospel, good message; same word used in Romans 1:1, 9, 16], God judges [krino; future active indicative; used in Romans 2:1, 3, 12] the secrets [concealed, privates, hidden, secrets] of men by Christ [“anointed”] Jesus [“Jehovah is salvation;” used in Romans 1:1].

17 But if you call [present middle indicative; named further, denominated, call] yourself a Jew and rely on [present middle indicative; settle on, remain, rely on, rest in] the law
[nomos] and boast [vaunt, boast, glory, joy, rejoice] in God 18 and know [present active indicative; know, are aware of, feel, perceive, understand] his will [determination, choice, purpose, decree, volition, inclination, desire, pleasure, will; same word used in Romans 1:10] and approve [present active indicative; test, approve, allow, discern, examine, like, prove, try; same word used in Romans 1:28] what is excellent [present active participle; borne through, transported, reported, bettered, excellent, published, of more value; (JF note: I am confused on the proper application of the definition of this word—and so was A.T. Robertson)], because you are instructed [katecheo; present middle participle; sounded down into the ears, indoctrinated, catechized, apprised of, informed, taught, instructed] from the law [nomos]; 19 and if you are sure [second perfect (completed action with the results continuing) active indicative; convinced, assented, rely, agreed, assured, believed, have confidence in, contented, make friend, obeyed, persuaded, trusted, yielded; same word used in Romans 2:8] that you yourself are [present middle infinitive] a guide [conductor, teacher, guide, leader] to the blind [opaque, smoky, blind], a light [luminousness, fire, light] to those who are in darkness [shadiness, obscurity, darkness], 20 an instructor [trainer, teacher, discipliner, instructor] of the foolish [mindless, stupid, ignorant, egotistic, rash, unbelieving, foolish, unwise], a teacher [instructor, doctor, master, teacher] of children [infants, simple-minded, immature Christians, babes, childish], having [present active participle; having, holding] in the law [nomos] the embodiment [formation, appearance, semblance, formula, form] of knowledge [knowing, knowledge, science] and truth—21 you then who teach [present active participle] others, do you not teach [present active indicative; same word used earlier in Romans 2:21] yourself? While you preach [present active participle; herald, preach, proclaim, publish] against stealing [present active infinitive], do you steal [present active indicative]? 22 You who say [present active participle; lay forth, relate, discourse, ask, bid, boast, call, describe, give out, name, put forth, say, speak, tell, utter] that one must not commit adultery [present active indicative], do you commit adultery [present active indicative; same word used earlier in Romans 2:22]? You who abhor [present middle participle; are disgusted by, detest, abhor, abominate] idols [images, heathen gods, worship of heathen gods], do you rob temples [present active indicative; commit sacrilege, rob temples]? 23 You who boast [present middle indicative; vaunt, boast, glory, joy, rejoice; same word used in Romans 2:17] in the law [nomos] dishonor [present active indicative; render infamous, despise, dishonor, suffer shame, entreat shamefully] God by breaking [violating, breaking, transgressing] the law [nomos]. 24 For, as it is written [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) middle indicative; written, described], “The name of God is blasphemed [present middle indicative; vilified, spoken impiously of, blasphemed, defamed, railed on, reviled, spoken evil against] among the Gentiles because of you.”
25 For circumcision [the rite of circumcision] indeed [indeed, truly, verily] is of value [present active indicative; is useful, benefits, advantages, betters, prevailed, profits] if you obey [present active subjunctive (probability or possibility); perform repeatedly, habitually, execute, accomplish, collect, fare, commit, deeds, do, exact, keep, require, use arts; same word used in Romans 1:32; 2:1, 2, 3] the law [nomos], but if you break [present middle subjunctive (probability or possibility); violation, breaking, transgression; used in Romans 2:23] the law [nomos], your circumcision [the rite of circumcision; same word as earlier in Romans 2:25] becomes [second perfect (completed action with the results continuing) active indicative] uncircumcision [not circumcised, uncircumcised]. 26 So [a connecting word], if a man who is uncircumcised [not circumcised, uncircumcised; used in Romans 2:25] keeps [present active subjunctive (probability or possibility); watches, guards, preserves, obeys, keeps, saves] the precepts [equitable deeds, statutes, decisions, judgments, justifications, ordinances, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:32] of the law [nomos], will not his uncircumcision [not circumcised, uncircumcised; used in Romans 2:25] be regarded [logizomai; future middle indicative; taken inventory, estimated, conuded, esteemed, imputed, numbered, reasoned, reckoned; same word used in Romans 2:3] as circumcision [the rite of circumcision; same word as used twice in Romans 2:25]? 27 Then he who is physically [growth, natural production, native disposition, usage, kind, nature; used in Romans 1:26; 2:14] uncircumcised [not circumcised, uncircumcised; used in Romans 2:25] but keeps [present active participle; completes, executes, concludes, discharges, accomplishes, makes an end, expires, fills up, finishes, goes over, pays, performs] the law [nomos] will condemn [krino; future active indicative; used in Romans 2:1, 3, 12, 16] you who have the written code [writing, letter, note, epistle, book, learning, scripture] and circumcision [the rite of circumcision; same word as used in Romans 2:25, 26] but break [violate, break, transgress] the law [nomos]. 28 For no one is [present middle indicative] a Jew who is merely one outwardly [shiningly, apparently, publicly, openly, outwardly, manifestly], nor is circumcision [the rite of circumcision; same word as used in Romans 2:25, 26] outward [shiningly, apparently, publicly, openly, outwardly, manifestly; same word used in Romans 2:28] and physical [flesh, meat, human, physical]. 29 But a Jew is one inwardly [concealed, privately, hidden, inwardly, secretly], and circumcision [the rite of circumcision; same word used in Romans 2:25 (twice), 26, 28] is a matter of the heart [heart, thoughts, feelings, mind], by the Spirit [current, breath, soul, spirit], not by the letter [writing, letter, note, epistle, book, learning, scripture; same word used in Romans 2:27]. His praise [laudation, commendable thing, praise] is not from man but from God.

Your homework: complete the rest of the handout on your own (remember to ask, read (use the language tools help), talk, and then use resources: commentaries, etc.).
Basics of Greek Verbs

A Greek verb has a person, a number, a tense, a voice, and a mood.

Person (the form of the verb)
- First person: the person speaking
- Second person: the person being spoken to
- Third person: the person being spoken of or about

Number (the reference of the verb)
- Singular: referencing one
- Plural: referencing more than one

Tense (the time and kind of action of the verb)
- Present: right-now continuous
- Aorist: simple occurrence without regard for the amount of time taken to accomplish the action
- Imperfect: action continually or repeatedly happening in past time
- Perfect: completed action with the results continuing
- Future: anticipated action
- Pluperfect: completed action and results that existed at some point in the past

Voice (the performer of the verb)
- Active: the subject performs the action
- Passive: the subject is the recipient of the action
- Middle: the subject acts in his own interest or performs action on himself or for his own benefit

Mood (the relationship to reality of the verb)
- Indicative: statement of fact
- Imperative: a command
- Subjunctive: probability or possibility
- Optative: possibility (more remotely possible than subjunctive)
- Participle: verbal adjective—can add an -ing
- Infinitive: verbal noun—”to” plus the word

Summarized and adapted from Corey Keating (ntgreek.org) and Strong’s Concordance
Are there any repeated words?

Law (nomos) (21), God (6), circumcision (6), one (4), yourself (3), Jew (3), written (3), sinned (2), boast (2), man (2), judges/judged (krino), teach (2), adultery (2), uncircumcised (2), break (2), Gentiles (2), keeps (2), commit (2), uncircumcision (2)

Are there any repeated topics?

What are some observations of the text?

Apply (What is the point?)

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

Next week: God’s Righteousness Upheld (3:1-8)

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

We should pursue a profound honesty before God, for He knows everything.

He talks about The Great Divorce by CS Lewis and the conversation that takes place between a resident in heaven and one in hell. This fanciful conversation perfectly captures the misleading religious confidence of the damned.

He talks about how we (even believers) can take God’s word and use it to make us seem okay. We have overconfidence (what Paul warns us about in 17-24) we have, know, understand, can quote the Bible (and in different versions) but if we aren’t clinging to its truths we are relying on the wrong thing. We are relying on our own ability instead of the Word of God. May God open our eyes as often as then need to be opened.

God is never fooled. The truth is, earnest, confident, religious people will ultimately be lost . . . they will be told “I never knew you; depart from me.” Matthew 7:23b

God is our hope!

Chris Arnold (Barclay)

In this passage Paul turns to the Gentiles. He has dealt with the Jews and with their claims to special privilege. But one advantage the Jew did have, and that was the Law. A Gentile might well retaliate by saying, “It is only right that God should condemn the Jews, who had the Law and who ought to have known better; but we will surely escape judgment because we had no opportunity to know the Law and did not know any better.” In answer Paul lays down two great principles.

(i) A man will be judged by what he had the opportunity to know. If he knew the Law, he will be judged as one who knew the Law. If he did not know the Law, he will be judged as one who did not know the Law. God is fair. And here is the answer to those who ask what is to happen to the people who lived in the world before Jesus came and who had no opportunity to hear the Christian message. A man will be judged by his fidelity to the highest that it was possible for him to know.

(ii) Paul goes on to say that even those who did not know the written Law had an unwritten law within their hearts. We would call it the instinctive knowledge of right and wrong. The Stoics said that in the universe there were certain laws operative which a man broke at his peril—the laws of health, the moral laws which govern life and living.
The Stoics called these laws *phusis* (Greek #5449), which means nature, and urged men to live *kata* (Greek #2596) *phusin* (Greek #5449), according to nature. It is Paul’s argument that in the very nature of man there is an instinctive knowledge of what he ought to do. The Greeks would have agreed with that. Aristotle said: “The cultivated and free-minded man will so behave as being a law to himself” Plutarch asks: “Who shall govern the governor?” And he answers: “Law, the king of all mortals and immortals, as Pindar calls it, which is not written on papyrus rolls or wooden tablets, but is his own reason within the soul, which perpetually dwells with him and guards him and never leaves his soul bereft of leadership.”

Paul saw the world divided into two classes of people. He saw the Jews with their Law given to them direct from God and written down so that all could read it. He saw the other nations, without this written law, but nonetheless with a God-implanted knowledge of right and wrong within their hearts. Neither could claim exemption from the judgment of God. The Jew could not claim exemption on the ground that he had a special place in God’s plan. The Gentile could not claim exemption on the ground that he had never received the written Law. The Jew would be judged as one who had known the Law; the Gentile as one who had a God-given conscience. God will judge a man according to what he knows and has the chance to know.

To a Jew a passage like this must have come as a shattering experience. He was certain that God regarded him with special favor, simply and solely because of his national descent from Abraham and because he bore the badge of circumcision in his flesh. But Paul introduces an idea to which he will return again and again. Jewishness, he insists, is not a matter of race at all; it has nothing to do with circumcision. It is a matter of conduct. If that is so, many a so-called Jew who is a pure descendant of Abraham and who bears the mark of circumcision in his body, is no Jew at all; and equally many a Gentile who never heard of Abraham and who would never dream of being circumcised, is a Jew in the real sense of the term. To a Jew this would sound the wildest heresy and leave him angry and aghast.

In this passage Paul says that there are Jews whose conduct makes the name of God ill-spoken of among the Gentiles. It is a simple fact of history that the Jews were, and often still are, the most unpopular people in the world.

It was all too true that the Jews did bring the name of God into disrepute, because they shut themselves into a rigid little community from which all others were shut out and because they showed to the heathen an attitude of contempt for their worship and complete lack of charity for their needs. Real religion is a thing of the open heart and the open door; Judaism was a thing of the shut heart and the shut door.
Barclay and I have must have conflicting focal points here. Barclay seems to view this as an argument between two sides: Gentile and Jew. My mind’s eye pictures a crowd divided down the middle when I say this. This may be accurate. The Jews did keep to themselves, culturally and socially, and were somewhat victimized by their societal isolationism. They received special accommodation from Rome regarding religious practices and were even noted to not be conscripted into the Roman Army. Barclay points out that the Jewish fierceness of maintaining their racial/cultural purity brought rise to rumors such as misanthropy, pig worship (because of the dietary prohibition against enjoying the awesomeness of bacon), and worshipping an Ass’ Head in the wilderness. There was also some discord because the Jews were allowed to set up their own cultural courts, and were allowed to for a time) send their temple tax to Jerusalem, instead of local temples. They were allowed to have their own private enclaves and meetings, and if any Gentile were to become a convert to Christianity, the Jews would still not associate with that person unless they were physically circumcised.

Now, this is a matter of history and in the sense of providing some context, I can see where Barclay would spend a lot of time on it. But he does seem to paint the picture of the Jews as the bad guys.

But when I read this section of Romans, I see a much more holistic view of what is being said. When I read this I here Paul telling us that The Law of God, should define our actions and interactions, not the laws of men. I’ve said before that the law defines the crime. So it seems like Paul is saying that the Jews have the Law of Moses, the 10 commandments, hundreds of years of custom and culture, and that is well and good, but are not complying with the Law of God. They are being haughty and judgmental while not practicing what they preach. And because of this they are trying to enforce their cultural practices on new believers in an attempt to “correct” them.

It also read that the Gentiles who are coming to Christ, without the historical background that the Jewish cultures had, are getting more of the intent of the Law, while not necessarily having the “Letter” of the law as a point of reference. Barclay even tries to point out that “God implanted the knowledge of right and wrong on the hearts of the Gentiles, who, without the benefit of having the Jewish Law as a point of reference, just knew how to behave. Barclay seems to prop up this argument with quotes from philosophers. See this quote: It is Paul’s argument that in the very nature of man there is an instinctive knowledge of what he ought to do. The Greeks would have agreed with that. Aristotle said: “The cultivated and free-minded man will so behave as being a law to himself” Plutarch asks: “Who shall govern the governor?” And he answers: “Law, the king of all mortals and immortals, as Pindar calls it, which is not written on papyrus rolls or wooden tablets, but is his own reason within the soul,
which perpetually dwells with him and guards him and never leaves his soul bereft of leadership.”

So who is right?

Not, I think, Barclay.

Let’s get this out of the way quickly, before I get to the main point I wanted to make. I think Barclay places too much emphasis on the “universal law of man,” as he relates in his comments from Aristotle, Pindar, and Plutarch, and (I am sure, others). He completely ignores the Holy Spirit, who Paul states later in Romans, dwells in us. Paul further states in 2 Corinthians that “God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts.” Paul believes that the Holy Spirit penetrates our lives fully. Paul believes that the Holy Spirit influences every part of the believer’s being. Barclay, in comparison, seemed to have written some soft-balled “follow your heart, true believer” commentary that completely misses a great opportunity to extol the Holly Spirit. That bothers me.

Paul reminds them that the judgment of God is not based upon your cultural history, or whether you have the appropriate number of tassels on your robe, or whether you’ve had a strip of skin removed from a personal area. It is not about comparing yourself with other people. This is about how you measure up to the Law of God. Let’s not take this week’s verses and look at them in a vacuum. In the context of what has been said in the verses immediately prior, Paul is telling people so stop:

Stop judging others.
Stop sinning and claimant special privilege by virtue of custom.
Stop standing in the way of our Christian brothers.
Stop trying to justify your own sin by pointing out the sins of others.

When Paul points out in verse 24 For, as it is written, “The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.” He is reminding everyone that what we do is witnessed by others, and we are judged by what we do. By extension, so is God. We cannot continue to be a witness when our witness is a lie.

The quote from Barclay that I do like is “Real religion is a thing of the open heart and the open door; Judaism was a thing of the shut heart and the shut door.”

Paul reminds us that our cultural identity pales in comparison with our spiritual identity. Our place in society should never be equated with our place in the throne room. And our brothers and sisters in Christ should never be isolated and criticized for their past or their roots, but should be identified by their hearts’ longing for the things of God and their faithfulness in following the will of God.

Paul reminds us that, for the faithful, “his praise is not from man but from God.”
And if it is good enough for God to praise, who are we to criticize?

**Darla Skinner (Mounce)**

*People have a fatal tendency to substitute passive agreement for action.*

**Jessica Norris (Kroll)**

As Paul reprimanded the Jews, I mentally heard over and over “Do as I say, not as I do.” That’s what the Jews were practicing, that’s what I as a parent sometimes practices, and that’s what we as the modern day Christians sometimes practice. I wondered why and the simple answer is because it’s just easier that way sometimes. It’s really, really hard to be a good Christian example, some days worse than others. I imagine it must have been hard if not harder for the Jews as well because in reality, they were people and sinners just like us. Should they have been doing all of these unrighteous things? Of course not but when we step back and reflect on the church/Christians as a whole we are all guilty of the very same things at one time or another. It’s easy to judge the Jews for judging everyone else but this still happens today because we are still imperfect humans. Verse 24 really spoke to me: “The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.” Ouch. I know many people that refuse to go to church. Sometimes for no good reason at all or many times due to bad experiences. In talking to these people their first reason for not going is usually because they view “church goers” as hypocrites. I can sympathize with them as to how they came to that conclusion though it makes me sad because I have been in a church where the members were basically putting on a show, running around judging everyone about everything, and honestly, it turned me off from church for a while too. We need to be better examples and actually practice what we preach. I think if Paul were here now he would probably reprimand us in the same fashion. I understand how folks like Martin Luther got fired up after reading Romans and demanded change. Sorry this is so long. This one really hit me hard and made me realize that I need to slow down and take a look at what some of my actions represent.

In reference to my book, the Jews were convinced that they had been made righteous and believed they were able to assume four roles as laid out in verse 18. They felt the blind were the Gentiles in their un-Jewish darkness, the Gentiles needed to be enlightened by Jews who were enlightened by the Law, because the Gentiles did not know the Law the Gentiles were fools, and Gentiles were spiritually or religiously immature objects of Jewish disgust.
Julia Gregg (Schreiner)

Thoughts for this week...this section of the passage makes me think of JENGA- the stacking game. . . . it’s a delicate balance of sorts. For this reason, I seemed to view this section in layers—so my comments will lay out in the same fashion (yes, I am crazy lol)

GOD IS IMPARTIAL

Paul’s comments are still mostly directed at the Jews and their assumption that possession of the law extended credibility, superiority, and even deniability of their actual lifestyles. Paul confronts this in the first few verses by establishing (reminding) the reader of an absolute in God’s nature—He is impartial. There is no salvific value in mere possession of the law. (116-119)

DOING THE LAW in this context = JUSTIFICATION

In my opinion, much misinterpretation of these verses comes as a result of man’s natural tendency to “atone” for himself. This is not present in salvation—it is the saving/redeeming power of Christ—not of works. . . . This is present in much of religion; it is relationship that should set the standard. I especially like the connection to Jer 31:33 “that the work of the law is written in their hearts.” Even though the Gentiles did not possess the law by birth- it eludes here to the Holy Spirit—and the fact that they were grafted in/adopted. (Julia’s thought—since there isn’t an actual date that I am aware of for first Pentecost—I find this reference by Paul interesting. In the event that the Holy Spirit has not come—it is almost a foreshadowing) The author states that it’s a pair in vs 12-16 ”First, the command of the law are written in their hearts, and second, the conscience also testifies to the validity of those oral norms, in that it condemns or approves of the behavior practiced” (123) Interesting note here, it reminds me of the Tn dept of correction’s mantra—‘firm, fair, and consistent.’ . . . We preach this to new employees—it seems akin to what Paul is doing in verses 12-16. He concludes these verses with reference to God’s examination of obedience...not works.... and there is a difference.

Sean McGarvey (Ironside)

Judgment is according to deeds. To know the law and fail to obey it only increases the condemnation. Doers of the law will be justified, if such there are. But elsewhere we learn that from this standpoint all would be lost, for ‘by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight’ (3:20). The Jew prided himself upon being in possession of the divine oracles and thought this made him superior to the Gentile nations round about. But God has not left Himself without witness. To these nations He has given both the light of conscience and the light of nature. They ‘show the work of the law written in their hearts’ (2:15). (p. 27)
Holding correct doctrine does not avail if practical righteousness be overlooked or disregarded. (p. 27) Oooh, snappity doo dah!

Of the Hebrews, then, “God had revealed Himself to this people as to no other, but they were wrong in supposing that this exempted them from judgment if they failed to keep His covenant. He had said long before, ‘You only have I known of all the families of earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities’ (Amos 3:2). Privilege increases responsibility. It does not, as they seemed to think, set it aside.” (p. 28)

Incisively the Spirit of God drives home the truth as to their actual state in four questions calculated to expose the innermost secrets of their hearts and to lay bare the hidden sins of their lives.

Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? (Rom. 2:21). Did they actually heed the instruction they were giving others? I, too, have felt the sting of this one.

‘Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?’ (v. 21).” The Jews were seen as cunning money lenders, usurers, and pawnbrokers who “had no niceties of pity or compassion for an indigent debtor when the debtor was a hated Gentile dog.”

‘Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery?’ (v. 22)” In this practice, Jews were seen to be as guilty as their Gentile neighbors.

‘Thou that abhorrest idols dost thou commit sacrilege?’ (v. 22). The word translated ‘commit sacrilege’ really means ‘to traffic in idols.’ This was an offense of which the Jew was peculiarly guilty. They were often known to act as intermediaries in moving idols stolen from conquered peoples to others ready to buy them, or “systematically robbing temples and then selling the images.” Ironside uses the example of the town clerk of Ephesus in speaking of this known practice: ‘Ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of [temples, not churches], nor yet blasphemers of your goddess’ (Acts 19:37). (p. 29)

Which brings us to verse 24 and God’s name being blasphemed among the Gentiles via the Jews. And it is no stretch to find where members of the church have done much the same in the world.

The true Jew (and ‘Jew’ is a contraction of ‘Judah,’ meaning, ‘Praise’) is not one who is such by natural birth alone or by outward conformity to ritual, but one who is circumcised in heart, who has judged his sinfulness in the sight of the Lord, and who now seeks to walk in accordance with the revealed will of God (see vv. 26-29). ‘Whose praise [note the play on the word Jew] is not of men, but of God’ (v. 29). (p. 29)

Hard stuff.
Stephen Samsel (Stott)

Stott says that, “If we judge others, we should be able to judge ourselves (vv. 1-3). If we teach others, we should be able to teach ourselves (vv. 12-24). If we set ourselves up as either teachers or judges of others, we cannot possibly plead ignorance. On the contrary, we invite God’s condemnation of our hypocrisy.”

He also redefines what it means to be a Jew in a fourfold explanation.

1. It is not outward and visible, but inward and invisible.
2. Circumcision is in the heart and not of the flesh.
3. It is by the Spirit and not the law.
4. It is the approval of God and not Man.

Man relies on the outward. What we can see and feel. God cares about what is within. How the Holy Spirit is working in our hearts.

Tim & Mila Archer (Maclaren—but Wiersbe since Maclaren was silent on this passage)

12 is prefaced by . . . Paul’s statement in verse 11, “For there is no respect of persons with God” would shock the Jew, for he considered himself deserving of special treatment because he was chosen by God.

15-24 You find among all cultures a sense of sin, a fear of judgment, and an attempt to atone for sins and appease whatever gods are feared.

The Jews looked upon the Gentiles as blind, in the dark, foolish, immature, and ignorant! But if God found the “deprived” Gentiles guilty, how much more guilty were the “privileged” Jews!

The Jews had a religion of outward action, not inward attitude. They may have been moral on the outside, but what about the heart?

The pagan Gentiles had daily contact with the Jews in business and other activities, and they were not fooled by the Jews’ devotion to the Law. The very Law that the Jews claimed to obey only indicted them.

Vs. 25-29 Circumcision:

To the Jews, the Gentiles were “uncircumcised dogs.” the tragedy is that the Jews depended on this physical mark instead of the spiritual reality it represented.

People today make this same mistake with reference to baptism or the Lord’s Supper, or even church membership.
In fact, a disobedient Jew turns his circumcision into un-circumcision in God’s sight, for God looks at the heart.
Romans

God’s Righteousness Upheld (Romans 3:1-8)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Let’s read the text that leads into this week’s text: Romans 1:1-2:29

Read: God’s Righteousness Upheld (3:1-8)

1 Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? 2 Much in every way. To begin with, the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God. 3 What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God? 4 By no means! Let God be true though every one were a liar, as it is written,

“That you may be justified in your words,
and prevail when you are judged.”

5 But if our unrighteousness serves to show the righteousness of God, what shall we say? That God is unrighteous to inflict wrath on us? (I speak in a human way.) 6 By no means! For then how could God judge the world? 7 But if through my lie God’s truth...
abounds to his glory, why am I still being condemned as a sinner? 8 And why not do evil that good may come?—as some people slanderously charge us with saying. Their condemnation is just.

**Explain: God’s Righteousness Upheld (3:1-8)**

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

**Introduction**

I do not have the gift of teaching but I do have the gift of command. After 36 + years in military, I learned how to tell people what to do.

**Are there any literary/structural observations?**

Seven times Paul remarks in the form of questions. This is called the Socratic method.

**Are there any repeated words?**

“What” - four times Paul is trying to be specific in driving his point home

Exclamation! - two times

God (6), means (2), way (2), Jew/Jews (2), unrighteous (2)

**Are there any repeated topics?**

“What shall we say” – Paul uses this phrase seven times in Romans. He is used to introduce a conclusion Paul rejects or one that he accepts.

Condemnation, faithfulness of God, righteous/unrighteous

**What do the words mean? What are some observations of the text?**

Previously Paul lays out his argument in Romans 2.

**Romans 2:12:** For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law.

**Romans 2:17:** But if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast in God

**Romans 2:20:** an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth

At this point, there is no guesswork as to who Paul is talking about. Now in Romans 3, Paul is upholding the righteousness of God.

1 Then what advantage [perissos; rank or need, superior, extraordinary, surpassing, uncommon; What makes a Jew better than anyone else?] has the Jew? Or what is the value [usefulness, advantage, profit] of circumcision? [Paul begins his argument by
leveling the playing field both Jew and Gentile. Paul is trying to help them understand their thinking is wrong. If both are guilty before God, then what is the superiority of the Jew or of circumcision? Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: What does the Jew have over and above the Gentile? It is a pertinent question after the stinging indictment of the Jew in chapter 2. Here Paul wants the Jews to put the emphasis in the proper place. In Romans 2:12-28 Paul is explaining God’s judgment and the Law. But he is driving to the point of Romans 2:29.] 2 Much in every way [individually, each, every, any, all, the whole, everyone, all things, everything, collectively, some of all types]. To begin with [proton; firstly (in time, place, order, or importance), before, at the beginning, chiefly, (at, at the) first (of all); pointing out the most important fact; Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: As in Romans 1:8; 1 Corinthians 11:18 Paul does not add to his “first.” He singles out one privilege of the many possessed by the Jew.], the Jews were entrusted [aorist middle indicative; of the thing believed, in a moral or religious reference to entrust a thing to one, i.e., his fidelity; Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: First aorist passive indicative . . . to entrust, with accusative of the thing and dative of the person in the active. In the passive as here the accusative of the thing is retained as in 1 Thessalonians 2:4.] with the oracles [brief utterance, a divine oracle (doubtless because oracles were generally brief); in the NT, the words or utterances of God; of the contents of the Mosaic Law (the word)] of God. [Why do you think God called Israel the “apple of His eye?” They were the ones entrusted with sharing the word of God. Paul is emphasizing the privileges they were entrusted with. 1 Thessalonians 2:4: but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts. We should look just how off the mark the Jewish nation became. What was their attitude then and how different is it today? Exodus 19:3-6 (HCSB): 3 while Moses went up to God. The LORD called to him out of the mountain, saying, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel: 4 ‘You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. 5 Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; 6 and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel.” Romans 9:4, 32; Romans 4:11: He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well. Romans 4:3: For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.” Paul is letting them know they are special not for what they have done, but for what God did through and with them.] 3 What if some were unfaithful [aorist active indicative; to have no belief, be unfaithful; 1 Thessalonians 2:4;
Paul is asking them if they are really doing what they are thinking they are doing (e.g., teaching, etc. from Romans 2)? Does their faithlessness [apistia; faithlessness, disbelief, unfaithfulness, unbelief] nullify [future active indicative; to be entirely idle (useless), abolish, cease, cumber, destroy, do away, become of no effect, fail, loose, bring to naught, put away, vanish away, make void] the faithfulness of God? [This is a rhetorical question—he is teeing them up for what comes next. Expositor’s Commentary: What inference shall we draw? Surely not that God, He who inflicts the wrath due to unrighteousness at the last day (Romans 1:18), is Himself unrighteous. Again, Paul is bringing up a question which demands an answer: by no means! 2 Timothy 2:13: if we are faithless, he remains faithful. Again, the apostle Paul is referring to God’s character and not ours.] 4 By no means [second aorist active optative (possibility (more remotely possible than subjunctive))]; to become, to come into existence, begin to be, receive being; same phrase used in Romans 3:4, 6, 31; 6:2, 15; 7:7, 13; 9:14; 11:1, 11; Keith Krell: The phrase “May it never be” (me genoito) is a very potent phrase. This is the first of ten times this phrase is used in Romans. This phrase has been variously translated: “Absolutely not” (NET); “By no means” (ESV); “God forbid” (KJV); and “Perish the thought!” Again, Paul is refuting their thinking here.]. Let God be true [present middle imperative] though every one were a liar, as it is written [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) middle indicative; Keith Krell: The phrase translated “it is written” occurs fifteen times in Romans. It’s a formula that alerts the readers that the writer is making a significant point from the Old Testament.], “That you may be justified [aorist middle subjunctive (probability or possibility)] in your words, and prevail [future active indicative; subdue, conquer, overcome, prevail, get the victory] when you are judged [present middle infinitive, “In the being judged;” Psalm 51:4 (the chapter about David’s sin)].”

5 But if our unrighteousness [legal injustice, moral wrongfulness, iniquity, unrighteousness, wrong; same word used in Romans 1:18, 29; 2:8] serves [present active indicative; KJV: commend, NAS: demonstrate; sets together, introduces, exhibits, stands near, constitutes, approves, commends, consists, makes, stands with] to show the righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; righteousness, what is right, justice, the act of doing what is in agreement with God’s standards, the state of being in proper relationship with God] of God, what shall we say [future active indicative]? [Krell: The phrase “what shall we say?” is found seven times in Romans and nowhere else in the New Testament. It may be used to introduce a conclusion Paul rejects or one that he accepts. . . . When this word begins a Greek sentence, a negative reply is to be anticipated. This is one of Paul’s familiar literary devices.] That God is unrighteous to inflict wrath [present active
participle] on us? (I speak [present active indicative] in a human way.) [STOP—this is a conversational, mental, logical reasoning stop sign from Paul—this STOP sign is for their safety—they are not above the Law or better than others (Gentiles]) 6 By no means! [second aorist active optative (possibility (more remotely possible than subjunctive))]; to become, to come into existence, begin to be, receive being; same phrase used in Romans 3:4, 6, 31; 6:2, 15; 7:7, 13; 9:14; 11:1, 11; same phrase used in Romans 3:4 to describe bringing out the big guns with this phrase] For then how could God judge [future active indicative; krino; distinguish, decide, try, condemn, punish, avenge, conclude, condemn, damn, decree, determine, esteem, judge, sue, ordain, call in question, sentence, think; shows up multiple times in Romans 2] the world? 7 But if through my lie God’s truth abounds [aorist active indicative; to superabound (in quantity or quality), be in excess, be superfluous; also (transitively) to cause to superabound or excel, (make, more) abound, (have, have more) abundance, (be more) abundant, be the better, enough and to spare, exceed, excel, increase, be left, redound, remain (over and above)] to his [God’s] glory [very apparent glory, dignity, glory, honor, praise, worship; same word used in Romans 1:23; 2:7, 10], why am I still being condemned [present middle indicative] as a sinner? [same word used in Romans 6:1, 15] 8 And why not do [aorist active subjunctive (probability or possibility)] evil [worthless, depraved, injurious, bad, evil, harm, ill, noisome, wicked; same word used in Romans 1:30; 2:9] that good [benefit, good, well; same word used in Romans 2:7, 10] may come [second aorist active subjunctive (probability or possibility)]?—as some people slanderously [blasphemeo; present middle indicative; vilified, spoken impiously of, blasphemed, defamed, railed on, reviled, spoken evil against; same word used in Romans 2:24; Mouce: to blaspheme, insult, slander, curse] charge us [present middle indicative] with saying [present active indicative]. Their condemnation [avenge, condemned, condemnation, damnation, go to law, judgment; same word used in Romans 2:2, 3] is just [present middle indicative].

Apply (What is the point?)

1. Everyone is doing it. Look to the Scripture.
2. Daily Bible study. Bathe yourself in God’s word.
3. Do we talk to God? Prayer is essential?

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. Does our reasoning align with Scripture?
2. Where do we get our theology?

Tom Wenger (Pastor of Trinity Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Crofton, Maryland):
Commands are the railroad tracks on which the life empowered by the love of God
Poured into the heart by the Holy Spirit runs. Love empowers the engine; law guides the direction.

What themes do we take from this?
How do we let these truths soak in to the fabric of life?

Next week: No One Is Righteous (3:9-20)

9 What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, 10 as it is written:

“None is righteous, no, not one;
no one understands;
no one seeks for God.
12 All have turned aside; together they have become worthless;
no one does good,
not even one.”

13 “Their throat is an open grave;
they use their tongues to deceive.”
“The venom of asps is under their lips.”

14 “Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness.”

15 “Their feet are swift to shed blood;
in their paths are ruin and misery,
and the way of peace they have not known.”

18 “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

19 Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. 20 For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
 quotes & observations

amy valovcin (hughes)

he starts this chapter out by talking about the fable of “the emperor’s new clothes”. he uses this story as it relates to how the jew’s that paul is addressing see themselves, clothed in a mighty garment of righteousness when in fact the “garment” is nonexistent.

“They were duped by misleading religious confidence. So Paul...stripped away their layers of delusion. They believed that because they possessed the Word of God they were safe. They saw themselves as guides to the blind, correctors of the foolish, teachers of the immature. But Paul undresses them, proving that having God’s word is no guarantee of life.”

“God is always true, no matter how much man falls short.” How blessed are we that God is always true and remains faithful to those that are called to be His, even when we fall?

“God’s word teaches us that God is the all-powerful Creator and completely sustains the universe. It reveals the He is perfect in holiness, in righteousness, in love, in justice.” They were entrusted with the oracles of God. It was a help to them then as it is for us today. God made everything, the Bible tells me so . . . said in my best Puggle teacher voice.

darla skinner (mounce)

of all the nations on earth God had chosen the Jews to be the custodians of his redemptive plan for the human race.

george jackson (murray)

romans 3:2

George Jackson: The Church looks at the Jewish community’s rejection of Christ and shakes our head. And that is rightfully so, except we as believers struggle daily to follow the precepts of His teaching.

That said, the Jewish community preserved (through God’s providence) the “oracles of God” [the Old Testament]. Their high view of scripture, memorizing it, writing it, teaching it, are all traits we as the Church would do good to enact.

We are now trusted with the “oracles of God” let us not fail.
John Murray: For Paul the written Word is God’s speech, and God’s speech is conceived of as existing in the form of a “trust” to Israel. . . . When we think of what, above all else, was the Jew’s privilege as an abiding possession it was his entrustment with the Word of God.

Romans 3:5-8

George Jackson: These verses must be viewed in context and not isolated or a misunderstanding of Paul’s intentions could be drawn.

When a vile sinner is dramatically saved and life changed it draws attention. We are not called to abuse God’s grace but called to proclaim it.

I am again reminded of John Newton’s words near his death “Although my memory’s fading, I remember two things very clearly: I am a great sinner and Christ is a great Savior.”

Also, another of John Newton’s famous quotes: “I am not what I ought to be, I am not what I want to be, I am not what I hope to be in another world; but still I am not what I once used to be, and by the grace of God I am what I am.”

John Murray: Paul appeals to the fact of universal judgment and he does not proceed to prove it. He accepts it as an ultimate datum of revelation, and he confronts the objection of verse 5 with this fact. About the certainty of God’s judgement there can be no dispute.

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

I see that Paul’s “lawyer” is really showing in this section. A good attorney always prepares not only his side of the case but the opposing counsel’s side of the case as well, anticipating the next question, and being prepared to tackle any potential speed bump thrown in your way. Paul is an excellent defense attorney, handling questions with ease that the Jews are most likely thinking. I love his responses.

Notes from my author:

“If men prove unfaithful to God’s oracles, He is nevertheless faithful in His promises to them. Why? Because He is God and cannot ever be unfaithful to himself.”

Paul quotes David in Psalm 51:4 “So that Thou art justified when thou dost speak and blameless when Thou dost judge.” David had broken covenant of God and had found in himself no righteousness or integrity of any kind. Paul quotes this so that his readers may clearly see the difference between the faithfulness and integrity of God and the lack of the same in man.
When he states he is “speaking in human terms” he is using a form of human reasoning to express this inspired truth about God. God’s justice cannot be called into question and Paul indicates that only foolish reasoning would attempt to do so. Paul uses the Jews’ own logic to turn the tables on them. They could not admit that God’s teachings were true. But if they claimed them to be false, by their own logic, they would have to say that divine good arouse out of Paul’s doctrine.

Julia Gregg (Schreiner)

I found this week’s study interesting for many reasons—the thought that stuck me from scripture this week was that there can be no salvation without judgment. Essentially, there would be no need unless there was a standard of righteousness against which we were examined. . . . This week’s passage was a visual aid for me in Paul’s argument that God is faithful despite the unfaithfulness of man. Interestingly, my commentary summarized the thought in a paraphrased list—and then defended it in an exegesis. My author likened this passage to a bridge, but the more I read it—the more it seemed a supporting visual aid to further emphasize Paul’s position on God’s faithfulness. The use of Israel’s history of unfaithfulness makes an undeniable point to the Jewish people Paul was speaking to. (The pink elephant if you will . . . ) One of my faves from this section... (150) The Jews were faulted with anthropological and salvation-historical reasons for unfaithfulness. . . . The incapacity of the Jews to practice the Law and the ability of the Gentiles to do so indicates that the old covenant was deficient because of human weakness, while the new covenant is superior because of the gift of the Spirit. This is the eschatological triumph of God in the justification the ungodly! Packs a big punch for me. My author also used the phrase unconditional election of God (151) with regards to discussing the entrance of man into a covenant with God by GRACE not works. I loved the pair . . . unconditional election . . . the “whosoever”. There really is a lot in these eight verses, but the emerging theme of the impartiality of God is still very present. In my opinion, God’s mercy, grace, and judgment are all impartial.

Sean McGarvey (Ironside)

Wish this guy would be more poetic and show his Byron side.

“In Romans 3:1-20 we have the great indictment, the summing up of all that has gone before. There is no moral distinction between Jew and Gentile. All are bereft of righteousness. All are shut up to judgment, unless God has a righteousness of His own providing for them.” (p. 29)

Otherwise, all will die of dysentery . . . and hellfire . . . in a rather charred and odiferous fashion. God will remain righteous through it all, no matter what argument man could think up with which to indict Him.
Romans

No One Is Righteous (Romans 3:9-20)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Let’s read the text that leads into this week’s text: Romans 1:1-3:8

Read: No One Is Righteous (3:9-20)

9 What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, 10 as it is written:

“None is righteous, no, not one;
11 no one understands;
no one seeks for God.
12 All have turned aside; together they have become worthless;
no one does good,
not even one.”
13 “Their throat is an open grave;
they use their tongues to deceive.”
“The venom of asps is under their lips.”
14 “Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness.”
15 “Their feet are swift to shed blood;
16 in their paths are ruin and misery,
17 and the way of peace they have not known.”
18 “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

19 Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. 20 For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

Explain: No One Is Righteous (3:9-20)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

Paul continues his Socratic approach by asking questions and answering from Scripture.

One other literary observation: when Paul quotes other authors (from Isaiah and the Psalms), the language used is much simpler than Paul’s normal language. So, if you wanted an easier portion of “Paul” to study, start with Romans 3:10-18 (the average word length is shorter and the sentence structure is very straightforward).

Hughes: This is called a charaz, which literally means “stringing pearls.” Valovcin: He talks about how Paul uses Old Testament texts and strings them together. I love that this is called stringing pearls, stringing together little pearls of wisdom that we can gleam from today.

What do the words mean?

9 What then? Are we Jews any better off [present middle/passive indicative; hold ourselves before others, excels, better]? No, not at all [entirely, at all events, in no event, by all means, altogether, at all, no doubt, in no way, surely]. For we have already charged [aorist active indicative; accused already, previously charged, proven before (see Romans 1:18-3:8)] that all, both Jews and Greeks, are [present middle infinitive; exist, are] under sin [sin, offense], 10 as it is written [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) middle indicative]:

[from Psalm 14] “None is [present middle indicative] righteous [equitable, innocent, holy, just, righteous; same word used in Romans 1:17; 2:13], no, not one;
11 no one [an ‘is’ in the Greek not in the ESV —present middle indicative] understands [present active participle; puts together, comprehends, acts piously,
considers, understands, is wise];

no one [an ‘is’ in the Greek not in the ESV — present middle indicative] seeks [present active participle; searches out, investigates, craves, demands, worships, enquires, seeks after] for God.

12 All have turned aside [deviated, shunned, declined from piety, avoided, eschewed, gone out of the way]; together they have become worthless [aorist middle indicative; rendered useless, spoiled, unprofitable; laptop with no battery or power cord; Lightfoot: the Hebrew word means to go bad, become sour like milk];

no one [an ‘is’ in the Greek not in the ESV — present middle indicative] does [present active participle] good [usefulness, moral excellence, gentleness, goodness, kindness; same word used in Romans 2:4],

not even one [an ‘is’ in the Greek not in the ESV — present middle indicative]."

13 [from Psalm 5:9] “Their throat [larynx] is an open [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) middle participle] grave [grave, place of internment, sepulcher, tomb];

they use their tongues [tongues, languages] to deceive [imperfect (action continually or repeatedly happening in past time) active indicative; to be guileful, to use deceit].”

[this quote is from Psalm 140:3] “The venom [rust, venom, poison] of asps [coiling serpent, asp] is under their lips.”

14 [from Psalm 10:7a] “Their mouth [mouth, language] is full [present active indicative; swelled out, full] of curses [prayer, imprecation, curse; imprecatory prayers: Psalm 69, 109, etc.] and bitterness [acridity (especially poison), bitterness; acrid is usually used with the sense of smell (like the burning in your nose from something that’s just burned down), but here it’s used of words that leave a stinging feeling in others’ ears].”

15 [from Isaiah 59:7-8] “Their feet are swift [keen, rapid, sharp, swift] to shed [aorist active infinitive; pour, bestow, gush out, run greedily, spill, shed] blood;

16 in their paths [roads, progress, route, act, distance, mode, means, journey, way, highway] are ruin [concussion, utter fracture, complete ruin, destruction] and misery [wretchedness, calamity, misery],

17 and the way [roads, progress, route, act, distance, mode, means, journey, way, highway; same word used in Romans 3:16] of peace [peace, prosperity, one, quietness, rest, to be set at one again; same word used in Romans 1:7; 2:10] they have not known [second aorist active indicative; been aware of, known, perceived, understood].”

18 [from Psalm 36:1b] “There is [present middle indicative] no fear [phobos; fear, alarm, fright, terror] of God before their eyes [vision, eyes, sight, envy (from the jealous side glance)].”

19 Now we know [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) active indicative; see, know, behold, consider, perceive, can be sure, understand] that
whatever the law [nomos] says [present active indicative; relates, sets in discourse, means, asks, calls, describes, names, puts forth, shews, says, speaks, tells] it speaks [present active indicative; talks, utters, preaches, says, speaks, tells] to those who are under the law [nomos], so that every mouth [mouth, language; used in Romans 3:14] may be stopped [second aorist middle subjunctive (probability or possibility); fenced in, enclosed, blocked up, silenced, stopped], and the whole world may be [second aorist active subjunctive (probability or possibility)] held accountable [under sentence, condemned, guilty] to God. 20 For [a connecting word] by works [works, toils, effort, occupation, act, doing, labor] of the law [nomos] no human being will be justified [future middle indicative; rendered just, rendered innocent, freed, justified, be righteous; same word used in Romans 2:13] in his sight [in his face, before, in his presence], since through the law [nomos] comes knowledge [recognition, full discernment, acknowledgement, knowledge; same word used in Romans 1:28] of sin [sin, offense; same word used in Romans 3:9].

Are there any repeated words?

One (5), law (4), God (3), under (3), mouth (2), Jew (2), sin (2)

Are there any repeated topics?

No one is good

What are some observations of the text?

I like this paragraph which summarizes Paul’s “closing statement.” Stott: The apostle is approaching the end of his lengthy argument and asks himself how to wrap it all up, how to rest his case: “What shall we conclude then?” (v. 9). He has exposed in succession the blatant unrighteousness of much of the ancient Gentile world (1:18-32), the hypocritical righteousness of moralizers (2:1-16) and the confident self-righteousness of Jewish people, whose anomaly is that they boast of God’s law but break it (2:17-3:8). So now he arraigns and condemns the whole human race.

9 What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin [Morris: He is regarding sin as a tyrant ruler, so that sinners are ‘under’ it], 10 as it is written:

Kroll: Paul continues with his “trial” to determine guilt or innocence. The charge: The whole world is innately sinful. But is there enough evidence for a guilty verdict? . . . Next comes the indictments. There are 14 counts total:

“No one is righteous, no, not one [Guzik: There has never been a truly righteous man apart from Jesus Christ. Newell: Even Adam was not righteous: he was innocent—not knowing good and evil.];

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11 no one understands; no one seeks for God.
12 All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.”
13 “Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive.”
   “The venom of asps is under their lips.”
14 “Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness.”
15 “Their feet are swift to shed blood;
16 in their paths are ruin and misery,
17 and the way of peace they have not known.”
18 “There is no fear of God before their eyes.” [Wiersbe: An X-ray study of the lost sinner, from head to foot]

Kroll: The verdict: **Guilty**

19 Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God [Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: Every one is “liable to God,” in God’s court].

20 For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin [Guzik: J.B. Phillip’s paraphrase of this phrase is striking: *it is the straight-edge of the Law that shows us how crooked we are.*

McGee: The law doesn’t provide the salvation for man, it just reveals man to be a sinner.

Poole: Lest any should think that the law hereup on is useless, he goes on to show its use, but a quite contrary one to what they intended. It convinceth us of our guilt, and therefore is far from being our righteousness. Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: The effect of law universally is rebellion to it (1 Corinthians 15:56). . . . He has now proven the guilt of both Gentile and Jew.]

Guzik: Summation: the law cannot save us from our sin and the penalty it deserves

Paul has teed us up for the savior from all this condemnation and wrath. Julia Gregg: His presentation reminds me of a funnel as the reader is drawn to redemption work of Christ.

**Apply (What is the point?)**

1. All men are sinners
2. No one is righteous
3. Every part of man is sinful
4. The Law shows us our sinfulness

**Personalize (What do we do with that?)**

1. **We** are all sinners (not exempt/special)
2. We are **not** righteous (and not exempt/special)
3. **Every** part of us is sinful and unrighteous

4. Be thankful for the **Law** (because it tutors us to Jesus)

**Next week: The Righteousness of God Through Faith (3:21-31)**

21 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. 26 It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

27 Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. 28 For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law. 29 Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, 30 since God is one—who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. 31 Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.

**Homework**

**Resources (our helps—order matters)**
- Holy Spirit
- Bible: **Romans** (ESV)
- Church: [bit.ly/FlemingSS](bit.ly/FlemingSS)

**Our process**
- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read **(Romans)**
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

**Quotes & Observations**

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

Everyone in the world is under the power of the dynamic of sin!

v 10: “None is righteous, no, not one.” There are no exceptions.
This is called a charaz, which literally means “stringing pearls.” He talks about how Paul uses Old Testament texts and strings them together. I love that this is called stringing pearls, stringing together little pearls of wisdom that we can gleam from today.

**vv 13-18:** When God is not in our speech, sight or where we walk; there can be no good that comes from any of it.

**v 15:** Man’s depravity is seen in his rush to violence. I must have read this line ten times. So true in so many ways and not just with violence. We rush with speech, our actions, our version of what is happening. We need to breathe Him in!

We must make use of our great advantage of truly knowing who we are and who God is, and what he wants of us as declared in His word.

**v 20:** "Since from the law come knowledge of sin.” The truth is we are His and we can hold true to His word. Having his word does not save us from sin. Taking it, knowing it, believing it and in the Creator is what sets us apart.

**Darla Skinner (Mounce)**

Law encourages effort. But human effort inevitably falls short of the divine standard. The purpose of the law is to guide conduct, not to provide a method to stand before God on the basis of one’s own righteousness.

**Doug Skinner (Phillips)**

Man is incapable by nature of doing that which is right in the sight of God. . . . Judges 17:6; 21:25—did that which was right, mark you, not that which was wrong.

On the things that matter most, man is blind. For example, the things that a person will believe in the name of religion are astounding. One person will tell you, “It doesn’t matter what you believe so long as you’re sincere”—a philosophy he would not tolerate for a moment in a professor of mathematics teaching arithmetic or calculus.

**Jessica Norris (Kroll)**

The Gentiles are lost because they suppress God’s truth even though they’ve seen it in both nature and conscience. Moral people are lost because they are inwardly guilty of the same sins. Jews are lost because they have not kept the law. All of them are under sin.

Paul continues with his “trial” to determine guilt or innocence. The charge: The whole world is innately sinful. But is there enough evidence for a guilty verdict?

Next comes the indictments. There are 14 counts total:

1. There is none righteous, not even one.
2. There is none who understands.
3. There is none who seeks for God.
4. All have turned aside.
5. They have become useless.
6. There is none who seeks for God.
7. Their throat is an open grave.
8. With their tongues, they keep deceiving.
9. The poison of asps is under their lips.
10. Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.
11. Their feet are swift to shed blood.
12. Destruction and misery are their paths. ("Calamity and misery are soul mates.")
13. And the path of peace they have not known.
14. There is no fear of God before their eyes.

The verdict: Guilty

I had to look up the word “asp” and found that it means a poison that is stored in a bag under the “lips” of a serpent. What a terrible thing to have your speech to be compared to. I wouldn’t think anyone would want that comparison. I know I wouldn’t.

I really like how Paul’s mind works and how he is working out his case. He has switched into full prosecutor mode. In trial preparation, a lot of time is obviously spent on preparing your case, but a WHOLE lot of time is spent on your opening statement and closing argument. After voir dire [a fancy phrase for interviewing potential jurors in order to strike the ones you might not want], your jury is open and listening. The opening statement is the first thing they hear and their first impression of both attorneys. You might lose some of their attention during the trial itself, especially if it is lengthy, which is why your closing argument must be good. It is the last thing they hear before going to deliberate. A closing argument in a bench trial is even more crucial because you typically can’t fool a judge with trickery of words. The judge already knows the laws. There are no emotions to play off of like you sometimes can with a jury. Paul doesn’t even include a closing statement because there is nothing at all that can be said to sway the mind of the judge, God. I find that very powerful. There is no room for plea bargaining or even a chance to filing an appeal. The verdict is straight to guilty. The judge is finished listening, made up His mind on your innocence, and does not want to hear anymore lame excuses.

Julia Gregg (Schreiner)

The interesting interpretation of this passage that struck me this week was, “Do we Jews possess any advantage.” (v 9) The use of the word possess or an active verb in this verse creates an interesting dynamic for me as I read this passage. The Jews did
have some advantage in being priority but this “birthright” was not continual through judgment. We see Paul again return to an emphasis that God is not a respecter of persons and he concentrates on four areas where man (Jew or Gentile) is the same: none is righteous, all have turned away from God, all have sinned in their speech, and all have injured their fellow man.

As a result, the Jews do not possess an advantage in every respect. One sentence that carried extensive meaning from my text was, “[Jews] cannot shield themselves from God’s wrath by appealing to the covenant and their Jewishness” (164). Hmmmm ponder that one minute. Essentially Paul doesn’t spend his time proving that all men are sinners—he makes the accusation that they are: “Sin as a power cannot ultimately be separated from the acts of sin” (164). (I mean WOW . . . something we all know but do we recognize the depth of that statement?) This is why the LAW would never be enough and we would need the atoning blood of Christ!!! As I completed this section, Paul’s painting of a picture of the Law not being sufficient because it was focused somewhat (actually mostly) on man’s works . . . it’s excellent.

His presentation reminds me of a funnel as the reader is drawn to redemption work of Christ. Justification cannot be obtained through works! It is sin—(our nature both Jew and Gentile)—which presents us for judgment. It’s an eventuality. Key thought here for me was that the focus is drawn again to the holiness/righteousness of God in presenting himself a Lamb ultimately.

Rachel Samsel (McGee)

We need to understand what it means to be “under sin.” Verse 9. We are sinners in many ways.

1. Man is a sinner by action
2. Man is a sinner by nature. Sinning does not make a sinner; we sin because we are sinners
3. The estate of man is under sin. We are all under sin—the entire human family.

Verse 10. None righteous. What does righteous mean? It means “Doeth good.” It means to be right. Right with whom you ask? Right with God. This is different than being right with fellow man. When we have differences with friends, we may or may not be to blame so we may have to reach a compromise. But being right with God is saying I will play by His rules. No compromise. But to God it isn’t a game. He doesn’t play games. Just simply. . . . Salvation is a free gift. Take it or leave it.

Verse 12. When it states “they are together become unprofitable” he compared this to fruit that passes the ripe state and is then rotten, overripe, spoiled. Also in this verse it states, “There is none good, no not one.” A triple negative. He references Matthew
15:14: “you are blind leaders of the blind.” We are like a group of travelers who have gone in the opposite direction of the right one and we are of no help to each other.

Verses 19-20. Man cannot attain righteousness by the Mosaic Law. It seems mankind feels that if they keep the law they are ok. When they are missing the point. By keeping the law we cannot be justified (declared righteous/saved). So what is the purpose of the law? “By the law is the knowledge of sin.” The law doesn’t provide the salvation for man, it just reveals man to be a sinner.

Stephen Samsel (Stott)

I like this paragraph which summarizes Paul’s “closing statement.” The apostle is approaching the end of his lengthy argument and asks himself how to wrap it all up, how to rest his case: “What shall we conclude then?” (v. 9). He has exposed in succession the blatant unrighteousness of much of the ancient Gentile world (1:18-32), the hypocritical righteousness of moralizers (2:1-16) and the confident self-righteousness of Jewish people, whose anomaly is that they boast of God’s law but break it (2:17-3:8). So now he arraigns and condemns the whole human race.

Stott goes on to talk about sin. Sin is the revolt of the self against God. . . . Ultimately sin is self-deification, the reckless determination to occupy the throne which belongs to God.

Stott finishes by asking how we should respond to this statement. He lists out many of the excuses we give for sin. We change the subject . . . blame our behavior on our genes, nurturing, education or society.

We need to accept responsibility of our sinful nature and recognize that we have fled from the first judgement of God on our sins to the only refuge there is, namely Jesus Christ, who died for our sins . . . only then shall we be ready to hear the great ‘But now’ of verse 21, as Paul begins to explain how God has intervened through Christ and his cross for our salvation.
Romans

The Righteousness of God Through Faith (Romans 3:21-31)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Let’s read the text that leads into this week’s text: Romans 1:1-3:20

Read: The Righteousness of God Through Faith (3:21-31)

21 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— 22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. 26 It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.
27 Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. 28 For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law. 29 Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, 30 since God is one—who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. 31 Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.

Explain: The Righteousness of God Through Faith (3:21-31)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

The first big observation of this week’s text is the first two words: “But now.” But now we are starting to turn the corner and peer down the hallway of Paul’s logic to some good news. But now we are going to start seeing why Paul spent so much time on condemnation and wrath and judgment—he has a larger point (he almost always does).

The second—and much more minor point—involves capitalization. In Romans 3:21, the word law is capitalized once (the only time it’s capitalized in Romans) and not capitalized once. I do not know for sure why the ESV capitalizes Law here—but I asked my daughter what she thought and this is what she came up with: Anna Grace Fleming: The Jews refer to the Old Testament as ‘The Law and the Prophets,’ which is a title. Titles are capitalized, and this rule is carried out here, which is why the word ‘law’ in the clause before is lowercase.

One more point—specifically about commentaries and resources at this point. You may have realized that your resource doesn’t align perfectly to the way in which we’re grouping verses for lessons. That’s largely OK. One of the things that makes commentaries and resources different is the different way of organizing thoughts and paragraphs of the text. Don’t let this bother you as it is rarely enormously significant.

What do the words mean?

21 But now [nyni de; a transition phrase that Paul will use at least a half a dozen more times in Romans (and be on the lookout for these transition phrases—they’ll help you figure out how to string his arguments together)] the righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; 3:5] of God has been manifested [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) middle indicative; rendered apparent, appeared, manifestly declared, manifested, shewed; same word used in Romans 1:19] apart from [at a space, separately, apart, beside, by itself, without] the law [nomos], although the Law [nomos] and the Prophets [foretellers, inspired speakers, poets, prophets; same word used in Romans 1:2] bear witness
[present middle participle; martyrdeo; originally it meant to be a witness, to testify, to charge, to give evidence, to bear record, to give a good/honest report, to give testimony, to witness; over time, however, the meaning changed to martyr as many who testified of Jesus ended up dying because of their testimony] to it—22 the righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21] of God through [dia; through the] middle; the longest chord fitting in a circle is the diameter—the diameter goes through the center] faith [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in Romans 1:5, 12, 17] in Jesus Christ for all who believe [present active participle; have faith in, credit, entrust, believe, commit to, put in trust with]. For there is [present middle indicative] no distinction [variation, difference, distinction; used in 1 Corinthians 14:7 of the difference in sound that different musical instruments make]; 23 for all have sinned [second aorist active indicative; missed the mark and not shared in the prize, erred, sinned, offended, trespassed] and fall short [present middle indicative; be later, be inferior, fall short, be deficient, come behind, be destitute, fall, lack, suffer need, be in want, be the worse] of the glory [very apparent glory, dignity, glory, honor, praise, worship; same word used in Romans 1:23; 2:7, 10; 3:7] of God, 24 and are justified [present middle participle; rendered just, rendered innocent, freed, justified, be righteous; same word used in Romans 2:13; 3:20] by his grace [graciousness, gratifying, the divine influence on the heart and its reflection in the life; acceptable, benefit, favor, gift, joy liberality, pleasure, thanks] as a gift [gratuitously, without a cause, freely, for naught, in vain], through [dia; through the middle; the longest chord fitting in a circle is the diameter—the diameter goes through the center] the redemption [ransom in full, riddance, salvation, deliverance, redemption; Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: Common in the papyri as the purchase-money in freeing slaves] that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God put forward [second aorist middle indicative; placed before, exhibited, proposed, set forth] as a propitiation [expiatory (able to make atonement—at-one-ment), an atoning victim, lid of the Ark of the Covenant, mercy seat (the physical place on the planet where atonement occurred), propitiation] by [dia] his blood [blood, bloodshed], to be received by [dia] faith [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in Romans 1:5, 12, 17; 3:22]. This was to show [declare, indicate, evident token, proof] God’s righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22], because in his divine [deity, divinity, godly] forbearance [self-restraint, tolerance, forbearance] he had passed over former [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) active participle; already done, previously transpired, past] sins. 26 It was to show [declare, indicate, evident token, proof; same word used in Romans 3:25] his righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in
Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25] at the present time [occasion, proper time, opportunity, season, time, while], so that he might be [present middle infinitive] just [equitable, innocent, holy, just, righteous; same word used in Romans 1:17; 2:13; 3:10] and the justifier [present active participle; render just, render innocent, free, justifier] of the one who has faith [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in Romans 1:5, 12, 17; 3:22, 25] in Jesus.

27 Then what becomes of our boasting [boasting, whereof I may glory, glorifying, rejoicing]? It is excluded [aorist middle indicative; shut out, excluded]. By [dia] what kind of law [nomos]? By a law [nomos] of works [works, toils, effort, occupation, act, doing, labor; same word used in Romans 3:20]? No [not indeed, nay, not], but by [dia] the law [nomos] of faith [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in Romans 1:5, 12, 17; 3:22, 25, 26].

28 For we hold [logizomai; present middle indicative; taken inventory, estimated, concluded, esteemed, imputed, numbered, reasoned, reckoned; same word used in Romans 2:3, 26] that one is justified [present middle infinitive; rendered just, rendered innocent, freed, justified] by faith [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in Romans 1:5, 12, 17; 3:22, 25, 26, 27] apart [at a space, separately, apart, beside, by itself, without; same word used in Romans 3:21] from works [works, toils, effort, occupation, act, doing, labor; same word used in Romans 3:20, 27] of the law [nomos].

29 Or is God the God of Jews only [merely, alone, only]? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since God is one—who will justify [future active indicative; render just, render innocent, free, justify] the circumcised by [dia] faith [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in Romans 1:5, 12, 17; 3:22, 25, 26, 28] and the uncircumcised through faith [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in Romans 1:5, 12, 17; 3:22, 25, 26, 28, 30].

31 Do we then overthrow [present active indicative; to be entirely idle (useless), abolish, cease, cumber, destroy, do away, become of no effect, fail, loose, bring to naught, put away, vanish away, make void; same word used in Romans 3:3] the law [nomos] by [dia] this faith [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in Romans 1:5, 12, 17; 3:22, 25, 26, 28, 30 (twice)]? By no means [second aorist active optative (possibility (more remotely possible than subjunctive)); to become, to come into existence, begin to be, receive being; same phrase used in Romans 3:4, 6, 31; 6:2, 15; 7:7, 13; 9:14; 11:1, 11].
On the contrary, we uphold [present active indicative; stand, abide, appoint, bring, continue, covenant, establish, hold up, lay, present, set up, stanch] the law [nomos].

Are there any repeated words?

God/God’s (9), law (8), faith (8), righteous (4), one (3), Jesus (3), apart (2), God, righteousness, faith, law, just/justified/justifier

Are there any repeated topics?

What are some observations of the text?

21 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it [If the Law and the Prophets have witnessed it, it’s not new—Paul is just bringing it to light now]— 22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe [Ironside: To be justified is to be declared righteous. It is the sentence of the judge in favor of the prisoner. It is not the state or condition of the soul. We are not justified because we have become righteous in heart and life. God justifies first, then He enables the justified one to walk in practical righteousness. Schreiner: The Mosaic covenant belonged to an era of redemptive history that has now passed away. Its passing away is inextricably bound up with its inability to effect righteousness. But please know we are always under a law—either Moses’ law or Jesus’ law of love.]. For there is no distinction: 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are justified by his grace as a gift [Stott: The first move was God the Father’s, and our justification is “freely by his grace,” his absolutely free and utterly undeserved favor. Grace is God loving, God stooping, God coming to the rescue, God giving himself generously in and through Jesus Christ.], through [God’s plan for the redemption of the universe goes through Jesus; #Geometry] the redemption [He pain the ransom in full. Get out your wallet. What would you pay to redeem your son or daughter? You would give everything you have—and that’s what the Father did for us—He gave Jesus for us. See Mark 10:45 and Matthew 20:28 for Jesus’ view on why He came (hint: it’s to be a ransom).] that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood [Paul just said the Ark of the Covenant is a shadow of something to come which Jesus would flesh out—even the Ark points us to Christ. Ironside: And he who died lives again and is Himself the abiding propitiation—literally, the mercy seat, the place where God can meet with man through Christ’s atoning blood—available to faith. The apostle clearly alludes to the blood-sprinkled mercy seat on the ark of the covenant of old. Within the ark were the tables of the law. Above were the cherubim, ‘justice and judgment’ the habituation of God’s throne. They are ready, as it were, to leap from that throne to execute God’s righteous wrath against the violators of His law. But sprinkled upon the mercy seat is the blood that typifies the sacrifice of the cross. Justice and judgment ask no more. ‘Mercy
rejoiceth against judgment’ (James 2:13), for God Himself has found a ransom., to be received by faith. This was to show God’s righteousness [The cross is the evident token of God’s righteousness—it demonstrates His perfect judging and righteousness.], because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. 26 It was to show his righteousness [Again—salvation shows God’s righteousness] at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus [Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: God’s mercy would not allow him to leave man to his fate. God’s justice demanded some punishment for sin. The only possible way to save some was the propitiatory offering of Christ and the call for faith on man’s part.].

27 Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. 28 For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law. 29 Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, 30 since God is one—who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. 31 Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law [This statement makes little sense here if the period that follows was the end of the letter. However, Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: How he will show in chapter 4 how Abraham himself is an example of faith and in his life illustrates the very point just made. Besides, apart from Christ and the help of the Holy Spirit no one can keep God’s law. The Mosaic law is only workable by faith in Christ.].

**Apply (What is the point?)**

1. Salvation by faith is not just a **New** Testament thing
2. God’s plan for the redemption of the universe goes through **Jesus**
3. The cross shows God’s righteousness

**Personalize (What do we do with that?)**

1. Correctly understand the **Old** Testament
2. Do not miss **Jesus**
3. Praise Him for His righteous judgments

Note: please look at the Quotes & Observations section this week—very good stuff from Schreiner, MacArthur, and Maclaren.
Next week: Abraham Justified by Faith (4:1-12)

Abraham Justified by Faith

1 What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? 2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. 3 For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.” 4 Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. 5 And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, 6 just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works:

7 “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven,
and whose sins are covered;
8 blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin.”

9 Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? For we say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness. 10 How then was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. 11 He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well, 12 and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)
Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

The miracle of justification is possible because a special righteousness exists separate from the works of the Law . . . a righteousness that comes to us through Jesus Christ.

God is our Mercy seat and He has been displayed by God as such.

Lastly, God demonstrates through Jesus’ death that his hatred of man’s evil is as real as his forgiveness of man’s sin. God did not spare His son one iota of the wrath we deserve. The only way God could save us consistent with His own justice was the way. He did—and it cost Him everything!

He talks about that the existence of righteousness apart from the law means everything to the believer. As “radically corrupt sinners” we can be made completely new. Our righteousness comes through faith. Righteousness through faith means we are “all on equal footing” (vv. 29-30).

One God=one way to salvation; justification is a miracle!

Darla Skinner (Mounce)

The redemptive work of God through his Son Christ Jesus is the most amazing event in the history of the universe. Never would such a plan have risen in the human mind. God brings a just sentence of death upon all, for all have sinned. He then provides a sinless sacrifice, his only Son, to atone for the unrighteousness of the wayward human race. From God’s standpoint forgiveness is freely offered. All that remains is for God’s people to accept that forgiveness. The obligation is to believe, to trust in the redemptive work of Christ. The good news is good only to those who receive it. God offers his righteousness to those who will receive it, not as something to supplement their own good works but as a gift that alone can place them in a right standing with God.

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

I know I saw this on the class page, but Paul starts with “but now.” This means nuni de in Greek and is an adverb of time. He uses it when transitioning from a dark, gloomy picture to something wonderful God does for us. Paul uses this phrase 18 times in the Pauline epistles and twice in Hebrews.

“Just as sin and Jesus Christ have nothing in common, so, too, righteousness and the Law have nothing in common.”
He quotes Karl Barth when talking about Paul “His mission did not erect barriers, it tore them down.”

When referencing that “we all fall short” this means that we do not measure up to the sinlessness of Jesus. The righteous man is justified freely (as a gift), this justification is by His grace and provided through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. If people could work to be justified then we would have a reason to boast, but we are saved by grace not by works.

(This is one of the most positive things I’ve heard Paul say so far. I could not imagine having to constantly work for that.)

Verses 25-26: The lid of the ark of the covenant was called the “mercy seat.” It was the meeting place between God and men. Paul uses the same word for mercy seat to describe Jesus as for the ark “hilasterion.”

Julia Gregg (Schreiner)

Quote of this section: “Paul maintains that the vindication and redemption of his people has been realized in the cross of Jesus Christ.” That alone is a mouthful and I love the use of the word vindication by Schreiner. It’s like a 1-2 in a fight because he follows it with “Indeed, both the saving and judging righteousness of God meet at the cross of Christ.” (176) This truth rang for me the entire time I was reading the notes and the Scripture. It really says it ALL in just a few words. From a research perspective however, I enjoyed that Paul’s thesis in these verses [I tend to agree because I read ahead out of curiosity with Schreiner] is laid out and developed in chapter 4 when he uses Abraham as the example. Thus far, I feel like it’s a brilliant layout of an argument. It reminds me of the New Tribes missions’ delivery of the Gospel in that they lay out need before redemption. In the western world, I think we have missed the mark here. (totally Julia opinion there). Because of how the Jews viewed Abraham—he was the perfect “bait” on the hook of faith and not works!

Focusing on verses 21-26—the critical mass. . . . Paul’s argument begins to shift, which I find parallel to the larger shift in thought. Paul is shifting his argument in exactly the same way as he wants the Jews to shift their focus from old covenant to new. He continues to drive the thought home that saving righteousness cannot be obtained through works or the law. “The Mosaic covenant belonged to an era of redemptive history that has now passed away. Its passing away is inextricably bound up with its inability to effect righteousness.” (180) I mean the choice of each word in those sentences is critical to delivery. I had to sit and meditate on that a minute. Though I have never taken Greek or Hebrew I am amazed out how well Schreiner breaks down the verbiage and word choice for a reader of my low caliber LOL. It has been insightful as a companion text while reading the Scripture. There really is so much in this
portion—it can be overwhelming at times. Paul really covers a great deal in these verses so I focused on the concept that most resonated with me.

Finally, in verses 27-31, Paul speaks of the righteousness by faith for Jews and Gentiles. He draws some conclusions here and focuses on righteousness being a GIFT received through faith. My favorite quote from the section came in the overview at the beginning, “His [Christ’s] death liberated believers from the slavery of sin and satisfied God’s judging righteousness.” (200) Paul’s delivery in these verses contains three major thoughts: 1. Since righteousness is based on faith in what GOD has accomplished, boasting is out of the question, 2. Oneness of God demands that Jews and Gentiles are justified in the same way, and 3. Faith doesn’t nullify the law . . . it establishes it!!! What follow through . . . and to use an earlier metaphor—it’s the KO.

Michelle Erickson (MacArthur)

God’s righteousness is different from all other kinds of righteousness in many ways. First of all, it is different because of its source, which is God Himself . . . Second, God’s righteousness is different in essence. It is a comprehensive righteousness that fulfills both the precept and the penalty of God’s law, under which all men stand judged. . . . Third, God’s righteousness is unique in its duration. His righteousness is everlasting righteousness, existing from eternity to eternity.

In 3:21-25a Paul gives seven additional elements of the righteousness that God divinely imparts to those who trust in His Son, Jesus Christ. It is apart from legalism (v. 21a), built on revelation (v. 21b), acquired by faith (v. 22a), provided for all (vv. 22b-23), given freely through grace (v. 24a), accomplished by redemption (v. 24b), and paid for by atoning sacrifice (v. 25a).

Whether the law of God is the Mosaic law of the Jews or the law written in the hearts and consciences of all men, including Gentiles (Romans 2:11-15), obedience to it can never be perfect and therefore can never save. That is a devastating truth to everyone who seeks to please God on his own terms and in his own power—which is why the gospel is so offensive to the natural man.

The Mosaic laws were not given as a means of achieving righteousness but of describing God’s righteousness and showing the impossibility of men’s living up to it. The Mosaic sacrifices were not prescribed as a means of atoning for sin but of symbolically pointing to Jesus Christ, who Himself became the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. The commandments, rituals, sacrifices, and godly principles taught in the Old Testament were, and still are, a part of His divinely inspired Word. But they could never remove sin, forgive sin, atone for sin, or give a new and righteous life to a sinner—no matter how zealously and sincerely he tried to abide by them.
His point here is that the perfect, saving righteousness of God not only is received apart from legalism and built on revelation, but is also acquired only by faith. That has always been the only way of salvation as far as man’s part is concerned. The very point of Hebrews 11 is to show that there has never been a means of salvation other than faith in the true God.

Jesus Himself said, “The one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out” (John 6:37). Anyone who believes in Jesus Christ—whether a murderer, prostitute, thief, rapist, homosexual, religious hypocrite, false teacher, pagan, or anything else—will be saved. Just as no one is good enough to be saved, no one is so evil that he cannot be saved. That is the wonderful point of Romans 3:22. All those who believe will be saved because in God’s sight there is no distinction. Just as everyone apart from Christ is equally sinful and rejected by God, everyone who is in Christ is equally righteous and accepted by Him.

As far as the way of salvation is concerned, there are therefore only two religions the world has ever known or will ever know—the religion of divine accomplishment, which is biblical Christianity, and the religion of human achievement, which includes all other kinds of religion, by whatever names they may go under.

Sean McGarvey (Ironside)

Regarding the righteousness of God being manifested: “This is in no sense a wrought-out, legal righteousness, such as man was unable to produce for God. It is a righteousness ‘without the law,’ that is, altogether apart from any principle of human obedience to a divinely-ordained code of morals. It is a righteousness of God for unrighteous men and is in no wise dependent upon human merit or attainment.” (p. 33

“To be justified is to be declared righteous. It is the sentence of the judge in favor of the prisoner. It is not the state or condition of the soul. We are not justified because we have become righteous in heart and life. God justifies first, then He enables the justified one to walk in practical righteousness.” (p. 35)

“In order thus to show grace in righteousness to admittedly guilty sinners, God must have a just and satisfactory basis. Sin cannot be overlooked. It must be atoned for. This has been effectuated ‘through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus’ (3:24).” (p. 35)

“And he who died lives again and is Himself the abiding propitiation—literally, the mercy seat, the place where God can meet with man through Christ’s atoning blood—available to faith. The apostle clearly alludes to the blood-sprinkled mercy seat on the ark of the covenant of old. Within the ark were the tables of the law. Above were the cherubim, ‘justice and judgment’ the habitation of God’s throne. They are ready, as it
were, to leap from that throne to execute God’s righteous wrath against the violators of His law. But sprinkled upon the mercy seat is the blood that typifies the sacrifice of the cross. Justice and judgment ask no more. ‘Mercy rejoiceth against judgment’ (James 2:13), for God Himself has found a ransom.” (p. 36)

**Stephen Samsel (Stott)**

These verses talk about how there is no distinctions among sinners. Sin is sin and without God, there is no hope. The verses also show that God initiated giving us the gift of eternal life. There was nothing that you or I could do to deserve this gift.

The first move was God the Father’s, and our justification is “freely by his grace,” his absolutely free and utterly undeserved favor. Grace is God loving, God stooping, God coming to the rescue, God giving himself generously in and through Jesus Christ.

**Tim & Mila Archer (Maclaren)**

I. Paul’s view of the purpose of the law.

A. Making known God’s will as to man’s conduct.

B. To drive home to men’s consciences, the conviction of sin.

C. To bear witness, in conjunction with the prophets, to a future more perfect revelation of God’s righteousness.

II. Paul’s view of universal sinfulness.

A. By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified?

B. There is no distinction, but all varieties of condition, character, attainment, are alike in this, that the fatal taint is upon them all.

III. Paul’s view of the remedy for man’s sin.

A. Into the world of sinful men comes streaming the light of the “righteousness of God.”

B. God should give righteousness brought to men by Jesus Christ.

C. The remedy should reach as far as the disease.

IV. Paul’s view of what makes the Gospel the remedy.

A. Justified—accounted or declared righteous

B. Grace—His own loving disposition

C. Redemption—captivity, liberation, and the price paid
D. Paul doesn’t merely point to Jesus Christ as Savior, but to His death as the saving power. We are to have faith.

E. The vindication of God’s righteousness in forbearing to inflict punishment on sins committed before the advent of Jesus.

No Difference: Romans 3:22

There is no difference: All men, kings, beggars, civilized or savage, rich or poor, wise or foolish cultured or illiterate, breath the same breath, hunger and thirst, eat and drink, sleep, are smitten by the same diseases, and die at last the same death.

Paul triumphs and raises above all these small differences, between man and man: There is no difference.

I. There is no difference in the fact of sin.

II. There is no difference of God’s love to us.

III. There is no difference in the purpose and power of Christ’s cross for us all.

IV. There is no difference in the way which we must take for Salvation.
Romans

Abraham Justified by Faith (*Romans* 4:1-12)

**Introduction**

A gentle review: *Did we do this?* Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Before I read this week’s text, I want to explain why I’m not starting at *Romans* 1:1. I’ve already told you our past approach of stating at *Romans* 1:1 and reading up to today’s text isn’t sustainable from a time perspective.

When I was reading last week’s text, there was a big shift in both Paul’s tone and Paul’s goal between *Romans* 3:20 and *Romans* 3:21: “But now.” You heard it in my voice and you likely felt it as we were reading—almost a pop-off valve of pressure being released as Paul transitioned out of the wrath of God (where we had been for the better part of three chapters) and transitioned in to the solution—Jesus Christ.

What you felt was us moving from one major section of *Romans* to the next. I didn’t want to talk about it last week because I wanted you to *feel* it before we *studied* it.

Not every book of the Bible will have clean transitions like this, but Paul’s writings often do. Now that you’ve felt it, let’s talk about why you felt it and how that helps us.
As we’ve seen many times so far, Paul is a lawyer and he’s arguing a case in Romans. If we combine the facts that Romans is a very long letter and the fact that Paul goes very deep into his arguments (confusingly deep at times), we find ourselves needing something to help us provide some structure for what is prior to what we’re studying.

Are there any Bible study tools that help us understand a larger portion of text or an entire book? Yes! Outlines can help. Outlines help us boil down and break up longer portions of text into meaningful and manageable sections.

Outlining a book is one of my least favorite things to do—it takes me a very long time to come up with themes to portions of text, but it can also be incredibly helpful.

Before we get to the ESV’s outline of the book of Romans (which we will use for our study—and which is not inspired, but is very clean and straightforward), let me take an aside to this aside and say that many of you have noticed (especially those of you studying with a resource) the resource I gave you does not align to the grouping of verses we are studying any given week. Your author may have grouped all of Romans together whereas the ESV breaks Romans 4 into two parts.

This difference in grouping is usually ok. It is possible to mis-group text in a way that causes confusion, but it’s far easier to mis-comment on the text. So, don’t fret if the ESV’s outline differs from your personal outline or from your resource’s outline.

Here’s the ESV’s outline of the book of Romans:

I. The Gospel as the Revelation of God’s Righteousness (1:1-17)  
   (Paul’s introduction & righteousness introduced)

II. God’s Righteousness in His Wrath against Sinners (1:18-3:20)  
   (righteous wrath)

III. The Saving Righteousness of God (3:21-4:25)  
   (saving righteousness)

IV. Hope as a Result of Righteousness by Faith (5:1-8:39)  
   (righteous freedom)

V. God’s Righteousness to Israel and to the Gentiles (9:1-11:36)  
   (righteousness → Jews)

VI. God’s Righteousness in Everyday Life (12:1-15:13)  
   (righteous living)

VII. The Extension of God’s Righteousness through Paul’s Mission (15:14-16:23)  
   (Paul’s closing)

VIII. Final Summary of the Gospel of God’s Righteousness (16:25-27)  
   (righteousness summarized)
So, with all of that said, each week (from here on out), we will start with a brief summary of prior major sections, then read from the beginning of each section up to and including the text for that week. Let’s practice this.

Here’s the ESV’s outline of the book of Romans, leading into this week’s text of Romans 4:1-12.

I. The Gospel as the Revelation of God’s Righteousness (1:1-17)  
(Paul’s introduction & righteousness introduced)

II. God’s Righteousness in His Wrath against Sinners (1:18-3:20)  
(righteous wrath)

III. The Saving Righteousness of God (3:21-4:25)  
(saving righteousness)

Let’s read from the start of this major section, starting in Romans 3:21.

Read: Abraham Justified by Faith (4:1-12)

1 What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? 2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. 3 For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.” 4 Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. 5 And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, 6 just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works:

7 “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, 
and whose sins are covered;
8 blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin.”

9 Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? For we say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness. 10 How then was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. 11 He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well, 12 and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

Explain: Abraham Justified by Faith (4:1-12)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.
Are there any literary/structural observations?

Today’s text is the first part of the evidence Paul puts forward to back up last week’s text (next week we finish this piece of evidence). Paul does this many times in Romans, and Romans 4 is actually not the longest example of an example. In today’s text, Paul uses Abraham (through his life) and David (through his writing in Psalm 32:1-2a) as examples to the Jews of justification by faith and not works. Barclay: The wise teacher knows that every idea must become a person, for the only way in which an ordinary person can grasp an abstract idea is to see it in action, embodied in a person.

One Bible principle that Paul affirms (and uses as significant evidence in his argument) is the order of events in the Bible. Paul talks about how order matters in the Bible—and how we can draw theological conclusions from the order of events. So pay attention to the order.


What do the words mean?

1 What then shall we say [future active indicative; utter, speak, say] was gained by Abraham [“father of a multitude”], our [Paul is a Jew, so he can use “our”] forefather [father] according to the flesh? 2 For if Abraham was justified [aorist middle indicative; render just, render innocent] by works [works, toils, effort, occupation, act, doing, labor; same word used in Romans 3:20, 27, 28], he has [present active indicative] something to boast [boast, glory, rejoice] about, but not before God. 3 For what does the Scripture [document, scripture] say [present active indicative]? “Abraham believed [aorist active indicative; had faith, credited, entrusted, believed, committed, put trust with] God, and it was counted [logizomai; aorist middle indicative; taken inventory, estimated, concluded, esteemed, imputed, numbered, reasoned, reckoned; same word used in Romans 2:3, 26; 3:28] to him as righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26].” 4 Now to the one who works [present middle participle; toils, effects, is engaged in, is engaged with], his wages [pay, reward, wages] are not counted [present middle indicative; taken inventory, estimated, concluded, esteemed, imputed, numbered, reasoned, reckoned; same word used in Romans 2:3, 26; 3:28; 4:3] as a gift [charis; graciousness, acceptable, benefit, favor, gift, gracious, grace, joy, liberality, pleasure, thanks, thankworthy; same word used in Romans 1:5, 7] but as his due [something owed, due, fault, debt]. 5 And to the one who does not work [present middle participle; toil, effect, engage in, engage with] but believes [present active participle; has faith in, credits, entrusts, believes, commits, puts in trust with] in him who justifies [present active participle; renders just, renders innocent, justifies] the ungodly [irreverent, impious,
wicked, ungodly], his faith [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance, constancy in profession, assurance, belief, faith; same word used in Romans 1:8] is counted [present middle indicative; taken inventory, estimated, concluded, esteemed, imputed, numbered, reasoned, reckoned; same word used in Romans 2:3, 26; 3:28; 4:3, 4] as righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 4:3], 6 just as David [”beloved”] also speaks [present active indicative; aorist] of the blessing [beatification, attribution of good fortune, blessedness] of the one to whom God counts [present middle indicative; estimates, concludes, esteems, imputes, numbers, reasons, reckons; same word used in Romans 2:3, 26; 3:28; 4:3, 4, 5] righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 4:3, 5] apart [at a space, separately, apart, beside, by itself, without; same word used in Romans 3:21, 28] from works [works, toils, effort, occupation, act, doing, labor; same word used in Romans 2:6, 7, 15; 3:20, 27, 28; 4:2]:

7 “Blessed [fortunate, well off, happy] are those whose lawless deeds [illegality, violation of the law, wickedness, iniquity, transgression, unrighteousness] are forgiven [aorist middle indicative; sent, gone, sent forth, forgiven, forsaken, laid aside, left alone, omitted, put away, remitted; The mental image I get from looking at this word is the Father speaking to the violation to flee and not come back: “Go!” And where did those sins go? They went on Christ. They were poured out completely on Him, never to return to us—the forgiven—and subsequently, happy],

and whose sins [sin, offenses] are covered [aorist middle indicative; concealed, forgiven, covered; this is similar to what pagans tried to do with God’s truth—conceal (how wonderful that God does what we tried to do with His truth)];

8 blessed [fortunate, well off, happy; same word used in Romans 4:7] is the man against whom the Lord will not count [aorist active subjunctive (probability or possibility) and a double negative (which in Greek makes the idea more intense); taken inventory, estimated, concluded, esteemed, imputed, numbered, reasoned, reckoned; same word used in Romans 2:3, 26; 3:28; 4:3, 4, 5, 6] his sin [sin, offense].”

9 Is this blessing [beatification, attribution of good fortune, blessedness; same word used in Romans 4:6] then only for the circumcised [Jews], or also for the uncircumcised [Gentiles]? For we say [present active indicative] that faith [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in Romans 1:5, 12, 17; 3:22, 25, 26, 28, 30 (twice), 31] was counted [aorist middle indicative; taken inventory, estimated, concluded, esteemed, imputed, numbered, reasoned, reckoned; Romans 2:3, 26; 3:28; 4:3, 4, 5, 6, 8] to Abraham as righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 4:3, 5, 6]. 10 How then was it counted [aorist middle indicative; taken inventory, estimated, concluded, esteemed, imputed,
numbered, reasoned, reckoned; same word used in Romans 2:3, 26; 3:28; 4:3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9] to him? Was it before or after he had been [present middle participle] circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. [Genesis 15 is when Abraham’s faith is counted for righteousness. Genesis 17 is when Abraham is circumcised.] 11 He received [second aorist active indicative; took, got a hold of] the sign [indication, miracle, sign, token, wonder] of circumcision as a seal [signet, stamp, seal; outward sign that can be seen] of the righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 4:3, 5, 6, 9] that he had by faith [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in Romans 1:5, 12, 17; 3:22, 25, 26, 28, 30 (twice), 31; 4:9] while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make [present middle infinitive; exist] him the father of all who believe [present active participle; have faith in, credit, entrust, believe, commit to, put in trust with] without being circumcised [Paul just said Abraham was the father of believing Gentiles—this is BIG (and we will explore it more next week in a lesson that could be entitled, "Who’s your daddy?")], so that righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 11] would be counted [aorist middle infinitive; taken inventory, estimated, concluded, esteemed, imputed, numbered, reasoned, reckoned; same word used in Romans 2:3, 26; 3:28; 4:3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10] to them as well, 12 and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk [present active participle; Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: a military term, to walk in file] in the footsteps [track, steps] of the faith [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in Romans 1:5, 12, 17; 3:22, 25, 26, 28, 30 (twice), 31; 4:9, 11] that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

Are there any repeated words?

Account, righteousness, faith, circumcised, uncircumcised, belief

Are there any repeated topics?

Grace/faith & works (Guzik: Grace has to do with receiving the freely given gift of God, works has to do with earning our merit before God)

What are some observations of the text?

1 What then shall we say was gained by Abraham [trump card #1], our forefather according to the flesh? 2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God [Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: Abraham deserved all the respect from men that came to him, but his relation to God was a
different matter. He had there no ground of boasting at all]. 3 For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.” [Guzik: The Apostle Paul does not say that Abraham was made righteous in all of his doings, but God accounted Abraham as righteous. Our justification is not God making us perfectly righteous, but counting us as perfectly righteous. After we are counted righteous, then God begins making us truly righteous, culminating in our resurrection. . . . It was used in early secular documents; ‘put down to one’s account, let my revenues be placed on deposit at the storehouse.’ Wuest: Abraham possessed righteousness in the same manner as a person would possess a sum of money placed in his account in a bank. MacArthur: His faith was acceptable to God only because God graciously reckoned, or counted it as righteousness. It was not the greatness of Abraham’s faith that saved him but the greatness of the gracious Lord in whom he placed his faith.] 4 Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. 5 And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, 6 just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works:

7 “Blessed [Happiness is connected to forgiveness, not materiality] are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered;
8 blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin.”

9 Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? For we say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness. 10 How then was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. 11 He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness [Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: The circumcision did not convey the righteousness, but only gave outward confirmation. Ironside: People ever exalt the visible at the expense of the invisible.] that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well, 12 and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

Apply (What is the point?)

1. Justification is by faith
2. God’s accounting is the only accounting that matters
3. Order matters (faith → righteousness → evidence)
Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. Stop working and believe the gospel
2. Stop keeping score and believe the gospel
3. Stop displaying and believe the gospel

Recommended resource: The lyrics to Flame’s Start Over

Next week: The Promise Realized Through Faith (4:13-25)

13 For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. 14 For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. 15 For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression.

16 That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, 17 as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. 18 In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, “So shall your offspring be.” 19 He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah’s womb.

20 No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, 21 fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. 22 That is why his faith was “counted to him as righteousness.” 23 But the words “it was counted to him” were not written for his sake alone, 24 but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, 25 who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
• Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
• Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

Modern man is, as a matter of fact, deeply hostile to the concept of justification by faith alone through God’s grace. He is much more comfortable with the motto we get our salvation the good ole fashioned way . . . we earn it.

While I do agree with the statement above I also think that for man it is easier to believe that doing good will lead to justification than it is believing that the Creator of the world loved them so much that He died a horrible death to save them. He is justification. I pray that I never stop being baffled by the fact that He chose me and that He loves and saved me.

By faith alone . . . sola fide. Sola fide is for everyone.

The word counted, appears 11 times in Romans 4 and has the idea of crediting to one’s account. This is evident despite the various ways different translations render it: counted, reckoned, considered, imputed, computed. These all mean that righteous was credited to Abrahams account because of faith, not because or works!

Sola fide, the doctrine of faith alone, offends our natural sensibilities. We naturally think that justification ought to go to the good, those who are trying to do their best...Again, grace has power that the Law never had.

By faith alone.

Chris Arnold (Barclay)

Barclay contrasts the conventional wisdom of the day (Specifically the idea that Abraham was so special that, as his descendants, the Jewish people are also residually special and therefore –extra spiritually attuned to the will of God). I provide the following as proof of the basis for what Barclay is talking about.

Paul moves on to speak of Abraham for three reasons.

(i) The Jews regarded Abraham as the great founder of the race and the pattern of all that a man should be. Very naturally they ask, “If all that you say is true, what was the special thing that was given to Abraham when God picked him out to be the ancestor of his special people? What makes him different from other people?” That is the question which Paul is going on to answer.
(ii) Paul has just been seeking to prove that what makes a man right with God is not the performance of the works that the law lays down, but the simple trust of complete yieldedness which takes God at his word and believes that he still loves us even when we have done nothing to deserve that love. The immediate reaction of the Jews was, “This is something entirely new and a contradiction of all that we have been taught to believe. This doctrine is completely incredible.” Paul’s answer is, “So far from being new, this doctrine is as old as the Jewish faith. So far from being an heretical novelty, it is the very basis of Jewish religion.” That is what he is going on to prove.

(iii) Paul begins to speak about Abraham because he was a wise teacher who knew the human mind and the way it works. He has been talking about faith. Now faith is an abstract idea. The ordinary human mind finds abstract ideas very hard to grasp. The wise teacher knows that every idea must become a person, for the only way in which an ordinary person can grasp an abstract idea is to see it in action, embodied in a person. So Paul, in effect, says, “I have been talking about faith. If you want to see what faith is, look at Abraham.”

So the Jewish people appear to be taking the general position that since Abraham was special in the eyes of God, then by association, so are they. It seems that where the waters get muddiest is that there are some several years, and multiple “traditional” practices that seem to have been attached to this relationship, much in the same way that legislation is hidden within other legislation. So, in effect you have the personal relationship between Abraham and God being appropriated, and added to, and then being used as a standard upon which to judge others.

Barclay states that “the great majority of the Rabbis turned the Abraham story to suit their own beliefs.”

Barclay points out that this is because of the Jewish tradition of placing the emphasis upon deeds, and actions, instead of faith and trust in the redemption of Christ. They are completely missing that, as Barclay says, “The basic thought of Christianity is that all a man can do is to take God at his word and stake everything on the faith that his promises are true.”

This is what Abraham did. Abraham simply placed his faith in God and this was counted to him as Righteousness.

What a glorious thing that when we place our faith in Jesus that we don’t need to worry with doing things to become worthy of God’s love. In verses 7 and 8:

7 “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered;

8 blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin.”
This tells me that by placing our faith in Jesus, are unworthiness is negated. We are worthy of the gift because the gift is given to us. The giver of Life has determined in our sin we are deserving of better. And, because HE said so, it is true. Just …WOW.

Darla Skinner (Mounce)

For James that faith was confirmed when Abraham offered his son on the altar. Paul was concerned with the basis for justification; James, with its practical expression in conduct.

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

My biggest takeaway and observation this week is: faith and circumcision (then)=faith and baptism (now.)

Author notes: Paul uses both Abraham and David to get his point across. He does this because it meets the Jewish law regarding two witnesses and David gave witness that the same principal of justification was operative even for those living under the Mosaic law.

Abraham was 85 when righteousness was imputed to him. Ishmael was 13 years old when both he and Abraham were circumcised. This shows that circumcision had nothing to do with the imputation of righteousness to Abraham.

Circumcision, like baptism, is an outward sign declaring salvation as being baptized.

Less than 1% of the world’s population is Jewish. So does “seed” as referred to Abraham mean that only 1% is blessed? No. Seed refers to the seed of Jesus not Abraham of inheriting the world.

Julia Gregg (Schreiner)

Thoughts from verses 1-8: These seem so basic but so many people still strive for righteousness in such a way that their works gain them spiritual significance with God. However, these verses make it clear that the necessary works were lacking, instead Abraham was counted righteous in the sight of God because of his faith—as a result boasting could only be done by the one (One) whose works makes one righteous. God—through the work of Jesus Christ—made those who believe righteous. Therefore, “Faith alone is the way one becomes right with God” (212) It is God that works for us!!! Take a moment and think about that . . . God working for us—to bring Himself glory. WOW!

Verses 9-12 examine the role of circumcision for justification. The whole of this argument is that if circumcision (i.e., works/ law) is not necessary to be part of Abraham’s family, then both Jew and Gentile WHO HAVE FAITH can come into
covenant with God . . . by GRACE. The “cleanup” in the portion of Paul’s argument isn’t fully addressed through verse 12 but is completed (as such) by verse 16.

I’m typically quite direct so I enjoyed this portion of Paul’s argument because I felt that it was also direct.

Michelle Erickson (MacArthur)

The major premise is true: If a man could be justified by works, he would indeed have something to boast about, because he would have merited his own salvation. But, as Paul goes on to demonstrate, the minor premise is not true. Consequently, the conclusion is untrue. Abraham did not have anything in himself to boast about before God.

Was reckoned is from logizomai, which carried the economic and legal meaning of crediting something to another’s account. The only thing God received from Abraham was his imperfect faith but by His divine grace and mercy, He reckoned it to Abraham’s spiritual account as righteousness.

His faith was acceptable to God only because God graciously reckoned, or counted it as righteousness. It was not the greatness of Abraham’s faith that saved him but the greatness of the gracious Lord in whom he placed his faith.

If man would able to save himself by his own works, then salvation would be apart from God’s grace, and Christ’s sacrifice on the cross would have been in vain. If such righteous works were attainable by men, then salvation would not be a gift of God’s grace but would be a wage that is due.

By God’s standard, every person’s work falls far short of earning the redemption He provides. On the divine scale of perfect righteousness, even the most devoted and long-serving Christian is not a hair’s breadth closer to earning his salvation than the most vile criminal who accepts Christ on his deathbed.

F - Facts - Faith is not based on a blind leap into the unknown and unknowable, as many liberal and neoorthodox theologians would have us believe. It is based on the facts of God’s redeeming work through His Son Jesus Christ.

A - Agreement - It is one thing to know the truth of the gospel; it is quite another to agree with it. The believing heart affirms the truth it receives from God’s word.

I - Internalization - The inner desire of a believer to accept and apply the truth of the gospel to his own life.

T - Trust - In some ways and in some contexts, trust is a synonym for faith. But trust also carries the idea of having unreserved confidence in God, of trusting Him to keep His promises to never forsake us as His children and to provide all our needs.
H - Hope - Every believer is saved in the hope of going to live eternally with God in heaven, although he has never seen heaven or seen the Lord in whom he believes.

Racially, Abraham is the father of all Jews; spiritually, he is the father of both believing Gentiles, who believe without being circumcised, and of believing Jews, who... are of the circumcision. Both groups of believers are reckoned righteous because of their faith in God through Jesus Christ, and they also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised.

Sean McGarvey (Ironside)

Faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness when he was on Gentile ground before the covenant sign of circumcision was placed upon his flesh. It was really a seal of what was already true, as in the case of Christian baptism. Because he was justified he was commanded to be circumcised. In the centuries since the Jews had come to regard the sign as of more importance than the faith. People ever exalt the visible at the expense of the invisible. (p. 37)

Stephen Samsel (Stott)

My book doesn’t go into much detail or discussion on this passage.

What stuck out to me was in verses 11-12. The scripture says that Abraham was counted righteous before his circumcision. He was then circumcised as a seal for the faith he’d had prior to his circumcision. Why is this important? I think it sent a strong message to the Jews to show them that you were not circumcised just to follow the law and also it helped show the inclusion of Gentiles.
Romans

The Promise Realized Through Faith (Romans 4:13-25)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

✓ Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17)
✓ Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20)
7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December)
8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up)

Today’s text (Romans 4:13-25) is the second part of the evidence Paul puts forward to back up Romans 3:21-31 (righteousness comes by faith). In last week’s text, Paul puts forth Abraham and David as examples of righteousness by faith. In this week’s text, Paul finishes up the example of Abraham. Let’s read from Romans 3:21-4:25.
Read: The Promise Realized Through Faith (4:13-25)

13 For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. 14 For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. 15 For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression.

16 That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, 17 as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. 18 In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, “So shall your offspring be.” 19 He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah’s womb. 20 No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, 21 fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. 22 That is why his faith was “counted to him as righteousness.” 23 But the words “it was counted to him” were not written for his sake alone, 24 but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, 25 who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.


Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

But before we do . . . a quick word about promises. 2 Corinthians 1:20a: For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. So, when we look at the promises God made to Abraham—Jesus is the fulfillment. The Old Testament promises are fulfilled in Jesus.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

There are Old Testament references in Romans 4:17, 18, 22, 23.

What do the words mean?

13 For the promise [announcement, message, promise] to Abraham [“father of a multitude”] and his offspring [seed, offspring, remnant, issue; same word used in Romans 1:3] that he would be [present middle infinitive] heir [an inheritor, heir] of the world [orderly arrangement, decoration, world] did not come through [dia] the law [nomos] but [a comparison word] through [dia] the righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 11]
(twice) of faith [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in Romans 1:5, 12, 17; 3:22, 25, 26, 28, 30 (twice), 31; 4:9, 11, 12]. 14 For if it is the adherents of the law [nomos] who are to be the heirs [an inheritor, heir; same word used in Romans 4:13], faith [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in Romans 1:5, 12, 17; 3:22, 25, 26, 28, 30 (twice), 31; 4:9, 11, 12, 13] is null [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) middle indicative; made empty, abased, neutralized, falsified, in vain] and the promise [announcement, message, promise; same word used in Romans 4:13] is void [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) middle indicative; to be entirely idle (useless), abolish, cease, cumber, destroy, do away, become of no effect, fail, loose, bring to naught, put away, vanish away, make void; same word used in Romans 3:3, 31]. 15 For the law [nomos] brings [present middle indicative; works fully, accomplishes, finishes, fashions, causes, does, performs, works out; same word used in Romans 2:9] wrath [desire, violent passion, abhorrence, punishment, anger, indignation, vengeance, wrath; same word used in Romans 1:18; 2:5, 8], but where there is [present middle indicative] no law [nomos] there is no transgression [violation, breaking, transgression].

16 That is why it depends on [dia] faith [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in Romans 1:5, 12, 17; 3:22, 25, 26, 28, 30 (twice), 31; 4:9, 11, 12, 13, 14], in order that the promise [announcement, message, promise; same word used in Romans 4:13, 14] may rest [present middle infinitive] on grace [charis; graciousness, acceptable, benefit, favor, gift, gracious, grace, joy, liberality, pleasure, thanks, thankworthy; same word used in Romans 1:5, 7; 4:4] and be guaranteed [stable, firm, steadfast, sure] to all his offspring [seed, offspring, remnant, issue; same word used in Romans 1:3; 4:13]—not only to the adherent of the law [nomos] but also to the one who shares [not in the sense of distribution, but in the sense of possession] the faith [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in Romans 1:5, 12, 17; 3:22, 25, 26, 28, 30 (twice), 31; 4:9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16] of Abraham, who is [present middle indicative] the father [father, parent] of us all, 17 as it is written [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) middle indicative], “I have made [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) active indicative] you the father of many nations [ethnos; race, tribe, foreigner, Gentile, heathen, nation, people]” [from Genesis 17:5]—in the presence [directly opposite, before, over against] of the God in whom he believed [aorist active indicative; had faith, credited, entrusted, believed, committed to, put in trust with], who gives life [present active participle; revitalize, make alive, give life, quicken] to the dead and calls [present active participle (the participle instead of
the indicative may indicate this still continues] into existence the things that do not exist [present middle participle]. 18 In hope [expectation, confidence, faith, hope] he believed [aorist active indicative; had faith, credited entrusted, believed, committed to, put in trust with] against hope [expectation, confidence, faith, hope; same word used earlier in Romans 4:18], that he should become [second aorist active infinitive; cause to be, become] the father of many nations [ethnos; race, tribe, foreigner, Gentile, heathen, nation, people], as he had been told [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) middle participle; uttered, spoken to, called, told], “So [in this way] shall [future middle indicative] your offspring [seed, offspring, remnant, issue; same word used in Romans 4:13, 16] be.” [from Genesis 15:5] 19 He did not weaken [aorist active participle; be feeble, impotent, sick, weaken (this example is about Abraham and Sarah having a child, so Paul uses child-producing language)] in faith [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in Romans 1:5, 12, 17; 3:22, 25, 26, 28, 30 (twice), 31; 4:9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16 (twice)] when he considered [aorist active indicative; observed fully, beheld, considered, discovered, perceived] his own body, which was [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) middle participle] as good as dead (since he was [present active participle; was under, into existence, existed] about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness [nekrosis; deceasedness, impotency, deadness, dying] of Sarah’s [“princess”] womb [metra; matrix, womb]. 20 No unbelief [apistia; faithlessness, disbelief, unfaithfulness, unbelief; same word used in Romans 3:3] made him waver [aorist middle indicative; separate thoroughly, withdraw from, oppose, discriminate, hesitate, contend, differ, discern, doubt, judge, be partial, stagger, waver; again, Paul may be using this word relative to baby-making—separating thoroughly would prohibit a child] concerning the promise [announcement, message, promise; same word used in Romans 4:13, 14, 16] of God, but he grew strong [aorist middle indicative; empowered, enabled, increased, strengthened, made strong] in his faith [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in Romans 1:5, 12, 17; 3:22, 25, 26, 28, 30 (twice), 31; 4:9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16 (twice), 18] as he gave [second aorist active participle] glory [very apparent glory, dignity, glory, honor, praise, worship; same word used in Romans 1:23; 2:7, 10; 3:7, 23] to God, 21 fully convinced [aorist middle participle; carried out fully, completely assured, entirely accomplished, surely believed, fully known, fully persuaded, made full proof; Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: sense of finishing off or paying off] that God was [present middle indicative] able [dynateoo; able, could, mighty, possible, power, strong] to do [aorist active infinitive; able, could, mighty, possible, power, strong] what he had promised [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) middle indicative; announcement, message, promise; same
word used in Romans 4:13, 14, 16, 20. 22 That is why his [Abraham’s] faith [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used in Romans 1:5, 12, 17; 3:22, 25, 26, 28, 30 (twice), 31; 4:9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16 (twice), 18, 20] was “counted [logizomai; aorist middle indicative; taken inventory, estimated, concluded, esteemed, imputed, numbered, reasoned, reckoned; same word used in Romans 2:3, 26; 3:28; 4:3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11] to him as righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 11 (twice), 13].” 23 But the words “it was counted [logizomai; aorist middle indicative; same word used in Romans 2:3, 26; 3:28; 4:3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 22] to him” were not written [second aorist middle indicative] for his sake alone [dia], 24 but for [dia] ours also. It will be [present active indicative; intend, be about] counted [logizomai; present middle indicative; same word used in Romans 2:3, 26; 3:28; 4:3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 22, 23] to us who believe [present active participle; have faith in, credit, entrust, believe, commit to, put in trust with] in him who raised [aorist active participle; woke, roused, lifted up, raised again, stood, took up] from the dead [nekros] Jesus our Lord, 25 who was delivered up [aorist middle indicative; surrendered, yielded up, entrusted, transmitted, betrayed, brought forth, cast, committed, delivered, gave over, gave up, hazarded, put in prison, recommended; same word used in Romans 1:24, 26, 28] for [dia] our trespasses [side slips, errors, transgressions, falls, faults, offenses, sins, trespasses] and raised [aorist middle indicative; woke, roused, lifted up, raised again, stood, took up; same word used in Romans 4:24] for [dia] our justification [acquittal, justification].

Are there any repeated words?
Promise, faith, law, raised, logizomai, offspring, father, believe

Are there any repeated topics?

What are some observations of the text?

Sidebar: Jessica Miller brought up a great question this week on the Romans Facebook page. Here is it: “I struggle with this text because of Ishmael. If Abraham never wavered, why did he go to Hagar?”

First, this is a great question. Never hold back from asking Scripture hard questions. The Word can take it.

Second, I want to draw your attention to a resource I posted on the Romans Facebook page a few weeks ago: a sermon by John Piper entitled, “Why God Inspired Hard Texts.” It’s a great look at the implications of hard passages of Scripture.

Third, let’s make sure we always keep in mind the following: All of God’s Word is true. We may struggle to see how the pieces fit together, but it is all true. Every. Word.
(Note: I don’t doubt for a second JM believes this, I’m just taking an opportunity to repeat it.) Now, to the question: “If Abraham never wavered, why did he go to Hagar?”

The question I posed back to Jessica was the following: “Is there a specific portion of Abraham’s story that the Romans passage above is referring to or is it referring to his entire story?” Let’s do a quick recap of Abraham’s life:

- **Genesis 12**: called at 75, Lot introduced, A&S go to Egypt
- **Genesis 13**: A & Lot separate
- **Genesis 14**: A rescues Lot & is blessed by Melchizedek
- **Genesis 15**: God’s covenant with A (the first promise is made & believed (1-6))
- **Genesis 16**: 10/11 years later, S gives A Hagar & a son is born
- **Genesis 17-18a**: 13 years later, A is circumcised & a son is promised (second) through S
- **Genesis 18b-19**: Sodom & Gomorrah
- **Genesis 20**: A & Abimelech
- **Genesis 21**: Isaac is born (25 years after the initial promise)
- **Genesis 25**: A dies (175)

I would argue this week’s passage is only referring to **Genesis 15**: the portion of Abraham’s life dealing with his salvation (since salvation is Paul’s focus—not Abraham’s demonstration of his salvation—which would necessitate a look at how he behaved).

Hagar is a beautiful example of working for your salvation—taking it into your own hands and circumventing God’s plan. End of sidebar

Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: Paul employs (Sanday and Headlam) the keywords of his gospel (faith, promise, grace) and arrays them against the current Jewish theology (law, works, merit).

13 For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith [Translation: our salvation is not *dia* the law, but *dia* faith. Two circles.]. 14 For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void [“Null and void” sounds like contract language. However, if the law saves, then faith is useless and God’s promises are worthless. We know that can’t be the truth, so the law doesn’t save.]. 15 For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression [Some read this verse (separate from Romans 1-3) and assume if someone has never heard the Law (that they are guilty) then there is no sin. That is obviously not Paul’s intent as we spent weeks going through the fact that all guilty. (This is, by the way, one of the reasons we study large portions of Scripture.) So, what does this verse mean? It means what it says. Men don’t think they’re sinners without the law. It has a purpose. MacArthur: The law cannot save because the Law brings about wrath. The more a
person seeks to justify himself by keeping God’s Law, the more he proves his inability to do so. . . . Just as surely as the law reveals God’s righteousness so it also exposes man’s sinfulness.]

16 That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all [“Us” = believers—so it does matter who your daddy is], 17 as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist [Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: Summons the non-existing as existing.]. 18 In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, “So shall your offspring be.” 19 He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body [in that moment], which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah’s womb. [Mounce: The church of Jesus Christ is in desperate need of those who will insist that God is able to bring to pass anything that is consistent with his nature and in concert with his redemptive purposes.] 20 No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong [strong, not perfect] in his faith as he gave glory to God, 21 fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. 22 That is why his faith was “counted to him as righteousness.” 23 But the words “it was counted to him” were not written for his sake alone, 24 but for ours also [If it was good enough for Abraham, it’s good enough for us.]. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, 25 who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification. [Amen and amen.]

Apply (What is the point?)

1. **Faith** brings grace
2. **Law** brings wrath
3. A choice will be made

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

Hughes: This is what we are to believe!
We are to put our faith in God who raised up Christ for our sins and was resurrected for our justification.

1. **Believe**
2. **Believe**
3. **Believe**

So, as we look at this third major point in our rear-view mirrors, what has happened so far? Ironside: The divine justice has been appeased. The holiness of God has been
vindicated. The law has been established. And so the believing sinner is declared justified from all things. Such is the testimony of chapter 4. (p. 38)

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

- Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17)
- Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20)
- Saving Righteousness (3:21-4:25)
- Righteous Freedom (5:1-8:39)
- Righteousness → Jews (9:1-11:36)
- Righteous Living (12:1-15:13)
- Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23)
- Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27)

Next week: Peace with God Through Faith (5:1-11)

1 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3 Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, 4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 5 and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— 8 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. 10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. 11 More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)
Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

This is what we are to believe! We are to put our faith in God who raised up Christ for our sins and was resurrected for our justification.

Abraham’s righteousness by faith was established some fourteen years before he was circumcised. By faith alone . . . sola fide!

We all have faith. The decisive issue is where we place the faith we have. An issue I struggle with. If my faith is in Christ and Christ alone, I need to trust His plan and not try and push my plan, list, agenda . . . after all I’m really good with lists and plans. I have a tendency to think that my plan or way would be better and faster because I can usually already see the end result. However, in my heart I know that God’s plan is way more beneficial. On several occasions, I could just see Him shaking His head at me and saying, “I told you, Amy. I told you that I had this and that the end would be worth waiting for.” (In all honesty, He says this to me far too often.) By faith and faith alone! My faith is much better place on the One who holds everything in His hand then in my lists/plans. I need to add a note that His plan is better to all my lists/calendars, just as a reminder to look to Him in all I do.

The God “who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist” was clearly the object of the patriarch’s faith. It is fundamental that we understand that the object of one’s faith is most important. One’s faith, outstanding as it may be, will never benefit its owner if it has the wrong object. (Back to the whole my plan/His plan . . . my object was wrong and He is much more beneficial!)

Darla Skinner (Mounce)

The church of Jesus Christ is in desperate need of those who will insist that God is able to bring to pass anything that is consistent with his nature and in concert with his redemptive purposes. (p. 130)

God is also portrayed as the one who calls into existence things that are not. The immediate reference could be to the calling into existence of the child Isaac yet unborn at that time. The neuter plural participles, however, suggest a broader context. The point is not that God speaks of things that do not exist as though they did but that he speaks the nonexistent into existence. By definition the Creator brings into existence all that is from that which never was. Anything less than that would be adaption rather than creation. (p. 128)
Michelle Erickson (MacArthur)

Abraham not only was not justified by the rite of circumcision but also was not justified by keeping the Mosaic law. Again, the chronology of the Jewish Scriptures proves his point. As every Jew will knew, the law was not revealed to Moses until more than five hundred years after Abraham lived and that patriarch obviously had no way of knowing what the law required.

When Abraham was declared right with God, he was neither circumcised nor in possession of the Mosaic law. Circumcision had not yet been required by God and the law had not been revealed by God. Therefore, the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith.

The law cannot save because the Law brings about wrath. The more a person seeks to justify himself by keeping God’s Law, the more he proves his inability to do so because of his sinfulness and the more judgement and wrath he brings upon himself. Just as surely as the law reveals God’s righteousness so it also exposes man’s sinfulness.

Sincere struggling with spiritual problems comes from strong, godly faith. Such faith refuses to doubt and trusts God’s promises, even when no way of fulfillment is humanly imaginable.

John Calvin wisely observed the believers “are never so enlightened that there are not remains of ignorance, nor is the heart so established that there are no misgivings.” A Christian who claims to understand all of God’s truth and to envision the fulfillment of all His promises is not demonstrating great faith but great presumption. Godly faith is not full understanding but full trust, “assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” Heb 11:1

Sean McGarvey (Ironside)

The divine justice has been appeased. The holiness of God has been vindicated. The law has been established. And so the believing sinner is declared justified from all things. Such is the testimony of chapter 4. (p. 38)

God is the God of resurrection. He works when nature is powerless. He so wrought in the case of Abraham and Sarah, both beyond the time when they could naturally be the parents of a child. He so wrought when He raised up Christ, the true Seed, first by bringing Him into the world contrary to nature, of a virgin mother; and second by bringing Him up from the dead. Abraham believed in the God of resurrection and staggered not at the divine promise though fulfillment seemed impossible. God delights to do impossibilities! (p. 38)
Stephen Samsel (Stott)

Verse 13: We see that Abraham just believed God, that’s all

Verses 14-16: We see how Abraham was saved by faith

Verse 19: Even though the things around him seemed dead, his circumstances alone would not appear promising, Abraham had faith. He simply believed God. He believed the promise. He put confidence in the promise because of the One who gave it. And all of this faith and belief and trust was then him giving worship to God.

I liked this quote—it hit home to how important believing is . . . putting your complete Trust in someone. You see, man was created to glorify God, but by disobedience he did the opposite. And, my friend, the only way you can glorify God is to believe Him.

Verse 21: “fully persuaded” meant filled brimful—meaning NO room for doubt. I liked that definition. A cup completely full of belief left no area for doubt.

Verses 23-25: Faith. Abraham believed God could raise from the dead his son (Sarah womb being a tomb) and Abraham rejoiced in this. That is faith. Just as the faith of not only the death of Christ but also in his resurrection.

Quote from Matthew Henry: In Christ’s death he paid our debt; in his resurrection he took our acquittance. God justifies those who believe in the death AND resurrection of Christ.
Romans

Peace with God Through Faith (Romans 5:1-11)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

1. Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17)
2. Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20)
7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December)
8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up)

Today’s text (Romans 5:1-11) is the first part of our next major section.
Read: Peace with God Through Faith (5:1-11)

1 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3 Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, 4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 5 and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— 8 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. 10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. 11 More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Explain: Peace with God Through Faith (5:1-11)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

As Paul shifts into this new major section (Romans 5-8), he starts to list some of the benefits of righteousness—and he will continue this approach for several more chapters. These chapters can sometimes appear disconnected, but when read together, there are several consistent themes—and one is Righteous Freedom.

As far as literary/structural observations, there aren’t any that jump off of the page for me. Jessica Norris: Paul turns from being the ultimate bearer of bad news to the ultimate cheerleader in this section and I am glad for it!

What do the words mean?

1 Therefore [a connecting word—Paul is still making arguments and connections], since we have been justified [aorist passive (per Robertson) participle; rendered just, rendered innocent, freed, justified] by faith [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity], we have [present active subjunctive (per Robertson) (probability or possibility)] peace [peace, prosperity, one, quietness, rest, to be set at one again; same word used in Romans 1:7; 2:10; 3:17] with God through [dia] our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Through [dia]
him [Jesus] we have perfect (completed action with the results continuing) active indicative also obtained access [admission, access] by faith [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity] into this grace [charis; graciousness, acceptable, benefit, favor, gift, gracious, grace, joy, liberality, pleasure, thanks, thankworthy; same word used in Romans 1:5, 7; 4:4, 16] in which we stand [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) active indicative; stand, abide, appoint, bring, continue, covenant, establish, hold up, lay, present, set up, stanch; same word used in Romans 3:31], and we rejoice [present middle subjunctive (per Robertson) (probability or possibility); vaunt, boast, glory, joy, rejoice; same word used in Romans 2:17, 23] in hope [expectation, confidence, faith, hope; same word used in Romans 4:18 (twice)] of the glory [very apparent glory, dignity, glory, honor, praise, worship; same word used in Romans 1:23; 2:7, 10; 3:7, 23; 4:20] of God. 3 Not only that, but we rejoice [present middle subjunctive (per Robertson) (probability or possibility)] in our sufferings [pressure, affliction, anguish, burden, persecution, tribulation, trouble; same word used in Romans 2:9], knowing [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) active participle; seeing, knowing, considering, perceiving, understanding] that suffering [pressure, affliction, anguish, burden, persecution, tribulation, trouble; same word used in Romans 2:9 and earlier in Romans 5:3] produces [present middle indicative; works fully, accomplishes, finishes, fashions, causes, does, performs, works out; same word used in Romans 2:9; 4:15] endurance [cheerful/hopeful endurance, constancy, endurance, patience, patient continuance, waiting; same word used in Romans 2:7], 4 and endurance [cheerful/hopeful endurance, constancy, endurance, patience, patient continuance, waiting; same word used in Romans 2:7; 5:3] produces [this word is not in the original language, but is added for clarity of meaning] character [test, trustiness, experience, proof, trial], and character [test, trustiness, experience, proof, trial; same word used earlier in this verse] produces [this word is not in the original language, but is added for clarity of meaning] hope [expectation, confidence, faith, hope; same word used in Romans 4:18 (twice); 5:2], 5 and hope [expectation, confidence, faith, hope; same word used in Romans 4:18 (twice); 5:2, 4] does [present active indicative] not put us to shame [shame down, disgrace, put to the blush, confound, dishonor], because [a connecting word] God’s love [agape] has been poured [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) passive (per Robertson) indicative; poured forth, bestowed, gushed out, run out, shed, spilled] into our hearts [heart, thoughts or feelings, middle] through [dia] the Holy [sacred, pure, consecrated, holy, saint; same word used in Romans 1:2, 7] Spirit who has been given [aorist middle participle] to us.

6 For while we were [present middle participle] still weak [strengthless, feeble, impotent, sick, without strength, weak], at the right time [occasion, proper time, opportunity, season, time, while; same word used in Romans 3:26] Christ died [second
aorist active indicative; died off, is dead, died, lies a-dying, is slain] for the ungodly [irreverent, impious, wicked, ungodly; same word used in Romans 4:5]. 7 For one will [future active indicative] scarcely [with difficulty, hardly, scarcely, with much work] die for a righteous [equitable, innocent, holy, just, righteous; same word used in Romans 1:17; 2:13; 3:10, 26] person—though perhaps [shortly, possibly, peradventure, perhaps] for a good [benefit, good, well; same word used in Romans 2:7, 10; 3:8] person one would dare [present active indicative; boldness, venture, act, courageous, bold, dare] even to die [second aorist active infinitive; died off, is dead, died, lies a-dying, is slain; same word used in Romans 5:6] — 8 but God shows [present active indicative; sets together, introduces, exhibits, stands near, constitutes, approves, commends, consists, makes, stands with; same word used in Romans 3:5] his love [agape] for us in that while we were [present middle participle] still sinners, Christ died [second aorist active indicative; died off, is dead, died, lies a-dying, is slain; same word used in Romans 5:6, 7] for us. 9 Since, therefore, we have now been justified [aorist middle participle; rendered just, rendered innocent, freed, justified] by his [Jesus’] blood, much more shall we be saved [future passive (per Robertson) indicative; saved, delivered, protected, healed, preserved, made whole] by [dia] him from the wrath [desire, violent passion, abhorrence, punishment, anger, indignation, vengeance, wrath; same word used in Romans 1:18; 2:5; 8; 4:15] of God. 10 For if while we were [present middle participle] enemies [enemies, foes, hateful, odious, hostile, adversaries] we were reconciled [second aorist passive (per Robertson) indicative; changed mutually, compounded a difference, reconcile] to God by [dia] the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled [second aorist middle participle; changed mutually, compounded a difference, reconcile; same word as earlier in this verse], shall we be saved [future middle indicative; saved, delivered, protected, healed, preserved, made whole; same word used in Romans 5:9] by his life. 11 More than that, we also rejoice [present middle participle; present middle indicative; vaunt, boast, glory, joy, rejoice; same word used in Romans 2:17, 23; 5:2] in God through [dia] our Lord Jesus Christ, through [dia] whom we have now received [second aorist active indicative; taken, gotten hold of, seized, accepted, received] reconciliation [exchange, restoration to favor, atonement, reconciliation].

Are there any repeated words?

Faith, rejoice, God, Lord Jesus Christ, suffering, endurance, character, died/death, justified, reconcile, by, therefore, while, we

What are some observations of the text?

Kroll: Justification means . . .

- peace with God
- access to God
• a standing before God
• hope of glory
• exulting in our tribulations
• encouraging hope
• experiencing the love of God

1 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God [Robertson: The exhortation is that we keep on enjoying peace with God and keep on exulting in hope of the glory of God. Schreiner: Those who scorned God’s glory and have fallen short (by our very nature) are now promised a future share in it.]. 3 Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings [Robertson: It is one thing to submit to or endure tribulations without complaint, but it is another to find ground of glorying in the midst of them as Paul exhorts here], knowing that suffering produces endurance, 4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 5 and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. [first paragraph dominos: Justification → peace → rejoicing in suffering → endurance → character → hope; David Barber: This works in parenting too—don’t hold back the suffering because the character and hope won’t come]

6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— 8 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. 10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God [Robertson: Paul does not conceive it as his or our task to reconcile God to us. God has attended to that himself.] by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. 11 More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation [Maclaren: We sinners can never pass into that central glory, not ever possess those gifts of grace, unless the barrier that stands between us and God, between us and His highest gifts of love, is swept away].

Christ died for sinners; Christ’s shed blood justifies; Christ’s death reconciles us to the Father; Christ’s resurrection saves us.

Second paragraph dominos: Reconciliation → rejoicing in God through Christ

Apply (What is the point?)

1. Christ brings peace with the Father (through faith)
2. Christ brings hope for today (through dominos that fall after suffering)
3. Christ brings reconciliation with the Father (through His death and resurrection)

**Personalize (What do we do with that?)**

1. Live in peace with the Father (have the right view of Him)
2. Live in hope right now (have the right view of circumstances and the future)
3. Live in reconciliation with the Father (have the right view of our relationship)

**Next week: Death in Adam, Life in Christ (5:12-21)**

12 Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—13 for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. 14 Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.

15 But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man’s trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. 16 And the free gift is not like the result of that one man’s sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. 17 For if, because of one man’s trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.

18 Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. 19 For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous. 20 Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, 21 so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Homework**

**Resources (our helps—order matters)**
- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

**Our process**
- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)
Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

Therefore we exult confidently in the hope of the glory of God— even in our tribulation! How serendipitous that I read that statement today! How great is His love for us!

Grace is the unsought, undeserved and unconditional love of God. Grace is God pursuing us until he has found us and persevering with us ever afterwards. We have a God that loves us so much, that he waits on us and once we turn back to Him he is there . . . always there . . . walking with us in the valley, up the mountain, through the desert, no matter where we are He is there. Our sight may fall from where He is, but He doesn’t falter.

Before we were Christians, we had not even the faintest chance for real peace because we were far from God.

It is a beautiful thing to experience God’s peace and grace to the extent that we exult in tribulation as well as in the hope of glory. So very hard to do. We (I) feel like a failure when I don’t seek to praise Him in times of tribulation. I know that He understands my heart and that I’m just venting out my feelings. I take great comfort in knowing that He waits patiently on me.

God’s love has been poured into our heart. The idea in the Greek is that God’s love has been and continues to be poured out within our hearts. Love the mental image of this.

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

Paul turns from being the ultimate bearer of bad news to the ultimate cheerleader in this section and I am glad for it! He does keep us grounded in reminding us that it’s not all going to be roses from here on out. We are going to suffer but we should rejoice in that because that suffering produces endurance which produces endurance, which produces character, which then produces hope and a life without hope is a very bleak one.

Kroll:

- Justification means peace with God
- Justification means access to God
- Justification means a standing before God
- Justification means hope of glory
- Justification means exulting in our tribulations
• Justification means encouraging hope
• Justification means experiencing the love of God
• Justification means the gift of the Holy Spirit
• Justification means being saved from God’s wrath
• Justification means being saved by Christ’s life
• Justification means continued rejoicing

The Love of God, by Frederick Lehman

Could we with ink the ocean fill and were the skies of parchment made,
Were every stalk on earth a quill and every man a scribe by trade;
To write the love of God above would drain the ocean dry,
Nor could the scroll contain the whole tho stretched from sky to sky.

Julia Gregg (Schreiner)

Thoughts for this week . . . after some personal experiences over the last decade or so just my author’s title this week: “hope in suffering,” peeled back an emotional layer. It’s interesting to me that IMO thus far Paul has been direct in his argument—much like a court case delivered to the Supreme Court. However, in the next few verses (and maybe it’s my own personal experience) but there seems to be an emotional layer in the section of the argument. The term peace resonates more with reconciliation than it does with a spirit at rest. This thought of reconciliation further addresses the truth that GOD fulfilled his covenantal promise to his people in providing Himself a lamb . . . not just a lamb—but THE LAMB. “[it] describes in a comprehensive way God’s goodness to his people. Now this peace is available to both Jews and Gentiles who believe in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, for the church is the eschatological community of God.”(253)

An interesting side note to me here is that much of today’s church has lost a sense of community and I feel this inhibits some understanding of the new testament church—its purpose and its mission . . . back to thought.

Paul focuses on the fact that the peace with God ONLY becomes a reality through the Davidic king. This peace is the first blessing offered.

The second is “grace in which we stand”—which again is a reality only through Jesus Christ. Best sentence of this section for me was . . . 254—I kept coming back to “those who scorned God’s glory and have fallen short (by our very nature) are now PROMISED a future share in it.” This grace is not a present possession but one realized in judgment—when the reality of the price paid is fully realized. It is a confidence of this future hope that Paul seems to be delivering in this portion of scripture. Hence the encouragement to endure—because endurance produces tested character which then
produces hope that GOD’S wrath will be not be experienced on judgment day. What a focus on the intercessory work of Christ—a hope that affliction will eventually be left behind.

As Paul moves into verses 6-11 he focuses more on the grounds of that hope and leaves the more emotional realm to a more objective one where he discusses the “how.” This hope is available as a result of the objective work of Christ on the cross. Two sentences struck me in this section—one on page 259: “Christ died for the ‘weak,’ ‘ungodly,’ ‘sinners,’ and ‘enemies’”—there is a repetition here that I find interesting. Repetition in court cases and arguments are there for reasons! It draws attention and focus.

The other sentence came on page 264: “We are saved by His life.” It’s interesting here to me because the Christian community (me included) seems to focus on our salvation coming from the death of Christ. Yes, this was necessary—but we are separated from all other religions because of His life . . . specifically the one after His death. Just a small change in perspective but a huge impact! Hence, our reconciliation is accomplished through the GIFT. “Salvation is communicated by saying—we received the reconciliation” (265).

Tim & Mila Archer (Maclaren)

Romans 5:1: Let us have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Men, on their side, are alienated, because their wills are rebellious and their aims diverse from God’s purpose concerning them. On God’s side, the relation has been disturbed, and we are by nature the children of wrath, even as others, not a wrath which is unloving, no of a wrath which is impetuous and passionate, not of wrath which seeks the hurt of its objects, of the wrath which is the necessary antagonism and recoil of pure love from such creatures as we have made ourselves to be.

By faith in Christ, and grasping in faith His death, pass from out of the condition of hostility into the condition of reconciliation.

To be justified by faith is a certain process, to have peace with God is the inseparable and simultaneous result of the process itself.

Retain the peace by the exercise of the same faith which at first brought it.

Retain it by union with the same Lord from whom you at first received it.

Let your conduct be such as will not disturb your peace with God.

The smallest sin destroys, for the time being, our sense of forgiveness and our peace with God.
Romans 5:2: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand.

I. The Christian Place

II. The Christian Attitude
   A. A life thus suffused by the love, and enriched by the gifts, and adorned by the loveliness that come from God, will be stable and steadfast
   B. Our attitude which is the result of the possession of grace, we may say that it indicates not only stability and steadfastness, but erectness, and in opposition to crouch or bowing

III. The Christian way of entrance into grace
   A. We sinners can never pass into that central glory, not ever possess those gifts of grace, unless the barrier that stands between us and God, between us and His highest gifts of love, is swept away

Romans 5:2-4: we rejoice in the hope of the glory of Gd. And not only so, but we glory in the tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience, experience, and experience hope.

I. The wonderful designation of the one object of Christian hope which should fill, with an coruscating and unflickering light, all that darkness future

II. The double source of Hope
   A. Justified by faith
   B. Peace with God

IV. The one emotion with which the Christian should front all the facts, inward and outward or his earthly life. The plain lesson of all this is just that we have here, in these texts, a linked chain, on end of which is wrapped around our sinful hearts, and the other is fastened to the Throne of God. You cannot drop any of the links and you must begin at the beginning, if you are to be carried to the end.

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

I. The Spirit given

II. Love shed abroad by the Spirit

III. Hope is established by the love poured out

Romans 5:8: But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
I. What Paul thought Jesus Christ died for
   A. Christ died of His own accord
   B. Voluntary death
II. How does Christ’s death commend God’s love
   A. You have seen me, You have seen the Father
   B. God so love the world that He sent His son
III. What kind of love does Christ’s death declare to us as existing in God
   A. A love that is turned away by no sin
   B. God lays siege to all hearts in that great sacrifice
Romans

Death in Adam, Life in Christ (Romans 5:12-21)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

✓ Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17)
✓ Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20)
✓ Saving Righteousness (3:21-4:25)
7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December)
8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up)

Today’s text (Romans 5:12-21) is the second part of this major section.

Before we listen to today’s text, let’s watch a quick video to be reminded of God’s larger storytelling methods. Video: This is about that.
Read: Death in Adam, Life in Christ (5:12-21)

12 Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—13 for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. 14 Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.

15 But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man’s trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. 16 And the free gift is not like the result of that one man’s sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. 17 For if, because of one man’s trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.

18 Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. 19 For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous. 20 Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, 21 so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Explain: Death in Adam, Life in Christ (5:12-21)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

There are lot of references to Genesis 3 and the Fall. And, there are lots of references to Exodus 20 and the giving of the Law. This is about that. Also, notice how Paul assumes his readers have a working knowledge of the Old Testament. We must know the Old Testament so we can understand the New Testament.

What do the words mean?

12 Therefore, just as [just as, exactly like, as] sin [offense, sin] came into [second aorist active indicative; entered, came into, entered in to] the world [kosmos; orderly arrangement, decoration, world; same word as used in Romans 4:13] through [dia] one man, and death through [dia] sin, and so death spread [second aorist active indicative; traversed, came, departed, passed, pierced through, traveled, walked through] to all men because all sinned [second aorist active indicative; missed the mark and not share
in the prize, erred, sinned, offended, trespassed; same word used in Romans 2:12 (twice); 3:23—13 for sin indeed was [imperfect (action continually or repeatedly happening in past time) middle indicative] in the world [kosmos] before [until, up to, till] the law [nomos] was given, but sin is not counted [reckoned in, attributed, imputed, put on account; note: this is not logizomai] where there is [present middle participle] no law [nomos]. 14 Yet death reigned [aorist active indicative; ruled] from Adam [Genesis 3] to Moses [Exodus 20], even over those whose sinning was [aorist active participle; missed the mark and not share in the prize, erred, sinned, offended, trespassed; same word used in Romans 2:12 (twice); 3:23; 5:12] not like [form, resemblance, likeness, shape, similitude; same word used in Romans 1:23] the transgression [violation, breaking, transgression] of Adam, who was [present middle indicative] a type [die, stamp, scar, shape, statue, style, resemblance, sampler, model, instance] of the one who was to come [present active participle; intend, be about; same word used in Romans 4:24].

15 But the free gift [gratuity, deliverance, endowment, qualification; same word used in Romans 1:11] is not like the trespass [side slip, error, transgression, fall, fault, offense, sin, trespass; same word used in Romans 4:25]. For if many died [second aorist active indicative; died off, is dead, died, lies a-dying, is slain; same word used in Romans 5:6, 7, 8] through one man’s trespass [side slip, error, transgression, fall, fault, offense, sin, trespass; same word used in Romans 4:25; earlier in 5:15], much more have the grace [charis] of God and the free gift [gratuity] by the grace [charis] of that one man Jesus Christ abounded [aorist active indicative; superabounded, be in excess, be superfluous, to cause to superabound; example: an overflowing cup] for many. 16 And the free gift [bestowment, gift] is not like the result of that one man’s sin [aorist active participle; missed the mark and not share in the prize, erred, sinned, offended, trespassed; same word used in Romans 2:12 (twice); 3:23; 5:12, 14]. For the judgment [avenge, condemned, condemnation, damnation, go to law, judgment; same word used in Romans 2:2, 3; 3:8] following one trespass brought condemnation [adverse sentence, condemnation], but the free gift [gratuity, deliverance, endowment, qualification; same word as used in Romans 1:11; 5:15] following many trespasses [side slips, errors, transgressions, falls, faults, offenses, sins, trespasses; same word used in Romans 4:25; 5:15 (twice)] brought justification [equitable deeds, statutes, decisions, judgments, justifications, ordinances, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:32; 2:26]. 17 For if, because of one man’s trespass [side slip, error, transgression, fall, fault, offense, sin, trespass; same word used in Romans 4:25; 5:15 (twice), 16], death reigned [aorist active indicative; ruled; same word used in Romans 5:14] through that one man, much more will those who receive [present active participle; take, get hold, seized] the abundance [surplusage, superabundance, abundance, superfluous] of grace [charis] and the free gift [gratuity, gift] of righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in
Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 11 (twice), 13, 22] reign [future active indicative; ruled; same word used in Romans 5:14, earlier in 5:17] in life through the one man Jesus Christ.

18 Therefore [by inference, drawing a conclusion], as one trespass [side slip, error, transgression, fall, fault, offense, sin, trespass; same word used in Romans 4:25; 5:15 (twice), 16 (twice), 17] led to condemnation [adverse sentence, condemnation; same word used in Romans 5:16] for all men, so one act of righteousness [equitable deeds, statutes, decisions, justifications, ordinances, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:32; 2:26; 5:16] leads to justification [acquittal, justification; same word used in Romans 4:25] and life for all men. 19 For as by the one man’s disobedience [inattention, disobedience] the many were made [aorist passive (per Robertson) indicative; placed down permanently, designated, constituted, convoyed] sinners [sinful, sinners], so by the one man’s obedience [attentive hearing, compliance, submission, obedience; same word used in Romans 1:5] the many will be made [future middle indicative; placed down permanently, designated, constituted, convoyed] righteous [equitable, innocent, holy, just, righteous; same word used in Romans 1:17; 2:13; 3:10, 26; 5:7]. 20 Now the law [nomos] came in [second aorist active indicative; came in alongside, supervened additionally, stealthily, came in privily] to increase [aorist active subjunctive (probability or possibility); do, make, be more, increase, superabound] the trespass [side slip, error, transgression, fall, fault, offense, sin, trespass; same word used in Romans 4:25; 5:15 (twice), 16 (twice), 17, 18], but where sin increased [aorist active indicative; do, make, be more, increase, superabound], grace abounded all the more [aorist active indicative; superabound, abound much more, exceeding; this is the strongest of all of Paul’s words in this passage for abounding (superfluous squared)], 21 so that, as sin reigned [aorist active indicative; ruled; same word used in Romans 5:14, 17 (twice)] in death, grace [charis] also might reign [aorist active subjunctive (probability or possibility); ruled; same word used in Romans 5:14, 17 (twice), earlier in 5:21] through righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 11 (twice), 13, 22; 5:17] leading to eternal [perpetual, eternal, for ever, everlasting; same word as used in Romans 2:7] life through [dia] Jesus Christ our Lord.

Are there any repeated words?

Sin, death, one, trespass, free gift, reign, Jesus Christ, law, ruled

What are some observations of the text?

12 Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned [This is referred to as the federal headship of Adam. Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: Christ is the head of all
belivers as Adam is the head of the race.]— 13 for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. 14 Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.

15 But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man’s trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. 16 And the free gift is not like the result of that one man’s sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification [Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: The gift surpasses the sin.]. 17 For if, because of one man’s trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.

18 Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. 19 For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous. 20 Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more [Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: The flood of grace surpassed the flood of sin, great as that was (and is).], 21 so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. [Mounce: Only by understanding the depths of human degradation can we hope to grasp, even in part, the surpassing wonder of divine forgiveness. Chris Arnold: God’s love for us is apparent in His planning, in His attention to details. I don’t want this to seem heretical, but I can’t help but think that He planned our need for Christ because He wanted to show us His (as Paul put it) Superabundant Love.]

Apply (What is the point?)
1. **This** is about that (God does things with purpose and order)
2. Adam gets us in
3. Jesus gets us out

Personalize (What do we do with that?)
1. Don’t mess with ‘this’ or ‘that’ (don’t mess with the text)
2. Understand the first Adam
3. Follow the second Adam

Next week: Dead to Sin, Alive to God (6:1-14)
1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? 3 Do you not know that all of us who
have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. 6 We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. 7 For one who has died has been set free from sin. 8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. 9 We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. 10 For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. 11 So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. 13 Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. 14 For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Chris Arnold (Barclay)

This is a tricky section to read and to think about. Paul does not have a good track record of being succinct. Indeed, he hares off down verbal side-trails faster than one can conveniently keep up with. I wonder if he did it purposefully—to cause folks to pay attention and think, or if he did it unconsciously, out of brilliance. I strongly suspect a touch of both.

But Anyway
Barclay points out that the cultural mindset is strong in the Jewish community in that they see themselves as more of a collective, than a group of individuals. Therefore, this argument by Paul, that Adam’s sin created a splash effect by which all were covered with the stain of sin, would impact the Jews pretty much like a smack in the face. You can take the cultural argument, or the domino argument, but the end result is the same: Sin entered the world through Adam. (Funny that Eve was not mentioned—at all. More fuel for the fire that Adam was representative of all mankind, maybe?) And since the consequences of sin are death, and sin covers all men through the actions of the first man, then the argument that all men/mankind are fated to die as well seems academic.

Barclay, indeed points out that Paul said it again, and better in his first letter to the Corinthians. If we were to put the thought of this passage into one sentence, which, indeed, was the sentence which Paul set out to write at the very beginning, and which got sidetracked, it would be this: “By the sin of Adam all men became sinners and were alienated from God; by the righteousness of Jesus Christ all men became righteous and are restored to a right relationship with God.” Paul, in fact, said this very much more clearly in 1 Corinthians 15:21: As by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

But then Paul, in another bout of grammatical gymnastics, reminds us that death already existed in the world, and sin existed in the world PRIOR to the coming of the LAW, but was not debited to us because the LAW had not defined the sin.

At this point my brain screams “YES!...huh?”

So, Paul is telling us that death and sin were built in to the world? From the get-go?

It sure seems that way from my reading. But why? This would seem to be an argument that agnostics and atheists would latch onto and use as an argument of the capriciousness of God. Indeed, the doubter latch on to the idea of narcissism, capriciousness, and cruelty on the part of God . . . or even the fallibility of God. Let’s not forget that Paul’s letter to the Romans details that sin and death were already built into the world, but Adam’s disobedience essentially gave substance to the sin. And like a good, and just Father, God, cannot just turn a blind eye and allow for sliders. Once the sin is “made flesh,” , the law—which defines the punishment for the sin—must be applied to ALL. A law that is not for everyone is not a law, but a loophole.

Except for what follows:
But the gift of free grace was not like the trespass. For if the many died in consequence of the sin of the one, much more the grace of God and his free gift in the grace of the one man Jesus Christ abounded to many.

What’s that? That is the sound of a door opening in my brain. The Bible is rife with examples of the thoroughly planned abundance of God. He NEVER creates a situation of trial but that there is also a way of redemption. (Something that agnostics and atheists do not credit.) Paul describes that Just as one man opened, through disobedience, the floodgates to let the sin of the world loose, one man, Jesus, was a living example of loving obedience and conquered that sin through righteous redemption, restoring our relationship with the Father, and granting, freely, the gift of eternal life, which is, indeed, the antithesis of death! This is a gift that is not incurred by us, as sin, but is imparted to us, freely given, as a life preserver is thrown to a drowning man.

And my brain screams, “that seems like the hard way of doing things.”

If God, omnipotent, omnipresent, all-knowing, was aware that we would be so ham-handed and sin-minded, why would he even bother?

The Bible, for all the fighting, scary bits, and head-scratching, heart-wrenching moments illuminated therein, is the most beautiful, and subtle of love letters to an increasingly proud and uncaring people. God’s love for us is apparent in His planning, in His attention to details. I don’t want this to seem heretical, but I can’t help but think that He planned our need for Christ because He wanted to show us His (as Paul put it) Superabundant Love. [I realize that that sentence actually would certain capricious arrogance, but that is totally unintentional. The true intent of my words is that God planned for our need for Christ more than he set us up for failure. If that makes sense.] At the very least, He’s planned FOR our need for Christ. God is always prepared.

The problem is not with God. The problem is with me. My sin, which continues to pull me away from God, and my heart’s desire to cling to the things of God, are forever at war. And my mind cannot comprehend the things of God. So, it seems that here, we have an instance of a brilliant man of God, Paul, teaching the village idiot (me) things that I cannot ever hope to understand. So, I have to take it on faith . . . by which I am saved, by the Grace of God . . . who’s got this.

Darla Skinner (Mounce)

Law increased sin. That is the sad story of humanity estranged from God. . . . Only by understanding the depths of human degradation can we hope to grasp, even in part, the surpassing wonder of divine forgiveness. (p. 145)
Jessica Norris (Kroll)

Kroll identifies several contrasts between Adam and Jesus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adam</th>
<th>Christ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Condemnation</td>
<td>Justification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disobedience</td>
<td>Obedience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>Grace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sin</td>
<td>Righteousness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death</td>
<td>Life</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kroll continued:

1) One offense by one man made all the world guilty of sin.

2) The resultant guilt of Adam’s original sin is imputed to each of us.

3) Adam acted as our official representative when he cast his vote against God.

The command not eat from the tree was given only to Adam. It wasn’t Eve’s sin that brought guilt to the world, it was Adam’s sin after hers. Death sneaked into the human race on the back of Adam’s sin. But death was defeated in the human race on the back of Christ’s righteousness. Adam is at the head of the family of man and Jesus is at the head of the family of God. Adam’s sin was charged to our account but, Christ’s righteousness was also charged to our account.

My biggest take away: I have always thought that both Adam and Eve’s sin was equal to the fall of man. Kroll really opened my mind by pointing out that the command not to eat from the tree was given only to Adam because Eve wasn’t around yet. Eve doesn’t get off the hook. She still shouldn’t have done something that she KNEW was forbidden but it brought up the issue of submission for me. Many women view submission as a sign of weakness when it is really the exact opposite. Eve faltered in her submission to her husband by eating from the tree when she knew she wasn’t supposed to and then talked him into doing it as well. While Adam may be the one to have to answer for their sins and ultimately should have been stronger by telling her no, his wife failed him. Being a submissive wife carries much more responsibility than it may appear. It is especially hard when you have a very strong willed wife compared to the husband who can be more passive. I may or may not speak from experience on that one. 😊

Tim & Mila Archer (Maclaren)

Romans 5:21: The Warring Queens
I. So, first, look at the two Queens who rule over human life.

SIN and GRACE are both personified; and they are both conceived of as female figures, and both as exercising dominion. They stand face to face, and each recognizes as her enemy the other. The one has established her dominion: “sin hath reigned.” The other is fighting to establish hers: “That Grace might reign.” And the struggle is going on between them, not only on the wide field of the world; but in the narrow lists of the heart of each of us.

II. Notice the Gifts of these two Queens to their subjects.

A. Sin hath reigned unto Death
B. Grace reigns unto eternal life

III. How this Queenly Grace gives her gifts.

A. Through Righteousness
B. Unto Eternal Life
C. Through Jesus Christ our Lord
Romans

Dead to Sin, Alive to God (Romans 6:1-14)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

1. Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17) (four weeks)
2. Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20) (six weeks)
3. Saving Righteousness (3:21-4:25) (three weeks)
7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 6:1-14) is the third part of this major section.
Read: Dead to Sin, Alive to God (6:1-14)

1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? 3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. 6 We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. 7 For one who has died has been set free from sin. 8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. 9 We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. 10 For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. 11 So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. 13 Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. 14 For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

Explain: Dead to Sin, Alive to God (6:1-14)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

Paul starts this section with four questions—a pattern we’ve seen in him before and one we’ll see plenty of in the future.

Paul also begins to use imperatives (commands) in Romans 6. In Romans 1-5, he only used one imperative (Romans 3:4), but Paul uses five imperatives in Romans 6. He is beginning to sprinkle in some practice into his doctrine: he is adding orthopraxy (behavior) to orthodoxy (belief). We would be wise to remember the orthopraxy—there is a behavioral component to Christianity.

What do the words mean?

1 What shall we say [future active indicative] then? Are we to continue [future active indicative; stay over, remain, abide, continue, tarry] in sin [offense, sin] that grace [charis] may abound [aorist active subjunctive (probability or possibility); do, make,
increase, superabound]? 2 By no means [second aorist, active optative (possibility (more remotely possible than subjunctive)); to become, to come into existence, begin to be, receive being; same phrase used in Romans 3:4, 6, 31; 6:2, 15; 7:7, 13; 9:14; 11:1, 11]! How can we who died [second aorist active indicative; died off, is dead, died, lies a-dying, is slain; same word used in Romans 5:6, 7, 8, 15] to sin [offense, sin] still live [future active indicative] in it [note: the dead don’t inhabit houses]? 3 Do you not know [present active indicative; not to know, ignore, be ignorant, not understand, unknown] that all of us who have been baptized [aorist middle indicative; made fully wet, baptized] into Christ Jesus were baptized [aorist middle indicative; same word used earlier in Romans 6:3] into his death? 4 We were buried [second aorist middle indicative; inter with, assimilate spiritually, bury with] therefore [certainly, accordingly] with him by [dia] baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised [aorist middle indicative; woke, roused, lifted up, raised again, stood, took up; same word used in Romans 4:24, 25] from the dead [nekros; dead] by [dia] the glory [very apparent glory, dignity, glory, honor, praise, worship; same word used in Romans 1:23; 2:7, 10; 3:7, 23; 4:20; 5:2] of the Father, [in this way (omitted in the ESV)] we too might walk [aorist active subjunctive (probability or possibility); tread all around, walk, live, deport oneself, follow] in newness [renewal, newness] of life.

5 For if we have been [second perfect (completed action with the results continuing) active indicative] united [grown with, united, planted together] with him in a death like [form, resemblance; same word used in Romans 1:23; 5:14] his, we shall certainly be [future middle indicative] united with him in a resurrection [standing up, resurrection, recovery] like his. 6 We know [present active participle] that our old [antique, not recent, worn out] self was crucified [aorist middle indicative; impaled with, crucified with] with him [Jesus] in order that the body of sin [offense, sin; in English it appears there’s a wordplay with the dual definition of the word body, but it’s not present in the Greek] might be brought to nothing [aorist middle subjunctive (probability or possibility); to be entirely idle (useless), abolish, cease, cumber, destroy, do away, become of no effect, fail, loose, bring to naught, put away, vanish away, make void; same word used in Romans 3:3, 31; 4:14], so that we would no longer [no further] be enslaved [present active infinitive; be a slave, be in bondage, do service] to sin [offense, sin]. 7 For one who has died [second aorist active participle; has died off, is dead, died, lies a-dying, is slain; same word used in Romans 5:6, 7, 8, 15; 6:2] has been set free [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) middle indicative; rendered just, rendered innocent, freed, justified; typically translated justified in Romans (as in 2:13; 3:4, 20, 24, 26, 28, 30; 4:2, 5; 5:1, 9)] from sin [offense, sin]. 8 Now if we have died [second aorist active indicative; has died off, is dead, died, lies a-dying, is slain; same word used in Romans 5:6, 7, 8, 15; 6:2, 7] with Christ, we believe [present active indicative; have faith in, credit, entrust, believe, commit to, put in trust with] that
we will also live [future active indicative; live in common with, \textit{co-survive} with him. 9
We know [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) active participle; see, know] that Christ, being raised [aorist middle participle; woke, roused, lifted up, raised again, stood, took up; same word used in Romans 4:24, 25; 6:4] from the dead, will never die [present active indicative; has died off, is dead, died, lies a-dying, is slain; same word used in Romans 5:6, 7, 8, 15; 6:2, 7, 8] again [not yet, no longer]; death no longer [not yet, no longer] has dominion over [present active indicative; rule, have dominion over, lord, be lord of, exercise lordship over] him. 10 For the death he died [second aorist active indicative; has died off, is dead, died, lies a-dying, is slain; same word used in Romans 5:6, 7, 8, 15; 6:2, 7, 8, 9] he died [second aorist active indicative; has died off, is dead, died, lies a-dying, is slain; same word used in Romans 5:6, 7, 8, 15; 6:2, 7, 8, 9, earlier in 10] to sin [offense, sin], once for all [upon one occasion only; once for all], but the life he lives [present active indicative] he lives [present active indicative] to God. 11 So [in this way] you also must consider [present middle imperative; logizomai; taken inventory, estimated, concluded, esteemed, imputed, numbered, reasoned, reckoned; same word used in Romans 2:3, 26; 3:28; 4:3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 22, 23, 24; 6:11] yourselves dead [present middle infinitive; nekros] [truly, certainly, surely, indeed (omitted in the ESV)] to sin [offense, sin] and alive [present active participle] to God in Christ Jesus.

12 Let not sin [offense, sin] therefore reign [present active imperative; ruled; same word used in Romans 5:14, 17 (twice), 5:21 (twice)] in your mortal [liable to die, mortal] body, to make you obey [present active infinitive; hear under, listen attentively, heed, conform] its passions [longings, desires, lusts]. 13 Do not present [present active imperative; stand beside, exhibit, proffer, recommend, substantiate, be at hand, aid] your members [limbs, parts of the body] to sin [offense, sin] as instruments [implement, utensil, tool (in the sense of offensive war) for unrighteousness [legal injustice, moral wrongfulness, iniquity, unrighteousness, wrong; same word used in Romans 1:18, 29; 2:8; 3:5], but present [aorist active imperative; stand beside, exhibit, proffer, recommend, substantiate, be at hand, aid; same word used earlier in Romans 6:13] yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life [present active participle], and your members [limbs, parts of the body] in Romans 6:13] to God as instruments [implement, utensil, tool (in the sense of offensive war); same word used earlier in Romans 6:13] for righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 11 (twice), 13, 22; 5:17, 21]. 14 For sin [offense, sin] will have no dominion [future active indicative; rule, have dominion over, lord, be lord of, exercise lordship over; same word as used in Romans 6:9] over you, since you are [present middle indicative] not under law [nomos] but under grace [charis].
Are there any repeated words?
We, sin, Christ, God, baptized, death, life/live, grace, members, instruments, righteousness, present

Are there any repeated topics?
Sin vs law; sin vs. grace; death vs life; death vs resurrection

What are some observations of the text?
1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 By no means! [Paul uses this phrase many times in Romans to get his readers to pay attention. A good teacher will ask a question he or she knows to be wrong to ensure the listeners are engaged.] How can we who died to sin still live in it? [The answer is no time at all.]
3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death [Paul is giving us a primer on baptism—it’s about Jesus’ death], in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life [And then Paul finishes up the primer—it’s also about Jesus’ resurrection]. [Hughes: Being under grace does not mean we have free reign to sin. Since we are under grace we are a changed people and our lives should reflect Christ. Now is a good time to ask a few questions: Who do I reflect: Christ or sin?]

5 For if we have been united with him [Hughes: Picture a branch bound to another branch—grafted in, if you will (a concept Paul will explore later in Romans 11)] in a death like his [We are united with Christ in death], we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his [We are united with Christ in resurrection.]. 6 We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. 7 For one who has died has been set free from sin [Death breaks bondage to sin—either my personal death, or Christ’s death for me (and I choose Christ’s death)]. 8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. 9 We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him [This is one of the (many) ways in which Jesus is better—death no longer has dominion over Him!]. 10 For the death he died he died to sin, once for all [Contrasting this is the Old Testament sacrificial system of repeated death of sacrifices], but the life he lives he lives to God. 11 So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. 12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body [This is a command to us right now—we are not to allow sin to rule in our fleshly bodies—we serve a better Master], to make you obey its passions [Sin wants what it wants. Sin is speaking to us. Contrast sin with Christ—Who wants what the Father wants. Christ is speaking to us as well.]. 13 Do not
present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness [God desires to use our earthly bodies—broken and bruised as they are—for His glory]. 14 For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace [So let’s live like it. Let’s wallow around in grace and not mope around in the Law. Bob Goff: Grace means we don’t need to airbrush our lives to make them look perfect when they’re not.].

Apply (What is the point?)
1. Christians are dead to sin (contrast with unbelievers who are alive to sin)
2. Christians are alive to God (contrast with unbelievers who are dead to God)
3. Death and life aren’t rocket science

Personalize (What do we do with that?)
1. Live like it (live in grace, live in love, live in freedom)
2. Live like it (praise Him, worship Him, serve Him, obey Him)
3. Examine ourselves

Next week: Slaves to Righteousness (6:15-23)
15 What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! 16 Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? 17 But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, 18 and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. 19 I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.

20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. 21 But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. 22 But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Homework
Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

Let us continue to consider ourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

I am so glad that sin does not have dominion over me. We are identified with Christ.

Being under grace does not mean we have free reign to sin. Since we are under grace we are a changed people and our lives should reflect Christ.

v. 5: united – grown together – “picture a branch bound to another branch.” A beautiful picture of our relationship with Christ.

Know is mentioned three times in verses 3-10, Paul wants us to know or understand our union with Christ.

How are we to live lives of Victory? First by understanding the nature of our identification with Christ. Second, by accepting our identification with Christ as true. Third by yielding to the Christ with whom we are so wonderfully identified.

Darla Skinner (Mounce)

Any justification that does not lead to sanctification is a sham. Any sanctification not founded upon justification is an exercise in legalistic futility and does not deserve the name.

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

Justification deals with the penalty for sin. Sanctification deals with the power of sin. Justification deals with the unsaved sinner. Sanctification deals with the saved sinner. Sanctification is a progressive act of God. The end result of justification is salvation. The end result for sanctification is holiness. We are dead to sin. To die to sin means that we are dead to the guilt of sin. Sin can no longer make any legal claim on believers because we are viewed by God as if we ourselves died at Calvary. Three principles of
living a holy and sanctified life: 1) Need to know. 2) Consider yourself dead. 3) Present yourself to God.
Romans

Slaves to Righteousness (Romans 6:15-23)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

1. Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17) (four weeks)
2. Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20) (six weeks)
3. Saving Righteousness (3:21-4:25) (three weeks)
7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 6:15-23) is the fourth part of this major section.
Read: Slaves to Righteousness (6:15-23)

15 What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! 16 Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? 17 But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, 18 and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. 19 I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.

20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. 21 But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. 22 But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Explain: Slaves to Righteousness (6:15-23)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

Paul brings a lot of hard truth in these verses and had been reminding me in the life of a Christian there is no middle ground. Jim said last week on the podcast that Paul starts to use the imperative mood in Romans 6, he only uses one in the verses we looked at last week. However, Paul uses the indicative or statements of fact 16 times in Romans 6:15-23 alone. Like I said, a lot of truth!

What do the words mean and what are some observations of the text?

15 What then? Are we to sin [aorist active subjunctive (probability or possibility); missed the mark and not share in the prize, erred, sinned, offended, trespassed; same word used in Romans 2:12 (twice); 3:23; 5:12, 14, 16] because we are [present middle indicative—fact] not under law [nomos] but under grace [charis]? By no means [second aorist active optative (possibility (more remotely possible than subjunctive)); to become, to come into existence, begin to be, receive being; same phrase used in Romans 3:4, 6, 31; 6:2, 15; 7:7, 13; 9:14; 11:1, 11]! 16 Do you not know [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) active indicative; see, know] that if you present [present active indicative; stand beside, exhibit, proffer, recommend,
substantiate, be at hand, aid; same word used in Romans 6:13 (twice)] yourselves to anyone as obedient [attentive hearkening, compliance, submission, obedience; same word used in Romans 1:5; 5:19] slaves [doulos; slave, bondservant; same word used in Romans 1:1], you are [present middle indicative] slaves of the one whom you obey [present active indicative; hear under, listen attentively, heed, conform; same word used in Romans 6:12], either of sin [offense, sin], which leads to death, or of obedience [attentive hearkening, compliance, submission, obedience; same word used in Romans 1:5; 5:19], which leads to righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 11 (twice), 13, 22; 5:17, 21; 6:13]? [Paul was not using the concept of slavery lightly here, he used it because he knew that this would be something that the Romans would be familiar with. He wanted a clear picture for them, so he tells them they are either slaves to sin or to obedience. The question is not, “Are we slaves?” but, “To whom are we enslaved?” We are all slaves.] 17 But thanks [charis; graciousness, acceptable, benefit, favor, gift, gracious, grace, joy, liberality, pleasure, thanks, thankworthy; same word used multiple times in Romans] be to God, that you were [imperfect (action continually or repeatedly happening in past time) middle indicative] once slaves [doulos; slave, bondservant; same word used in Romans 1:1; 6:16] of sin [offense, sin] have become obedient [aorist active indicative; hear under, listen attentively, heed, conform; same word used in Romans 6:12, 16] from the heart to the standard [die, stamp, scar, shape, statue, style, resemblance, sampler, model, instance; same word used in Romans 5:14] of teaching [instruction, doctrine] to which you were committed [aorist middle indicative; surrendered, yielded up, entrusted, transmitted, betrayed, brought forth, cast, committed, delivered, gave over, gave up, hazarded, put in prison, recommended; same word used in Romans 1:24, 26, 28; 4:25]; I grew up in the Methodist Church and most Sundays we would say our call to worship. The preacher would say, “Let us give thanks to the Lord, Our God,” and the congregation would answer, “It is right to give Him our thanks and praise.” Paul goes on to say they have become obedient from the heart . . . the heart is our core. We must serve Him from our very core with all that we are.] 18 and, having been set free [aorist middle participle; liberated, exempted, delivered, made free] from sin [offense, sin], have become slaves [aorist middle indicative; not doulos, but doulos is the root word for this word; enslaved] of righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 11 (twice), 13, 22; 5:17, 21; 6:13, 16; In this time, slaves could be released from their masters, but at a cost. Usually this cost was paid to their master. In the case of slaves to Christ, our master paid the ultimate cost for our freedom.]. 19 I am speaking [lego; present active indicative] in human terms [human, common to man], because [dia] of your natural [flesh, meat, body, human nature] limitations [feebleness, malady, frailty, disease, infirmity, sickness, weakness]. For just as you once presented [aorist active
indicative; stand beside, exhibit, proffer, recommend, substantiate, be at hand, aid; same word used in Romans 6:13 (twice), 16 your members [limbs, parts of the body; same word used in Romans 6:13 (twice)] as slaves [doulos; slave, bondservant; same word used in Romans 1:1; 6:16, 17] to impurity [impurity, uncleanness] and to lawlessness [illegality, violation of the law, wickedness, iniquity, transgression, unrighteousness; same word used in Romans 4:7] leading to more lawlessness [illegality, violation of the law, wickedness, iniquity, transgression, unrighteousness; same word used in Romans 4:7 and earlier in Romans 6:19], so now present [aorist active imperative; stand beside, exhibit, proffer, recommend, substantiate, be at hand, aid; same word used in Romans 6:13 (twice), 16, earlier in 19] your members [limbs, parts of the body; same word used in Romans 6:13 (twice), earlier in 19] as slaves [doulos; slave, bondservant; same word used in Romans 1:1; 6:16, 17, earlier in 19] to righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 11 (twice), 13, 22; 5:17, 21; 6:13, 16, 18, 19] leading to sanctification [purification, purity, purifier, holiness, sanctification]. [Mounce: Freedom is not a question of whether or not we would like to serve but the choice of which master we will serve. There is no middle ground. Matthew 6:24 says “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate one and love the other or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.” No two masters, there is no middle ground. We have to pick where our service goes, where our obedience goes, where our heart goes. In the commentary I am reading for Romans, Hughes said, “Our past slavery only brought shame and death. But our enslavement to God brings not only freedom from sin but sanctification and eternal life.” Paul uses the imperative here, making it a command to present our members, to present ourselves fully and completely as slaves to righteousness that leads to sanctification.]

20 For when you were [imperfect (action continually or repeatedly happening in past time) middle indicative] slaves [doulos; slave, bondservant; same word used in Romans 1:1; 6:16, 17, 19 (twice)] of sin [offense, sin], you were [imperfect (action continually or repeatedly happening in past time) middle indicative] free [unrestrained to go at pleasure, not a slave, exempt from obligation or liability, free, at liberty] in regard to righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 11 (twice), 13, 22; 5:17, 21; 6:13, 16, 18, 19]. 21 But what fruit were you getting [imperfect (action continually or repeatedly happening in past time) active indicative; holding, possessing] at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed [present middle indicative; feel shame for something, be ashamed]? For the end [limit, conclusion, result, impost, levy, custom, ending, finally, uttermost] of those things is death [In the movie The Princess Bride (and no, I did not get this reference from Jim) Fezzik and Inigo take Westley to Miracle Max. Miracle Max says that Westley is only, “Mostly dead.” Miracle Max says, “There’s a big difference
between mostly dead and all dead. Mostly dead is slightly alive.” He was saying there is still hope! And we being slaves to sin, were mostly dead but . . . we have a hope! Jesus! Jesus will always be our hope. He freed us from sin, from being mostly dead, and we now serve Him.]. 22 But now that you have been set free [aorist middle participle; liberated, exempted, delivered, made free; same word used in Romans 6:18] from sin [offense, sin] and have become slaves [aorist middle participle; not doulos, but doulos is the root word for this word; enslaved; same word used in Romans 6:18] of God, the fruit you get [present active indicative; hold, possess] leads to sanctification [purification, purity, purifier, holiness, sanctification; same word used in Romans 6:19] and its end [limit, conclusion, result, impost, levy, custom, ending, finally, uttermost; same word used in Romans 6:21], eternal [perpetual, eternal, for ever, everlasting] life [Even if we are covered in grace, going back to Romans 6:1 and 15. Even though we are covered and our debt is paid this does not give us free reign to sin. We should not choose the path to sin. In fact, we shouldn’t even choose to visit the path to sin. We cannot live in something we are dead to.]. 23 For the wages [rations for a soldier, stipend, pay, wages] of sin [offense, sin] is death, but the free gift [gratuity, deliverance, endowment, qualification; same word as used in Romans 1:11; 5:15, 16] of God is eternal [perpetual, eternal, for ever, everlasting; same word as used in Romans 2:7; 5:21; 6:22] life in Christ Jesus our Lord [odd, but there’s no verb in Romans 6:23].

For this verse, I have always focused on the fact that we are all guaranteed either eternal life or death. However, after living with Paul for a week or two, I started focusing more on the wages and the gift. Wages are earned, something that we are due, but a gift is something we are freely given. Two paths and we must choose. There is no middle ground. Both paths have hills, valleys, and rough places that are hard to cross. At the end of one path there is death; at the end of the other is righteousness. No matter how dirty, messy, or broken we are, at the end of the path leading to righteousness, the Savior, our Master, will look at us and say this one is Mine! (Because we are no longer sin’s, but Christ’s.)

Let’s go back and look at the 16 times Paul uses the indicative mood, or statements of truth or facts.

1. We are not under the law but under grace (6:15)
2. We know this (this information should not be a surprise; it might be a heart prick, but it shouldn’t be a surprise) (6:16)
3. We are slaves to who we present ourselves to (6:16)
4. We are, right now and going forward (6:16)
5. We are slaves of the one we obey (6:16)
6. We were slaves of sin (6:17)
7. We are now obedient from the heart (6:17)
8. We are now committed to the teachings (6:17)
9. We are slaves of righteousness (6:18)
10. Paul brings this message to them on their level, there should be no excuse
11. We once presented ourselves to impurity leading to lawlessness (6:19)
12. We were slaves of sin (6:20)
13. We were free from righteousness (6:20)
14. We still presented fruit when slaves to sin (6:21)
15. We were ashamed of that fruit (6:21)
16. The fruit we get when slaves to God, leads to sanctification (6:22)

Two paths, one leads to death and the other to righteousness. We were slaves of sin, we yielded fruit that we are not ashamed of. We presented ourselves to impurity, leading to lawlessness. We then became obedient in our hearts. We committed to the teachings and the fruit we get leads to righteousness. We are slaves to Christ. There is no middle ground and we shouldn’t even want to revisit the other path.

Apply (What is the point?)
1. There is no middle ground
2. See number 1
3. See number 2

Personalize (What do we do with that?)
1. Choose our path
2. Don’t visit
3. Serve Christ

Next week: Released from the Law (7:1-6)

1 Or do you not know, brothers—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives? 2 For a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives, but if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage. 3 Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress.

4 Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God. 5 For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. 6 But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

Amy Valovcin stuartheights.org/sundayschool
• Holy Spirit
• Bible: Romans (ESV)
• Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS
• Tools: bit.ly/romans2017

Our process

• Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
• Read (Romans)
• Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
• Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Darla Skinner (Mounce)

We have become slaves of God. And is there benefit in this? Most certainly! The reward for serving God is growth in holiness and, in the end, eternal life.

The word for “holiness” is agiasmos. Barclay reminds us that “all Greek nouns which end in –asmos describe, not a completed state, but a process. Sanctification is the road to holiness” (Romans, 91). A.M. Hunter writes that eternal life is “life with the tang of eternity about it” (The Epistle to the Romans, TBC [London: SCM, 1955], 68).

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

If we start to obey sin even a little we are opening the door for the mastery of sin in our lives. No one can serve two masters (Matthew 6:24). Christians today are accustomed to picking and choosing which doctrines, which portions, of the Bible, which commands of God’s Word they like, and then they only obey only those they feel are most meaning full or beneficial to them. Mature Christians do not pick and choose from God’s Word; mature Christians are shaped by every page of the Bible, which is why they are mature. Paul uses the word slave because he knew that as many as 1/3 of the inhabitants in the capital city of the empire were slaves. He knew they would be able to identify with the term. Slavery to Christ is real freedom. The wages of sin is death, because the paymaster is Satan, the disciple of death.
Romans

Released from the Law (Romans 7:1-6)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

- Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17) (four weeks)
- Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20) (six weeks)
- Saving Righteousness (3:21-4:25) (three weeks)
- Righteous Freedom (5:1-8:39) (post-Easter to July 4) (11 weeks)
- Righteousness → Jews (9:1-11:36) (post July 4 to Labor Day) (eight weeks)
- Righteous Living (12:1-15:13) (post Labor Day to October) (nine weeks)
- Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
- Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 7:1-6) is the fifth part of this major section.
Read: Released from the Law (7:1-6)

1 Or do you not know, brothers—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives? 2 For a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives, but if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage. 3 Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress.

4 Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God. 5 For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. 6 But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.

Explain: Released from the Law (7:1-6)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

This is a short text (compared to some of the other sections), but it starts with “or,” so this is a good reminder to (continually) keep the larger argument/document in mind.

What do the words mean?

1 Or do you not know [present active indicative; not to know, ignore, be ignorant, not understand, unknown; same word used in Romans 1:13; 2:4; 6:3], brothers—for I am speaking [present active indicative] to those who know [present active participle] the law [nomos]—that the law [nomos] is binding on [present active indicative; rule, have dominion over, lord, be lord of, exercise lordship over; same word as used in Romans 6:9, 14] a person only as long as [chronos; fixed or special occasion, interval, opportunity, delay] he lives [present active indicative]? 2 For a married woman [in subjection under a man, married woman] is bound [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) middle indicative; bound, in bonds, knit, tied] by law [nomos] to her husband while he lives [present active participle], but if her husband dies [present active participle; has died off, is dead, died, lies a-dying, is slain; same word used in Romans 5:6, 7, 8, 15; 6:2, 7, 8, 9, 10 (twice)] she is released [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) middle indicative; to be entirely idle (useless), abolish, cease, cumber, destroy, do away, become of no effect, fail, loose, bring to naught, put away, vanish away, make void; same word used in Romans 3:3, 31; 4:14; 6:6] from the law [nomos] of marriage. 3 Accordingly [by inference, drawing a conclusion; same word
used in Romans 5:18, she will be called [future active indicative; utter an oracle, intimate, bear as a title, be called, be admonished, reveal, speak] an adulteress if she lives [second aorist active subjunctive; becomes, comes into existence, begins to be, comes to pass, comes upon the stage, finishes (used in an extremely wide range of uses—as already used in Romans 1:3; 2:25; 3:4 (three times), 6, 19, 31, 4:18, 6:2, 5, 15—and none of those in the sense of marriage] with another [other, different, strange] man while her husband is alive [present active participle]. But if her husband dies [second aorist active subjunctive; has died off, is dead, died, lies a-dying, is slain; same word used in Romans 5:6, 7, 8, 15; 6:2, 7, 8, 9, 10 (twice), 7:2], she is free [present middle indicative; unrestrained to go at pleasure, not a slave, exempt from obligation or liability, free, at liberty; same word used in Romans 6:20] from that law [nomos], and if she marries [second aorist active participle; becomes, comes into existence, begins to be, comes to pass, comes upon the stage, finishes; same word used earlier in this verse] another [other, different, strange] man she is [present middle infinitive] not an adulteress.

4 Likewise [so too, thus therefore, as, so that], my brothers, you also have died [aorist middle indicative; become dead, put to death, killed, mortified] to the law [nomos] through [dia] the body of Christ, so that you may belong [second aorist active infinitive; becomes, comes into existence, begins to be, comes to pass, comes upon the stage, finishes; same word used twice in Romans 7:3] to another [other, different, strange], to him who has been raised [aorist middle participle; woke, roused, lifted up, raised again, stood, took up; same word used in Romans 4:24, 25; 6:4, 9] from the dead [nekros], in order that we may bear fruit [aorist active subjunctive (probability or possibility); be fertile, bear fruit, bring forth fruit, be fruitful] for God. 5 For while we were living [imperfect (action continually or repeatedly happening in past time) middle indicative] in the flesh, our sinful passions [hardships, pains, emotions, influences, affections, afflictions, motions, sufferings], aroused by [dia] the law [nomos], were at work [imperfect (action continually or repeatedly happening in past time) middle indicative; active, efficient, effectual, mighty, shewed forth, worked] in our members [limbs, members] to bear fruit [aorist active infinitive; be fertile, bear fruit, bring forth fruit, be fruitful; same word used in Romans 7:4] for death. 6 But now [just now, now] we are released [aorist middle indicative; to be entirely idle (useless), abolish, cease, cumber, destroy, do away, become of no effect, fail, lose, bring to naught, put away, vanish away, make void; same word used in Romans 3:3, 31; 4:14; 6:6; 7:2] from the law [nomos], having died [second aorist active participle; has died off, is dead, died, lies a-dying, is slain; same word used in Romans 5:6, 7, 8, 15; 6:2, 7, 8, 9, 10 (twice), 7:2, 3] to that which held us captive [imperfect (action continually or repeatedly happening in past time) middle indicative; to hold down, have, hold fast, possess, retain, seize on, stay, take, withhold; same word used in Romans 1:18], so that we serve
[present active infinitive; be a slave, be in bondage, do service; same word used in Romans 6:6] in the new way [renewal, newness] of the Spirit and not in the old way [antiquatedness, oldness] of the written code [writing, letter, note, epistle, book, learning, scripture; same word used in Romans 2:27, 29].

Are there any repeated words?
Law, brothers, married (even though it’s not really married), adulteress, woman, man, died, another, fruit

Are there any repeated topics?
Marriage, adultery, death, life

What are some observations of the text?
1 Or do you not know, brothers—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives? 2 For [Paul is giving an example: this is not intended to be the end-all-be-all on the nature of marriage] a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives, but if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage. 3 Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress.

4 Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ [Are Christians under obligation to keep the Old Testament Law? No], so that you may belong to another [a better Master], to him who has been raised from the dead [Jesus], in order that we may bear fruit for God. 5 For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law [the Law stirs up sinful passions because we are aware of them under the Law], were at work in our members to bear fruit for death [the two options for bearing fruit: God or death]. 6 But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code [Julia Gregg: Believers are liberated from the law then and married to Jesus Christ. This "marriage" should then produce good fruit.].

Apply (What is the point?)
1. Barclay: Death cancels all contracts
2. Evidence and examples support the main idea (but they aren’t the main idea)
3. “Christian” means something
4. Jesus releases Christians from the Law
Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. Serve the right Master
2. Focus on the main idea
3. Be Christ-like
4. Serve in the Spirit and be fruitful

Closing thought from Chris Arnold: What an amazing use of the law to underscore the redeeming power of Christ, and how, through Him, we are afforded not only a spiritual clemency, but a brand-new beginning, in the loving arms of a protecting Savior. This is further proof that God, in His, amazing attention to detail, preserves His integrity; not circumventing His own laws, but instead upholding their worthwhile making us free . . . exempt, if you will, from reaping the harvest of our sin by paying our debt.

Next week: The Law and Sin (7:7-25) (1/2)

7 What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.” 8 But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law, sin lies dead. 9 I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died. 10 The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me. 11 For sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. 12 So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

13 Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, producing death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure. 14 For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin. 15 For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. 16 Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. 17 So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. 18 For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. 19 For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. 20 Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.

21 So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. 22 For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, 23 but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. 24 Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body
of death? 25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Chris Arnold (Barclay)

The basic thought of the passage is founded on the legal maxim that death cancels all contracts. Paul begins with an illustration of this truth and wishes to use this picture as a symbol of what happens to the Christian. So long as a woman’s husband is alive, she cannot marry another without becoming an adulteress. But if her husband dies, the contract is, so to speak, cancelled, and she is free to marry anyone she likes.

In view of that, Paul could have said that we were married to sin; that sin was slain by Christ; and that, therefore, we are now free to be married to God. That is undoubtedly what he set out to say. But into this picture came the law. Paul could still have put the thing quite simply. He could have said that we were married to the law; that the law was killed by the work of Christ; and that now we are free to be married to God. But, quite suddenly, he puts it the other way, and, in his suddenly changed picture, it is we who die to the law.

Look—never let it be said that Paul took the easy way out when writing a letter. Paul seems to delight in taking the scenic route with his prose. Understandable since he was speaking to history about the majesty of God and the implications of eternity. So, is Paul saying that we are able, through Christ to ignore the law? I can’t see that he is. Christ has already said that he did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writing of the prophets, but to accomplish their purpose. Matthew 5:7
So, I look at his audience, and think of the arguments he’s JUST MADE concerning the law and how it delineates the fact that we are guilty of sin. Could it be that Paul is saying that if Christ killed the law, then the law would be unnecessary and impotent? That is where I lean. Instead, Paul is saying that we are dead IN CHRIST, and therefore, the law (which details in adequacy and guilt of the living) has lost its hold on us, in that we are a new creation in Christ. I like it when Barclay points out the following: When a man rules his life by union with Christ he rules it not by obedience to a written code of law which may actually awaken the desire to sin but by an allegiance to Jesus Christ within his spirit and his heart. Not law, but love, is the motive of his life; and the inspiration of love can make him able to do what the restraint of law was powerless to help him do.

What an amazing use of the law to underscore the redeeming power of Christ, and how, through Him, we are afforded not only a spiritual clemency, but a brand-new beginning, in the loving arms of a protecting Savior. This is further proof that God, in His, amazing attention to detail, preserves His integrity; not circumventing His own laws, but instead upholding their worthwhile making us free . . . exempt, if you will, from reaping the harvest of our sin by paying our debt.

**Jessica Norris (Kroll)**

Remarriage while the husband is alive is called adultery, remarriage after the husband is dead is called freedom. Three truths are evident from Paul’s thinking about the relation of the believer and the Law: 1) As brothers and sisters in Christ, we did not set out to divorce ourselves from the Law. 2) The reason God engineered the death of the Law to us and our death to it is so we “might be joined to another.” 3) The results of being joined to Christ should bring forth “fruit for God.”

I wonder how many people would think twice before committing adultery if they knew they would be branded as one for all the world to see? I wonder if we took the “marriage” vows to Jesus as a church as serious as we should or risk being branded “adulteress” how much that would impact everything we did and thought? It kind of feels like we just gave up on things, taking the easy way out, and it is interesting to see they struggled with the same issues in Paul’s days as we do today.

I know that we have slowly gotten away from right vs. wrong as a society but I wonder what/when/where was the defining point of where people stopped being held accountable for committing adultery. Adultery as grounds for divorce doesn’t even carry that much impact anymore in the courts.
Julia Gregg (Schreiner)

Firstly, the title on the schedule, "Released from the Law," I did enjoy. My text entitled this section of scripture study, "Freedom from the Law's Tyranny." As a history major, the use of the word tyranny I find precise for this section. Interestingly, my author further defined this section as one in which Paul rejects the notion that freedom from the law permits a lifestyle of sin, adding that those operating under the rule of law are actually being ruled by sin . . . (hmmmm) . . . this gave me pause during study. Essentially, believers have died to the law through the death of Christ. . . . The verses simply lay out that believers are liberated from the law then and married to Jesus Christ. This "marriage" should then produce good fruit—not out of obligation or tradition but out of a relationship of love. Verse one establishes the principle of the law's rule, verses 2-3 appeal to the metaphor of wife being married to the husband (believer to Christ), verses 4-6 are the conclusion—where verses 5-6 further explain verse 4 . . . they answer the why?? Why do believers need to die to the law? The ultimate answer is that the law should not dictate conversation (lifestyle) but the Holy Spirit should. Super simple; super intimidating to the controllers out there; super liberating to those daily attempting to walk in the Spirit; ultimately super powerful.

Sean McGarvey (Ironside)

"What is the rule of life for the yielded believer?" The Jew would naturally say, "The law given at Sinai." The apostle's answer is "Christ risen!" . . . And his argument here is that the law has dominion over men until death ends its authority or ends their relationship to it. . . . Is this then to leave us lawless? Not at all. For we are now, as he shows elsewhere (1 Cor. 9:21), "under law to Christ," or "en-lawed," that is, "legitimately subject" to Christ our new Head. He is Husband as well as Head, even as Ephesians 5 so clearly shows.

How I wish that so many times when the opportunity to sin reared its alluring head that I had instead responded with, "You are dead to me," "I am dead to you," or "I am under new management and no longer work for you."
Romans

The Law and Sin (Romans 7:7-25)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

- Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17) (four weeks)
- Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20) (six weeks)
- Saving Righteousness (3:21-4:25) (three weeks)
- Righteous Freedom (5:1-8:39) (post-Easter to July 4) (11 weeks)
- Righteousness → Jews (9:1-11:36) (post July 4 to Labor Day) (eight weeks)
- Righteous Living (12:1-15:13) (post Labor Day to October) (nine weeks)
- Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
- Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 7:7-25) is the sixth part of this major section.
Read: The Law and Sin (7:7-25)

7 What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.” 8 But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law, sin lies dead. 9 I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died. 10 The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me. 11 For sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. 12 So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

13 Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, producing death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure. 14 For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin. 15 For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. 16 Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. 17 So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. 18 For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. 19 For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. 20 Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.

21 So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. 22 For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, 23 but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. 24 Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? 25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

Jim Fleming did “Explain.”

Explain: The Law and Sin (7:7-25)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

Paul again asks a lot of questions in this section—four in English.
What do the words mean?

7 What then shall we say [future active indicative]? That the law [nomos] is sin [offense, sin]? By no means [second aorist active optative (possibility (more remotely possible than subjunctive)); to become, to come into existence, begin to be, receive being; same phrase used in Romans 3:4, 6, 31; 6:2, 15; 7:7, 13; 9:14; 11:1, 11]! Yet if it had not been for [dia] the law [nomos], I would not have known [ginosko; second aorist active indicative; allow, be aware of, feel, known, perceive, be resolved, speak, be sure, understand] sin [offense, sin]. For I would not have known [eido; pluperfect active indicative; to know, be aware, behold, consider, look, perceive, be sure, understand] what it is to covet [longing, concupiscence, desire, lust] if the law [nomos] had not said [imperfect active indicative]; “You shall not covet [future active indicative; set the heart upon, long for, covet, desire, lust after].” 8 But sin [offense, sin], seizing [second aorist active participle; accepting, attaining, bringing, catching, having, holding, obtaining, receiving, taking] an opportunity [starting point, an opportunity, occasion] through [dia] the commandment [commandment, precept], produced [aorist active indicative; worked fully, accomplished, finished, fashioned, caused, performed, worked out] in me all kinds of covetousness [longing, concupiscence, desire, lust; same word used in Romans 7:7]. For apart [at a space from, separately, apart, beside, by itself, without] from the law [nomos], sin [offense, sin] lies dead. 9 I was once alive [imperfect active indicative] apart from the law [nomos], but when the commandment [commandment, precept; same word used in Romans 7:8] came [second aorist active participle], sin [offense, sin] came alive [aorist active indicative; recovered life, lived again, revived] and I died [second aorist active indicative; has died off, is dead, died, lies a-dying, is slain; same word used in Romans 5:6, 7, 8, 15; 6:2, 7, 8, 9, 10 (twice), 7:2, 3, 6]. 10 The very commandment [commandment, precept; same word used in Romans 7:8, 9] that promised life proved [aorist middle indicative; found, got, obtained, perceived, saw; same word used in Romans 4:1] to be death to me. 11 For sin [offense, sin], seizing [second aorist active participle; accepting, attaining, bringing, catching, having, holding, obtaining, receiving, taking; same word used in Romans 7:7] an opportunity [starting point, an opportunity, occasion; same word used in Romans 7:8] through [dia] the commandment [commandment, precept; same word used in Romans 7:8, 9, 10], deceived [seduced wholly, beguiled, deceived] me and through [dia] it killed [aorist active indicative; put to death, killed, slayed] me. 12 So [so too, thus therefore, insomuch, so then] the law [nomos] is holy [sacred, pure, consecrated, holy, saint; same word used in Romans 1:2, 7; 5:5], and the commandment [commandment, precept; same word used in Romans 7:8, 9, 10, 11] is holy [sacred, pure, consecrated, holy, saint; same word used in Romans 1:2, 7; 5:5, earlier in 7:12] and righteous [equitable,
innocent, holy, just, meet, righteous] and good [benefit, good, well; same word used in Romans 2:7, 10; 3:8; 5:7].

13 Did that which is good [benefit, good, well; same word used in Romans 2:7, 10; 3:8; 5:7; 7:12], then, bring [second aorist active indicative] death to me? By no means [second aorist active optative (possibility (more remotely possible than subjunctive)); to become, to come into existence, begin to be, receive being; same phrase used in Romans 3:4, 6, 31; 6:2, 15; 7:7, 13; 9:14; 11:1, 11]! It was sin [offense, sin], producing [present middle participle; working fully, accomplishing, finishing, fashioning, causing, doing, performing, working out; worked fully, accomplished, finished, fashioned, caused, done, performed, worked out; same word used in Romans 7:8] death in me through [dia] what is good [benefit, good, well; same word used in Romans 2:7, 10; 3:8; 5:7; 7:12, and earlier in 7:13], in order that sin [offense, sin] might be shown [second aorist middle subjunctive; shown, appeared, seemed, shined] to be sin [offense, sin], and through [dia] the commandment [commandment, precept; same word used in Romans 7:8; 9, 10, 11, 12] might become [second aorist active subjunctive] sinful beyond measure [throwing beyond others, supereminence, abundance, far more exceeding, excellency, more excellent, beyond measure]. 14 For we know [eido; perfect active indicative; to know, be aware, behold, consider, look, perceive, be sure, understand; same word used in Romans 7:7] that the law [nomos] is [present middle indicative] spiritual [non-carnal, ethereal, supernatural, spiritual; same word used in Romans 1:11], but I am [present middle indicative] of the flesh [pertaining to the flesh, bodily, temporal, animal, unregenerate, carnal, fleshly], sold [perfect middle participle; trafficked, disposed as merchandise into slavery, sold] under sin [offense, sin]. 15 For I do [present middle indicative; work fully, accomplish, finish, fashion, cause, do, perform, work out; same word used in Romans 7:8, 13] not understand [ginosko; present active indicative; allow, be aware of, feel, known, perceive, be resolved, speak, be sure, understand] my own actions. For I do not do [present active indicative; perform repeatedly, habitually, execute, accomplish, collect, fare, commit, deeds, do, exact, keep, require, use arts; same word used in Romans 1:32; 2:1, 2, 3, 25] what I want [present active indicative; determine, choose, prefer, wish, inclined, be about, delight in, desire, intend, list, love, mean, please, will; same word used in Romans 1:13], but I do [present active indicative] the very thing I hate [present active indicative; detest, love less, hate]. 16 Now if I do [present active indicative] what I do not want [present active indicative; determine, choose, prefer, wish, inclined, be about, delight in, desire, intend, list, love, mean, please, will; same word used in Romans 1:13; 7:15], I agree [present middle indicative; say jointly, assent to, consent to] with the law [nomos], that it is good [beautiful, good, valuable, virtuous, better, fair, good, honest, meet, well, worthy]. 17 So now [just now, now] it is no longer I who do [present middle indicative; work fully, accomplish, finish, fashion, cause, do,
perform, work out; same word used in Romans 7:8, 13, 15] it, but sin [offense, sin] that dwells [occupies a house, resides, cohabits] within me. 18 For I know [eido; perfect active indicative; to know, be aware, behold, consider, look, perceive, be sure, understand; same word used in Romans 7:7, 14 (and other places)] that nothing good [benefit, good, well; same word used in Romans 2:7, 10; 3:8; 5:7; 7:12, 13 (twice)] dwells [present active indicative; occupies a house, resides, cohabits; same word used in Romans 7:17] in me, that is [present middle indicative], in my flesh. For I have [present middle indicative; lies near, be at hand, be present] the desire [present active infinitive; determine, choose, prefer, wish, inclined, be about, delight in, desire, intend, list, love, mean, please, will; same word used in Romans 1:13; 7:15, 16] to do what is right [beautiful, good, valuable, virtuous, better, fair, good, honest, meet, well, worthy; same word used in Romans 7:16], but not the ability [present middle infinitive; work fully, accomplish, finish, fashion, cause, do, perform, work out; same word used in Romans 7:8, 13, 15, 17] to carry it out. 19 For I do not do [present active indicative] the good [benefit, good, well; same word used in Romans 2:7, 10; 3:8; 5:7; 7:12, 13 (twice), 18] I want [present active indicative; determine, choose, prefer, wish, inclined, be about, delight in, desire, intend, list, love, mean, please, will; same word used in Romans 1:13; 7:15, 16, 18], but the evil [worthless, depraved, injurious, bad, evil, harm, ill, noisome, wicked; same word used in Romans 1:30; 2:9; 3:8] I do not want [present active indicative; determine, choose, prefer, wish, inclined, be about, delight in, desire, intend, list, love, mean, please, will; same word used in Romans 1:13; 7:15, 16, 18, earlier in 19] is what I keep on doing [present active indicative; perform repeatedly, habitually, execute, accomplish, collect, fare, commit, deeds, do, exact, keep, require, use arts; same word used in Romans 1:32; 2:1, 2, 3, 25; 7:15]. 20 Now if I do [present active indicative] what I do not want [present active indicative; determine, choose, prefer, wish, inclined, be about, delight in, desire, intend, list, love, mean, please, will; same word used in Romans 1:13; 7:15, 16, 18, 19 (twice)), it is no longer I who do [present middle indicative; work fully, accomplish, finish, fashion, cause, do, perform, work out; same word used in Romans 7:8, 13, 15, 17, 18] it, but sin [offense, sin] that dwells [present active participle; occupies a house, resides, cohabits; same word used in Romans 7:17, 18] within me.

21 So I find [present active indicative; find, get, obtain, perceive, see; same word used in Romans 4:1, 7:10] it to be a law [nomos] that when I want [present active participle; determine, choose, prefer, wish, inclined, be about, delight in, desire, intend, list, love, mean, please, will; same word used in Romans 1:13; 7:15, 16, 18, 19 (twice), 20] to do [present active infinitive] right [beautiful, good, valuable, virtuous, better, fair, good, honest, meet, well, worthy; same word used in Romans 7:16, 18], evil [worthless, depraved, bad, evil, harm, ill, noisome, wicked; same word used in Romans 1:30; 2:9; 3:8; 7:19] lies close [present middle indicative; lies near, be at hand, be present; same
word used in Romans 7:18] at hand. 22 For I delight [present middle indicative; rejoice within oneself, feel satisfaction concerning, delight] in the law [nomos] of God, in my inner [inside, inward, inner] being, 23 but I see [present active indicative; look, behold, beware, lie, look on, perceive, regard, see, take heed] in my members [limbs, members] another [other, different] law [nomos] waging war [present middle participle; attacking, destroying, warring against] against the law [nomos] of my mind [mind, understanding; same word used in Romans 1:28] and making me captive [present active participle; leading away captive, making captive, bringing into captivity] to the law [nomos] of sin [offense, sin] that dwells in [present middle participle] my members [limbs, members]. 24 Wretched [enduring trials, miserable, wretched] man that I am! Who will deliver [future active indicative; rescue, deliver (through the idea of a current)] me from this body of death? 25 Thanks [charis; graciousness, acceptable, benefit, favor, gift, gracious, grace, joy, liberality, pleasure, thanks, thankworthy; same word used multiple times in Romans] be to God through [dia] Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve [douleuo; present active indicative; be a slave, be in bondage, do service; same word used in Romans 6:6; 7:6] the law [nomos] of God with my mind [mind, understanding; same word used in Romans 1:28; 7:23], but with my flesh I serve the law [nomos] of sin [offense, sin].

Are there any repeated words?

Law (15x), sin (15x), commandment (6x), Jesus, God

Are there any repeated topics?

Tim Archer did “observations, applications, and personalizations.”

What are some observations of the text?

As I begin our lesson I truly feel a need to get it right when we look at these verses. First, let me point out that I cannot imagine what it would have been like to have been a first-century Christian and hear Paul’s letter read for the first time. The foundations of Christendom and the Gospel were being laid and already many false teachings were attempting to hijack the amazing thing Christ had done for us. As we look around us today we can see these same things still going on. I recall during last week’s lesson that Jim asked us the question, “Can you imagine sitting there while someone read the entire letter to us?” My initial thought was, “This certainly would have been tough and overwhelming.” As I dwelled more on this question over the week, I realized that there were so few Christians at that time. There was no completed Bible to study and they may have been so hungry for the words from Paul that this may have been an easier step for many of them than we think. This question caused me to think of a time that I
was so excited about hearing the word of God shared and that I was hungry to be with my brothers and sisters in Christ learning God’s word. The occasion that came to my mind was Fort Benning, Georgia, during Basic Training. Sure, it was tough physically and mentally but it was tough spiritually as well. I longed to be with believers and couldn’t wait for the occasions when we would be able to attend church services worship and hear God’s word together.

So, I thank God for calling Paul to this true salvation and his willingness to suffer for the spreading of the true message of the Gospel. Understand: all we have known, learned, and taught are things that have been passed down to us for many years and we can easily take these teachings for granted. In my case, I was raised in a Christian home, with some of my earliest memories being that of having family devotions and my mother teaching me in Sunday school. I understood early in life that God loved me and knew that Christ was there with me even when others were not. In fact, I began my walk with Christ at age 7 during Vacation Bible School. This wasn’t some strange or foreign teaching because we did receive the message that has been passed on for generations and we have had multiple biblical scholars to help us with the tougher portions. However, even today, we can see that the message is still needed because we continue to struggle with understanding how to walk in God’s Grace. We can still fall into the wrong thinking that following a list of laws or behaviors to prove we are finding favor with God or, if we’re not careful, go to the other extreme of, “I can do whatever I want because Jesus came.”

With that being stated let’s jump into Romans 7:7-25 and observe the fact that Paul has spent a large amount of time in this letter pointing out that following the law is not the answer to salvation and ultimately the pleasing of God. Paul has revealed in the previous chapters the fact that there is a need for God’s righteousness and the fact that all of us are unrighteous. It was probably a shock to some at what they were hearing at this point of the letter, wondering what else lay in store in the next pages.

7 What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.” [There is little doubt that Paul needed to address one of the primary conclusions that people could have come to at this point in his letter: “Is the law now sinful?” Was the law, the revered words that God Himself had penned through Moses, now being considered sinfulness by some of the babes in Christ? Remember, there was no finished Bible and many of the leaders were themselves new Christians. Paul is quick to show what God’s true intentions were when providing these statutes. Aren’t we so like this? We hear words spoken and yet certain portions seem to rub us in a wrong way and before you know it, we’ve lost the true meaning because we were quick to judge or tune our ears out to the rest of the
message. We must also remember that the early church was filled with a mix of individuals from various walks of life. Is it possible that he was bringing this out because there were old Jewish teachings that where seeping into the church at Rome? Were some of the leaders stating that following the old Jewish teachings concerning the law still needed to be adhered to and that this needed be addressed? Were there other teachings going to the other extreme? Charles Spurgeon: Even with the light of nature, and the light of conscience, and the light of tradition, there are some things we should never have believed to be sins had we not been taught so by the law. 8 But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law, sin lies dead. [I love how transparent the apostle becomes in this verse; he is not saying how much better he is; or be like me because of how holy I am. No, he points out that by God’s word he not only sees his sin but he sees all kinds of this sin, pointing out his own unrighteousness. Amazing; this man who was once among the Pharisees and someone that all were to look up to as the example, was now an amazingly humble follower. Understanding how much man had perverted God’s true teachings. He had witnessed firsthand and realized too that we needed to know the truth which lay at the foot of the cross. The law wasn’t meant to be the burdensome weight like “He himself” had once thought. The religious leaders demanded that these had to be followed to such an extreme level that Christ himself addressed the fallacies and perverted teachings. Christ came and by the law we are led to the one and only conclusion: we need a Savior because we do not and none will ever measure up to God’s holy standard.] 9 I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died. [Again, this former Pharisee and ultimate “Law Keeper and Enforcer” points out that he didn’t understand it at one point in his life but God had opened his eyes to the reality of what the law was. When this occurred, he realized that the law had condemned him to death and without hope.] 10 The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me. [John MacArthur: Theoretically, perfect obedience to the law could bring eternal life, and with it happiness and holiness. But no one except Christ has—or could—ever fully obey it. I have even heard some well-meaning Christians say that Jews can still make it to heaven and please God by keeping the law! As we’ve studied Hebrews with Brian over the last several months (especially the review of all the Old Testament champions of faith in Hebrews 11 this past week), prior to the Messiah coming, it was their faith that saved them—not following the law. Even these great champions of the Old Testament were condemned by the law. It was their faith in the coming Messiah that truly led to salvation.] 11 For sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. [Paul had once believed that the law was his salvation and the keeping of it was the pinnacle of his Jewish upbringing. He had once walked the holy haughty life of a Pharisee. However, Christ’s coming had changed all that. The Messiah
had come and by doing so revealed the true meaning of the Law: it could not be kept. It was an impossible task and the sentence in a court of the Almighty was death.] 12 So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good. [Ha, ha; wait, what? Didn’t he just sell me on the fact that the Law is not the answer? At this point, some truly could have thought that Paul was pointing out the reason for not following the law but he was simply trying to help change the wrong and historical thinking concerning the law.]

13 Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, producing death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure. [For those of us familiar with Ray Comfort and The Way of the Master, his use of the Ten Commandments has been nothing less than brilliant when witnessing! Why? Because it exemplifies exactly what the law was meant for. It reveals that there is absolutely no doubt that we are all sinners. There is no way around it! When was the last time we stopped and truly saw ourselves based on how we measure up to what the law demands? Oh, that’s right, if you’ve been in Sunday school lately, at least once probably. I recall during last week’s lesson how I pictured the law revealing our sins. In my mind’s eye, I remember thinking of a time when we first moved to Chattanooga. We lived Highland Park near the old Tennessee Temple University campus. The home we lived in was built in 1913 and had seen many different residents over the years. I just know that some of the residents didn’t leave when some others moved in. What do I mean by that? I recall that there was a different kind of battle that took place between my family and the insects that lived there. The metaphor that entered my mind was the disgusting, nasty, gross, roaches that lived there. I hate roaches and can recall the battle that ensued. We would turn the lights on and the filthy things would scurry to hide. I would spray poison I would put out bait, I put my faith in several of the top extermination companies of that day and yet, we could never get rid of them. Ultimately, we were told that it would be impossible to ever rid the home of the vermin. Is this not the perfect picture of our lives and how our sin is? We think we’ve taken all the precautions: read my Bible, prayed, gone to church, Sunday school, Wednesday evenings, and get this: I sang in the choir only to end up with seeing the nasty stinking reality that sin is still there.] 14 For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin. [From the time of Adam, the earth and all men and women within it, has lived in corruption, there is no getting around it. David Stern writes in the Jewish New Testament commentary concerning the law as spiritual: This remark shows that Sha’ul as a Messianic Jew retained a high view of the Torah, because in support of his main argument he presents the statement undefended, expecting his readers not to demand proof. It is a given, an axiom to which all can agree without requiring further demonstration. Paul further explains that his
flesh/earthy body is like a slave which is owned by someone. In this example, it is sin.] 15 For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. [Paul is being so transparent. He knows what God’s desire is and he strives for it only to realize that he has failed in its pursuit again. He continues with pointing out that even the leader continues to struggle with sin and that although he strives for perfection and is focused on doing so, he still ends up being sinful and failing.] 16 Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. [Understand that if we are dead in our sins then we either don’t know or truly don’t care about what the law means, but believers pursuing holiness with the law as our teacher and faith as our keeper in the Gospel, need to realize that the battle waging is the very evidence of not being dead but alive in Christ. This is a great thing to remind ourselves of.] 17 So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. [The recognition that we will always be sinners, admitting that we are all weak and bent towards doing evil is the first step of preparing for your walk with Christ. Recognizing that even in our pursuit of pleasing God we can end up producing sinfulness. One example of this is in the book of Proverbs. Solomon warns us in Proverbs 16:17-19 about our attitude when he wrote: 17 The highway of the upright turns aside from evil; whoever guards his way preserves his life. 18 Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. 19 It is better to be of a lowly spirit with the poor than to divide the spoil with the proud. Matthew Henry: Verse 17: A sincerely religious man keeps at a distance from every appearance of evil. Happy is the man that walks in Christ, and is led by the Spirit of Christ. Verse 18: When men defy God’s judgments, and think themselves far from them, it is a sign they are at the door. Let us not fear the pride of others, but fear pride in ourselves. Verse 19: Humility, though it exposes to contempt in the world, is much better than high-spiritedness, which makes God an enemy. He that understands God’s word shall find good.] 18 For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. [Do not ever depend on your flesh to do what is right! Paul is absolutely correct with this and warning against trusting in our own abilities to do what we should. Sure, there may be occasions when we have victory over a sin but that is short-lived. Does the temptation go away? The moment we feel the confidence in our ability to do, be very careful because the flesh is so very weak.] 19 For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. [I can remember early in life hearing the previous verses and thinking how strange they sound. In fact, I found them hard to follow and generally read through them for many years without fully understanding what they meant. Later, I came to see that Paul is giving us a great picture of the battle that is taking place within all who have come to know Christ. We so want to measure up and believe we are righteous by the doing, when in fact it is nothing that I do but what Christ has done that makes me righteous. Isaiah 64:6: We
have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. This is an accurate picture of how God sees our righteous acts. However, being covered in the righteousness of Christ, God is pleased with us. **20** Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. [We can lay the fault of our wrong doing on the sinfulness that remains in our broken bodies. We will never get away from this while we remain here. MacArthur Study Bible: Greek Dualism. . . taught that the body is evil and the spirit is good, so its adherents sinned with impunity by claiming they were not responsible; their sin was entirely the product of their physical bodies, while their spirits remained untouched and unsullied. But the apostle has already acknowledged personal guilt for his sin . . . His sin does not flow out of his new redeemed innermost self (“I”), but from his unredeemed humannesss, his flesh “in me.”]

**21** So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. [Our pursuit of righteousness is waiting to be marred by evil.] **22** For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, [Yes, he loves God’s law and so should all Christians because it is our teacher.] **23** but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. [The understanding for this finally came to me as I was teaching children about the very warring that takes place if you are saved. We had some teaching materials that shared how the new man was fighting with the old man if we were Christians and the fact that these two men warred inside of us continually. Wait, what? Yes, think about it—there is no war for those who are dead in their sin. Understand too that sin will always be in us while we fill these earth-suits—they are corrupted beyond measure. Think on these questions: Are there spiritual battles waging in your life? Do we recognize these occurring? If not, then why not? Have we become hardened to certain sins in our lives?] **24** Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? [Paul has just laid out the argument that he is a total complete failure and lost without hope in this sinful, earthly body. He is trapped and there is no way out—but wait, there is hope.] **25** Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin. [Hallelujah and praise God the Almighty for at this point in Paul’s letter the people had to have some hope. He has just laid out condemnation based on the merits of the law and the sin that it reveals in their lives. We are weary at times and truly need something—or should I say, “Someone” to help us and that “Someone” is Jesus the Messiah—the one who fulfilled the law. He didn’t do away with it, he revealed what it was truly meant for. I can recall when I was a youth pastor telling my young people, “Please call me if you ever need me for something, no matter what is; because although you may do things that disappoint me there is nothing you can do that will cause me to stop loving you.” So
much more we need to see that Christ is our true example of this. He and only He, is our Salvation. Our ability to save ourselves is impossible apart from Him.]

Apply (What is the point?)

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

We can personalize this text with these questions:

1. How has God’s law uncovered our sin?
2. How has it helped us to see our need for Christ?
3. How might losing sight of the fact that we are human and struggle daily lead to deep discouragement?
4. How might it lead to hypocrisy and superficiality in us and in the church?

Next week: Life in the Spirit (8:1-11)

1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. 3 For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, 4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. 5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. 6 For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. 7 For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. 8 Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

9 You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. 10 But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)
• Holy Spirit
• Bible: Romans (ESV)
• Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS
• Tools: bit.ly/romans2017

Our process

• Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
• Read (Romans)
• Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
• Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

The seventh chapter of Romans is a passionate piece of writing. Paul wants us to feel the emotion he experiences in trying to live up to Gods standards in his own strength. . . . A believer who tries to please God in his or own strength will always come to disheartening, aching, frustration—always!

When the believer realizes he is helpless he will receive God's help. As long as we think we can do it ourselves we are in Romans 7.

Matt and I have been living vs 24-25. Trying to do it on or own. Thinking that our way is best and that we have a plan. Every time we give our situation over to God we are blessed in ways we can't imagine, sometimes little ways sometime crazy big ways! We continue to try and take control back, again thinking that we can handle it from here. I can picture Him just shaking His head at us. But thanks to God . . . thanks for forgiveness, for compassion and for His grace and mercy.

Love these two verses in The Message:

24 I've tried everything and nothing helps. I'm at the end of my rope. Is there no one who can do anything for me? Isn't that the real question?

25 The answer, thank God, is that Jesus Christ can and does. He acted to set things right in this life of contradictions where I want to serve God with all my heart and mind, but am pulled by the influence of sin to do something totally different.

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

The Law was not evil but it became the base of operations from which Satan could assault Paul with the desire to covet. The Law isn’t the cause of death, sin is. The Law is but the instrument by which we may be shown that sin is causing our physical and spiritual death.
Paul has been delivered from the penalty of sin through justification, but daily he still faces the struggle with the power of sin. When sin is Paul’s master, lord, and kind, Jesus Christ cannot fill the same position. Paul is:

1. Justified by faith in Jesus Christ
2. Sanctified by the power of the Holy Spirit
3. One day will be glorified by the grace of the Father.

**Julia Gregg (Schreiner)**

Firstly, a few moments of clarity where things connected for me in ways they had not done previously:

Paul’s “testimony” is a mirror of Adam’s and Israel’s. For me, this realization gave Paul’s testimony (which he used as evidence that the law itself cannot liberate from sin) more power and drive. It creates an element of "preponderance of evidence" in the argument that Paul continues to deliver against justification by works . . . for it is only through Christ. He does however, clarify, that the law made him aware of his sin. Though we have been examining sin in context of the law and of Christ's payment for that sin, this section of scripture is, at its core, about the goodness of God and His laws.

Secondly, I found it interesting the split vision that Paul presents of the law . . . as his argument is developing throughout the text. He drills the fact that the law became an ally to sin; yet, there is spirituality and rectitude in verses 14, 16, 22 and 25 because there is goodness in the law of God. Paul takes issue with the view that the law was the transforming agent in the hearts of men because that responsibility/purpose belongs solely to Jesus Christ. He IS the transforming work!! Further, the differentiation between sin and transgression is necessary to realization that "commandments from the law alone cannot stem the desire to worship self above every other god." (367). The law does bring an "awakening" to sin—which I feel is an awareness and this thought drives back to the garden when awareness of sin began.

Lastly, without the transforming work of Christ in the hearts of men, living under the law will only produce bondage. WE are NOT enough; however, HE IS. I was left with the thought of "dying to self" . . . and what that potentially means in light of Romans 7:7-25. I will ponder that this week outside of the realm of "clichés."
Romans

Life in the Spirit (Romans 8:1-11)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

1. Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17) (four weeks)
2. Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20) (six weeks)
3. Saving Righteousness (3:21-4:25) (three weeks)
7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 8:1-11) is the seventh part of this major section.
Read: Life in the Spirit (8:1-11)

1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. 3 For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, 4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. 5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. 6 For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. 7 For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. 8 Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

9 You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. 10 But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

Explain: Life in the Spirit (8:1-11)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

Paul comes to another conclusion in this text—a conclusion about the law and the impact/implications of the law on the life of a believer. Today’s text is comparing and contrasting life under the law and life in Christ/the Spirit.

What do the words mean?

1 There is therefore now [present, immediate, of late, soon, present, this time] no [not even one, none, nobody, nothing] condemnation [adverse sentence, condemnation; same word used in Romans 5:16, 18] for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2 For the law [nomos] of the Spirit [pneuma] of life has set you free [aorist active indicative; liberated, exempted, delivered [brought me something I didn’t have (i.e., Dinner Delivered)], made free; same word used in Romans 6:18, 22 (this is not, ‘set free,’ this is, ‘made free’) in Christ Jesus from the law [nomos] of sin and death. 3 For God has done what the law [nomos], weakened [imperfect (action continually or repeatedly happening in past time) active indicative; be feeble, impotent, sick, weaken; same word used in Romans 4:19] by [dia] the flesh, could not do [could not do, impossible, impotent, not
possible, weak. By sending [aorist active participle; dispatching, transmitting, bestowing, wielding, sending, thrusting in] his own Son in the likeness [form, resemblance, likeness, shape, similitude; same word used in Romans 1:23, 5:14] of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned [aorist active indicative; judge against, sentence, condemn, damn; same word used in Romans 2:1] sin in the flesh, 4 in order that the righteous requirement [equitable deeds, statutes, decisions, judgments, justifications, ordinances, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:32; 2:26; 5:16, 18] of the law [nomos] might be fulfilled [aorist passive (Robertson) subjunctive; replete, crammed full, leveled off, furnished, satisfied, executed, finished, verified, accomplished, completed, ended, expired, filled up, fulfilled, perfected, supplied; same word used in Romans 1:29] in us, who walk [present active participle; tread all around, walk, live, deport oneself, follow; same word used in Romans 6:4] not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit [pneuma]. 5 For those who live [present middle participle; be, come, have] according to the flesh set their minds [present active indicative; exercise the mind, entertain or have a sentiment or opinion, mentally disposed, interest oneself, set the affection on, be careful, mind, regard, savor, think] on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to ['live according to’ is not present in the Greek] the Spirit [pneuma] set their minds on ['set their minds on’ is not present in the Greek] the things of the Spirit [pneuma]. 6 For to set the mind on [to be inclined, to be purposed] the flesh is death, but to set the mind on [to be inclined, to be purposed; same word used earlier in Romans 8:6] the Spirit [pneuma] is life and peace [peace, prosperity, one, quietness, rest, to be set at one again; same word used in Romans 1:7; 2:10; 3:17; 5:1]. 7 For the mind that is set on [to be inclined, to be purposed; same word used in Romans 8:6 (twice)] the flesh is hostile [hostility, opposition, enmity, hatred] to God, for it does not submit [present passive (Robertson) indicative; subordinate, obey, be under obedience, put under, subdued under, make subject, put in subjection to, submit self to; Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: military term for subjection to orders. Present tense here means continued insubordination.] to God’s law [nomos]; indeed, it cannot [dynamai; present middle indicative; able, possible, be of power]. 8 Those who are [present middle participle; be, come, have] in the flesh cannot [dynamai; present middle indicative; able, possible, be of power; same word used in Romans 8:7] please [aorist active infinitive; be agreeable, please] God.

9 You, however, are [present middle indicative] not in the flesh but in the Spirit [pneuma], if in fact [if perhaps, if so be that, seeing, though] the Spirit [pneuma] of God dwells [present active indicative; occupies a house, resides, cohabits; same word used in Romans 7:17, 18, 20] in you. Anyone who does not have [present active indicative] the Spirit [pneuma] of Christ does not belong [present middle indicative] to him. 10 But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because [dia of sin, the Spirit [pneuma] is life because [dia of righteousness] equity, justification, righteousness; same word used
in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 11 (twice), 13, 22; 5:17, 21; 6:13, 16, 18, 19, 20]. 11 If the Spirit [pneuma] of him who raised [aorist active participle; woke, roused, lifted up, raised again, stood, took up; same word used in Romans 4:24, 25; 6:4, 9; 7:4] Jesus from the dead dwells [present active indicative; occupies a house, resides, cohabits; same word used in Romans 7:17, 18, 20; 8:9] in you, he who raised [aorist active participle; woke, roused, lifted up, raised again, stood, took up; same word used in Romans 4:24, 25; 6:4, 9; 7:4; earlier in 8:11] Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life [future active indicative; revitalize, make alive, give life, quicken; same word used in Romans 4:17] to your mortal [liable to die, mortal; same word used in Romans 6:12] bodies through [dia] his Spirit [pneuma] who dwells [present active participle; inhabits, dwells in] in you.

Are there any repeated words?

Spirit (22 times in Romans 8), Christ, Jesus, God, law, flesh, mind, dwells, life

Are there any repeated topics?

Life and death, setting the mind, life in the Spirit

What are some observations of the text?

Hughes: The theme of chapter 8 is the Holy Spirit. Over 20 times ‘spirit’ is used.

I like the title the ESV uses for this section, “Life in the Spirit,” because it both reflects what life in the Spirit is about and it states that life is in the Spirit. A dual-meaning title!

1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. [In Christ, no condemnation. Outside of Christ, condemnation. Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: This is Paul’s Gospel. The fire has burned on and around the Cross of Christ. There and there alone is safety.] 2 For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. 3 For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, 4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. 5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. 6 For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. 7 For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God’s law; indeed, it cannot. 8 Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

9 You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit [Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: the mystical union of the believer with Christ in the Holy Spirit], if in fact the
Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. 10 But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

Ironside: What unspeakable relief it is to the bewildered, troubled soul, oppressed with a sense of his own unworthiness, and distressed because of frequent failures to live up to his own highest resolves, when he learns that God sees him in Christ Jesus, and as thus seen he is free from all condemnation. He may exclaim, 'But I feel so condemned.' This, however, is not the question. It is not how I feel but it is what God says. He sees me in Christ risen, forever beyond the reach of condemnation. A prisoner before the bar, hard of hearing and dull of sight, might imagine his doom was being pronounced at the very moment that the judge was giving a verdict of full acquittal. Neither blindness or deafness would alter this fact. And though we are often slow to hear, and our spiritual vision is most defective, the blessed fact remains that God has pronounced the believer free from condemnation whether he fully rises to the glorious fact or not.

Apply (What is the point?)

1. The law does not condemn those in Christ
2. Life, peace, and pleasing God come from setting the mind on the Spirit
3. The Father gives life to the mortal bodies of Christians through the Spirit
4. The Trinity is involved in this work

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. Be in Christ
2. Set our minds on the Spirit (and encourage each other to do so as Paul does here)
3. Trust the Father’s work
4. Rejoice! (the Trinity is working for their glory and for our good)

Next week: Heirs with Christ (8:12-17)

12 So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. 13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” 16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if
children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

**Homework**

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

**Quotes & Observations**

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

The theme of chapter 8 is the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 8 mentions the Holy Spirit 20 times!

Since our flesh is inadequate, God sent Christ in "the likeness of sinful flesh. . . . Christ became a sin offering as He took our sin without sinning.

What Paul is saying here is immensely important because our mind-set makes all the difference when it comes to daily living. We all, whatever our spiritual state, live in a storm-tossed world. The rain falls on the just and the unjust. The set of our minds will determine not only eternity but the quality of our life now. The Holy Spirit gives the believer a new set of mind which brings life and peace. This is liberation. On Romans 8:6

What comfort to know that we are given life and peace when we set our minds on God.

Darla Skinner (Mounce)

On Romans 8:1: To insist on feeling guilty is but another way of insisting on helping God with our salvation. How deeply imbedded in human nature is the influence of works-righteousness!

On Romans 8:3-4: Law was unable to overpower the malignant dynamism of sin. Legislation is ill-equipped to conquer a vital force.
Jessica Norris (Kroll)

Kroll: Freedom from condemnation means we are not servants to the penalty for our sin, but that guilt and penalty have been removed at the cross. The Mosaic law is good and holy, but our flesh is weak, and we are unable to keep the Law; therefore, the Law does not have the power to justify. If our minds have an interest in carnal things, the results are the symptoms of spiritual death. But if the interests of the mind are placed on the things of the Spirit of God, we have a peace in life that passes all understanding.

Romans 8:8 stuck out for me: “Those who are in the flesh cannot please God” because not only cannot they not please God, but they cannot please themselves. When you do something that “is in the flesh” it only causes temporary satisfaction but if you are a Christian then guilt should follow as well as the Holy Spirit speaking to you that you need to ask for forgiveness and work on not doing it again. We might do better for a while as we try to focus on God and the things that please Him, but eventually we are going to “be in the flesh” again. It’s what we learn from those times that determines our continued spiritual growth or our hopefully only temporary pause in growth.

Sean McGarvey (Ironsides)

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus!

What unspeakable relief it is to the bewildered, troubled soul, oppressed with a sense of his own unworthiness, and distressed because of frequent failures to live up to his own highest resolves, when he learns that God sees him in Christ Jesus, and as thus seen he is free from all condemnation. He may exclaim, ‘But I feel so condemned.’ This, however, is not the question. It is not how I feel but it is what God says. He sees me in Christ risen, forever beyond the reach of condemnation. A prisoner before the bar, hard of hearing and dull of sight, might imagine his doom was being pronounced at the very moment that the judge was giving a verdict of full acquittal. Neither blindness or deafness would alter this fact. And though we are often slow to hear, and our spiritual vision is most defective, the blessed fact remains that God has pronounced the believer free from condemnation whether he fully rises to the glorious fact or not. (p. 59)

We are brought to God ‘in Christ Jesus,’ and so all question of judgment is forever settled. It can never be raised again. (p. 59)

It is not that the flesh is, or ever will be, in any sense improved. The flesh in the oldest and godliest Christian is as incorrigibly evil as the flesh in the vilest sinner. ... But it is otherwise with the believer. He is no longer in the flesh since born of God. He is now in the Spirit, and the Spirit of God dwells in him. (p. 61)
Romans

Heirs with Christ (Romans 8:12-17)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

✓ Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17) (four weeks)
✓ Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20) (six weeks)
✓ Saving Righteousness (3:21-4:25) (three weeks)
7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 8:12-17) is the eighth part of this major section.
Read: Heirs with Christ (8:12-17)

12 So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. 13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” 16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

Explain: Heirs with Christ (8:12-17)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

What do the words mean?

12 So then, brothers, we are [present middle indicative] debtors [owers, persons indebted, delinquents, transgressors, debtors, sinners; same word used in Romans 1:14], not to the flesh, to live [present active infinitive] according to the flesh. 13 For if you live [present active indicative] according to the flesh you will [present active indicative; intend, be about; same word used in Romans 4:24; 5:14] die [present active infinitive; has died off, is dead, died, lies a-dying, is slain; same word used in Romans 5:6, 7, 8, 15; 6:2, 7, 8, 9, 10 (twice), 7:2, 3, 6, 9], but if by the Spirit [pneuma] you put to death [present active indicative] the deeds [deeds, offices, works] of the body, you will live [future active indicative]. 14 For all who are led [lead, bring, drive, go, pass time, induce, bring forth, carry, let go, keep, lead away, be open; same word used in Romans 2:4] by the Spirit [pneuma] of God are [present middle indicative] sons [child, son; so far in Romans, only used of the Son of God (Romans 1:3, 4, 9; 5:10; 8:3)] of God. 15 For you did not receive [second aorist active indicative] the spirit [pneuma] of slavery [slavery, bondage] to fall back [anew, back, once more, again] into fear [phobos; fear, alarm, fright, terror; same word used in Romans 3:18], but you have received [second aorist active indicative] the Spirit [pneuma] of adoption [the placing as a son, adoption of children, adoption of sons] as sons, by whom we cry [present active indicative; croak, scream, call aloud, shriek, exclaim, intreat, cry, cry out], “Abba [father]! Father [father, parent]!” 16 The Spirit [pneuma] himself bears witness [present active indicative; symmartyreo (with + martyr); to testify jointly, corroborate by concurrent evidence, testify unto, bear witness with; same word used in Romans 2:15]
with our spirit [pneuma] that we are [present middle indicative] children [children, daughters, sons] of God, 17 and if children [children, daughters, sons; same word used in Romans 8:16], then heirs [an inheritor, heir; same word used in Romans 4:13, 14]—heirs [an inheritor, heir; same word used in Romans 4:13, 14, earlier in 8:17] of God and fellow heirs [fellow heirs, heirs together, heirs with] with Christ, provided [if perhaps, if so be, seeing, though] we suffer with [present active indicative; experience pain jointly, suffer with] him in order that we may also be glorified with [exalt to dignity in company with, glorify together] him.

Are there any repeated words?

Are there any repeated topics?

What are some observations of the text?

12 So then, brothers, we are debtors [Does anyone have a mortgage to pay? I do. This is bigger.], not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh [Guzik: The flesh (again, in the narrow sense of sinful flesh in rebellion against God) gave us nothing good. So we have no obligation to oblige or pamper it. Our debt is to the Lord, not to the flesh.]. 13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die [Ever been guilted into doing something? Especially something stupid? Let’s say friend (or so-called friend) did something for you, and now they want you to do something in return. “You owe me.” So you did it. You wish you hadn’t. This is Paul saying to the flesh (that so-called friend), “You tried to kill me, and you’re still trying!” Guzik: Paul constantly reminds us that living after the flesh ends in death. We need the reminder because we are often deceived into thinking that the flesh offers us life.], but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live [Guzik: When we put to death the deeds of the body (force the sinful flesh to submit to the Spirit), we must do it by the Spirit. Otherwise we will become like the Pharisees and spiritually proud.]. 14 For all who are led [Romans 2:4: Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God’s kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? Kindness, forbearance, and patience do not speak of driving (as with a whip and yelling). We are not cattle; we are sheep. Guzik: It is only fitting that the sons of God should be led by the Spirit of God. However, we should not think that being led by the Spirit is a pre-condition to being a son of God. Instead, we become sons first and then the Spirit of God leads us. Paul didn’t say, “As many as go to church, these are the sons of God.” He didn’t say, “As many as read their Bibles, these are the sons of God.” He didn’t say, “As many as are patriotic Americans, these are the sons of God.” He
didn’t say, “As many as take communion, these are the sons of God.” In this text, the test for sonship is whether or not a person is led by the Spirit of God.

How does the Holy Spirit lead us?

- We are led by guidance
- We are led by drawing
- We are led by governing authority
- We are led as we cooperate with the leading. “It does not say, ‘As many as are driven by the Spirit of God.’ No, the devil is a driver, and when he enters either into men or into hogs he drives them furiously. Remember how the whole herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea. Whenever you see a man fanatical and wild, whatever spirit is in him it is not the Spirit of Christ.” (Spurgeon)

Where does the Holy Spirit lead us?

- He leads us to repentance
- He leads us to think little of self and much of Jesus
- He leads us into truth
- He leads us into love
- He leads us into holiness
- He leads us into usefulness] by the Spirit of God are sons of God [Did you see that? To this point in Romans, Paul only uses this term sons to describe Jesus. Now he uses it to describe us. This is a big!].

15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear [Elisabeth Johnson (Professor, Lutheran Institute of Theology, Cameroon): In the ancient Roman world, unwanted children were routinely abandoned or sold into slavery. . . . Paul assures his readers that although we struggle in a world of sin and death, we have not been abandoned to lives of slavery and fear. In Christ, God has adopted us as God’s very own children and heirs. We are not going to become unwanted.], but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons [Again, in Romans, Paul is the consummate attorney making an airtight case to his audience, who are, “Those in Rome who are loved by God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” Jessica Norris, who is reading Kroll’s commentary, shared this: In Paul’s mind, there were four main consequences of adoption: 1) The adopted person lost all rights in his old family and gained all the rights of a fully legitimate son in his new family and got a new father. 2) It followed that he became heir to his new father’s estate that were equal to the blood related sons. 3) In law, the old life of the adopted person was completely wiped out, meaning all debts were canceled and wiped out as they had never been. 4) In the eyes of the law the adopted person was literally and absolutely the son of the new father.]
His audience then understood that, and it helps us now to understand this and the rest of the passage.

Adoption is a big theme in our house. Many of you know about and prayed us through the process of adopting our daughter Remi. Adoption’s big impact actually started back when my wife, Trisha, was adopted by her dad at the age of eight. His whole family brought her in and loved her like she had always been there. “It just fit.”

Later, adoption was a major part of her understanding coming to Christ, how God brings you into His family like you had always been there. You just fit.

When we got married, which will be 20 years ago on August 2, she even wore her adoptive grandmother’s wedding dress. And you know what’s crazy? While it did not fit Nana Chicki’s biological daughter, it fit Trisha without any alterations. It just fit!

Which reminds me of the quote Amy V and shared for my first time teaching this class. It was in regards to Galatians 3:27: “For as many of you were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” “We are clothed with Christ. The more we grow, the more we fit into what Christ as given us.” It just keeps fitting!], by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” [So let’s talk about ABBA. ABBA is an acronym for the artists’ first names Agnetha, Bjorn, Benny, and Anni-frid. iTunes CD cover: ABBA rose out of Sweden in the Seventies to become one of the most successful and beloved pop groups in music history. Their success gave a more international flavor to popular music, broadening it beyond the English-speaking countries of origin. ABBA truly was an international phenomenon, topping charts and breaking records in England, France, Italy, Germany, Holland and Scandinavia. For a few years ABBA ranked second only to automaker Volvo as Sweden’s biggest money-making export. So that’s ABBA. The word here is abba, and like Jesus, this is better.

I am a dad of four kids. At different times, like Father’s Day, we look back and remember how things started with them. Matthew (who is now 17 and driving and has a job!) started out with “yuck” followed closely by “what’s that.” Mike is 15. He started with “ball.” Megan will soon be 13, and I got my “dada” first with her. Remi is four, and I am claiming “dada” because today is Father’s Day.

Abba is one of those first words. Guzik: Abba is an Aramaic affectionate diminutive for ‘father.’ It represents the earliest of speech patterns, not long after the babbling abababababa.

Morris: Many of God’s children lack a deep understanding of the Christian way, but that does not mean that they are not genuine Christians. Being a Christian is being a believer, not having an intellectual answer to all the problems we meet as we live out our Christian lives.
And just like Amy’s quote, this is a growing relationship in which the intimacy deepens. It’s not complex speech. It’s a recognition of need and a dependence on the one who can meet it, and a confidence to approach Him. This is affectionate. This is intimate, and this is personal.

Guzik: It is fitting that those who are in fact sons have the Spirit of the Son in their hearts. This gives us both the right and the ability to cry out, “Daddy!” to God our Father, even as Jesus did to His Father.

Calvin: I consider that this participle is used to express great boldness. Uncertainty does not let us speak calmly, but keeps our mouth half-shut, so that the half-broken words can hardly escape from a stammering tongue. ‘Crying’, on the contrary, is a sign of certainty and unwavering confidence.

Luther: Let the Law, sin, and the devil cry out against us until their outcry fills heaven and earth. The Spirit of God outcries them all. Our feeble groans, ‘Abba, Father,’ will be heard of God sooner than the combined racket of hell, sin, and the Law. As a father knows the voice of his child, so to our heavenly Father knows the voice of the Spirit of His Son. It has His attention. It cuts through all other noises. Example: Remi and the baby monitor.] 16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God [And why the testimony? As a lawyer, Paul knows that his audience knows that.

Guzik: Jewish law stated that at the mouth of two or three witnesses everything had to be established (Deuteronomy 17:6). There are two witnesses to our salvation: our own witness and the witness of the Spirit. Guzik: Plainly put, Paul says that those who are God’s children, born again by the Spirit of God, know their status because the Holy Spirit testifies to our spirit that this is so. i. This is not to say that there are not those who wrongly think or assume they are God’s children apart from the Spirit’s testimony. There are also Christians whose heads are so foggy from spiritual attack that they begin to believe the lie that they are not God’s children after all. Nevertheless the witness of the Spirit is still there. We are children of God: We don’t have to wonder if we are really Christians or not. God’s children know who they are.], 17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ [This is that legal progression that Jessica Norris shared that Paul is laying out for his audience. Heirs. Guzik: Because we are in Christ, we have the privilege of relating to the Father as Jesus does. Therefore, we are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. Being a child of God also means having an inheritance. In Luke 18:18 the rich young ruler asked Jesus, “what must I do to inherit?” But the rich young ruler missed the point because inheritance is not a matter of doing, it is a matter of being—of being in the right family.], provided [NIV: “if indeed”; KJV: “if so be”; Disciples’ Literal New Testament: “since we are”. Elisabeth Johnson (Professor, Lutheran Institute of Theology, Cameroon): Because we are joint heirs with Christ, we can expect to share in his sufferings as well as his glory (Romans 8:17).
Suffering is not evidence of separation from God, but a sign of living in the conflict zone between "this present time" and the "age to come," a sign of being indwelled by the Spirit of God which is at odds with the rule of sin and death (Romans 8:1-10). We suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

Apply (What is the point?)

1. We are adopted by God and owe the flesh nothing.
2. Kroll: We do not fear God as the slave fears his master.
3. Hughes: Abba, Father! It is not a reasoned cry, but a reflexive one, the cry of children. Amy Valovcin: His children, we are His and He listens when we call to Him. What a great lesson for Father’s Day! Hughes mentions that Abba is the Aramaic meaning, "Dear Father," and it is used in the same sense of when we say, "Dad," or, "Daddy," and that the Jews themselves did not address God in this way. Jesus alone used this to address His father. As heirs and children of God we can cry out to, "Abba, Father," to our heavenly Father. What a Father!! His love is unending and His grace and mercy are limitless. We can cry out in love, anger, sadness and He allows us to come and He calms us, rejoices with us and lets us vent. "Abba, Father!"

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. Our obligation is to live in the Spirit
2. Kroll: Rather, we love him as a son loves his father.
3. Cry out, "Abba, Father!"

Next week: Future Glory (8:18-30)

18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. 19 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. 23 And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. 24 For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.
Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

The identity the Spirit gives us is that of being sons and daughters of God.

God offers His soul-satisfying paternity to all who come to Him.

Abba, Father! It is not a reasoned cry, but a reflexive one, the cry of children. His children, we are His and He listens when we call to Him.

What a great lesson for Father’s Day! Hughes mentions that Abba is the Aramaic meaning, "Dear Father," and it is used in the same sense of when we say, "Dad," or, "Daddy," and that the Jews themselves did not address God in this way. Jesus alone used this to address His father.

As heirs and children of God we can cry out to, "Abba, Father," to our heavenly Father. What a Father!! His love is unending and His grace and mercy are limitless. We can cry
out in love, anger, sadness and He allows us to come and He calms us, rejoices with us and lets us vent.

"Abba, Father!"

**Jessica Norris (Kroll)**

Kroll: “We do not fear God as the slave fears his master. Rather, we love him as a son loves his father.” In Paul’s mind, there were four main consequences of adoption:

1) The adopted person lost all rights in his old family and gained all the rights of a fully legitimate son in his new family and got a new father.

2) It followed that he became heir to his new father’s estate that were equal to the blood related sons.

3) In law, the old life of the adopted person was completely wiped out, meaning all debts were canceled and wiped out as they had never been.

4) In the eyes of the law the adopted person was literally and absolutely the son of the new father.
Romans

Future Glory (Romans 8:18-30)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

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8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 8:18-30) is the ninth part of this major section.
Read: Future Glory (8:18-30)

18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. 19 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. 23 And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. 24 For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

26 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. 27 And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. 28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. 29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. 30 And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

Explain: Future Glory (8:18-30)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

Paul continues his thoughts from the prior passages and gives us two examples of the points he is making in this text.

What do the words mean?

18 For I consider [logizomai; present middle indicative; taken inventory, estimated, concluded, esteemed, imputed, numbered, reasoned, reckoned; same word used in Romans 2:3, 26; 3:28; 4:3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 22, 23, 24] that the sufferings [hardships, pains, emotions, influences, affections, afflictions, motions, sufferings; same word used in Romans 7:5] of this present time [occasion, proper time, opportunity, season, time, while; same word used in Romans 3:26; 5:6] are not worth comparing [deserve, suitable, due reward, meet, worthy; same word used in Romans 1:32] with the glory [very apparent glory, dignity, glory, honor, praise, worship; same word used in Romans
1:23; 2:7, 10; 3:7, 23; 4:20; 5:2; 6:4) that is [present active participle; intend, be about; same word used in Romans 4:24; 5:14; 8:13] to be revealed [aorist middle infinitive; to take off the cover, disclosed, revealed; the same word used in Romans 1:17, 18] to us. 19 For the creation [original formation, building, creation, creature, ordinance; same word used in Romans 1:20, 25] waits [present middle indicative; expects fully, looks, waits for] with eager longing [intense anticipation, earnest expectation] for the revealing [disclosed, appeared, coming, lightened, manifested, revealed, revelation; same word used in Romans 2:5] of the sons [child, son; same word used in Romans 1:3, 4, 9; 5:10; 8:3, 14] of God. 20 For the creation [original formation, building, creation, creature, ordinance; same word used in Romans 1:20, 25; 8:19] was subjected [hypotasso; second aorist passive (Robertson) indicative; subordinate, obey, be under obedience, put under, subdue under, make subject, put in subjection to, submit self to; same word used in Romans 8:7] to vanity, not willingly [voluntarily, willingly], but because [dia] of him who subjected it [hypotasso; aorist active participle; subordinate, obey, be under obedience, put under, subdue under, make subject, put in subjection to, submit self to; same word used in Romans 8:7 and earlier in Romans 8:20], in hope [expectation, confidence, faith, hope; same word used in Romans 4:18 (twice); 5:2, 4, 5] 21 that the creation [original formation, building, creation, creature, ordinance; same word used in Romans 1:20, 25; 8:19, 20] itself will be set free [future middle indicative; liberated, exempted, delivered, made free; same word used in Romans 6:18, 22; 8:2 (this is not, ‘set free,’ this is, ‘made free’)] from its bondage [slavery, bondage; same word used in Romans 8:15] to corruption [decay, ruin, corruption, destroy, perish] and obtain the freedom [freedom, liberty] of the glory [very apparent glory, dignity, glory, honor, praise, worship; same word used in Romans 1:23; 2:7, 10; 3:7, 23; 4:20; 5:2; 6:4; 8:18] of the children [children, daughters, sons; same word used in Romans 8:16, 17] of God. 22 For we know [perfect active indicative; to know, be aware, behold, consider, look, perceive, be sure, understand; same word used in Romans 7:7, 14, 18 (and other places)] that the whole creation [original formation, building, creation, creature, ordinance; same word used in Romans 1:20, 25; 8:19, 20, 21] has been groaning together [present active indicative; moan] jointly, experience a common calamity, groan together] in the pains of childbirth [present active indicative; have pangs in company with, sympathize with, travail in pain together] until now. 23 And not only the creation [this word is not in the original, but added here in the English for clarity], but we ourselves, who have [present active participle] the firstfruits [beginning of sacrifice, first fruits] of the Spirit [pneuma], groan [present active indicative; make in straits, sigh, murmur, pray inaudibly, with grief, groan, grudge, sigh] inwardly as we wait eagerly [present middle participle; expects fully, looks, waits for; same word used in Romans 8:19] for adoption as sons [the placing as a son, adoption of children, adoption of sons; same word used in
Romans 8:15, the redemption [ransom in full, riddance, salvation, deliverance, redemption] of our bodies. 24 For in this hope [expectation, confidence, faith, hope; same word used in Romans 4:18 (twice); 5:2, 4, 5; 8:20] we were saved [aorist passive (Robertson) indicative; saved, delivered, protected, healed, preserved, made whole; same word used in Romans 5:9, 10]. Now hope [expectation, confidence, faith, hope; same word used in Romans 4:18 (twice); 5:2, 4, 5; 8:20, earlier in Romans 8:24] that is seen [present middle participle; look, behold, beware, lie, look on, perceive, regard, see, take heed; same word used in Romans 7:23] is [present middle indicative] not hope [expectation, confidence, faith, hope; same word used in Romans 4:18 (twice); 5:2, 4, 5; 8:20, earlier in Romans 8:24 (twice)]. For who hopes [present active indicative; expects, confides, hopes, trusts] for what he sees [present active indicative; look, behold, beware, lie, look on, perceive, regard, see, take heed; same word used in Romans 7:23, earlier in Romans 8:24]? 25 But if we hope [present active indicative; expect, confide, hope, trust; same word used in Romans 8:24] for what we do not see [present active indicative; look, behold, beware, lie, look on, perceive, regard, see, take heed; same word used in Romans 7:23; 8:24], we wait [present middle indicative; expects fully, looks, waits for; same word used in Romans 8:19, 23] for it with [dia] patience [cheerful/hopeful endurance, constancy, endurance, patience, patient continuance, waiting; same word used in Romans 2:7; 5:3, 4].

26 Likewise [thus, in the same way, likewise] the Spirit [pneuma] helps [synantilambanomai; present middle indicative; to take hold of opposite together, cooperate, assist, help] us in our weakness [feebleness, malady, frailty, disease, infirmity, sickness, weakness; same word used in Romans 6:19]. For we do not know [perfect active indicative; to know, be aware, behold, consider, look, perceive, be sure, understand; same word used in Romans 7:7, 14, 18; 8:22 (and other places)] what to pray [supplicate, worship, pray, make prayer] for as we ought [present indicative; necessary, what must be met; same word used in Romans 1:27], but the Spirit [pneuma] himself intercedes [present active indicative; to intercede in behalf of; make intercession for] for us with groanings [sighs, groanings] too deep for words [unspeakable, unutterable, which cannot be uttered]. 27 And he who searches [present active participle; seeks, investigates, searches] hearts knows [perfect active indicative; to know, be aware, behold, consider, look, perceive, be sure, understand; same word used in Romans 7:7, 14, 18; 8:22, 26 (and other places)] what is the mind [to be inclined, to be purposed; same word used in Romans 8:6 (twice), 7] of the Spirit [pneuma], because the Spirit [pneuma] intercedes [perfect active indicative; chance upon, confer with, entreat, deal with, make intercession] for the saints [sacred, pure, consecrated, holy, saint; same word used in Romans 1:2, 7; 5:5; 7:12] according to the will of [Jim’s note: I do not see, “to the will of” in the Greek] God. 28 And we know [perfect active indicative; to know, be aware, behold, consider, look, perceive, be sure,
understand; same word used in Romans 7:7, 14, 18; 8:22, 26, 27 (and other places)]

that for those who love [agapao; present active participle; much love] God all things [all, any, every, whole, every one, thoroughly] work together [present active indicative; to be a fellow worker, cooperate, help work with, work together] for good [benefit, good, well; same word used in Romans 2:7, 10; 3:8; 5:7; 7:12, 13 (twice), 18, 19], for those who are [present middle participle] called [invited, appointed, called; same word used in Romans 1:2, 6, 7] according to his purpose [setting forth, proposal, intention, the show bread as exposed before God, purpose, showbread]. 29 For those whom he foreknew [aorist active indicative; to know beforehand, foresee, foreknow, ordain, know before] he also predestined [aorist active indicative; to limit in advance, predetermine, determine before, ordain, predestinate] to be conformed to [jointly formed, similar, conformed to, fashioned like unto] the image [likeness, statue, profile, representation, resemblance, image; same word used in Romans 1:23] of his Son [child, son; same word used in Romans 1:3, 4, 9; 5:10; 8:3, 14, 19], in order that he might be [present middle infinitive] the firstborn among many brothers. 30 And those whom he predestined [aorist active indicative; to limit in advance, predetermine, determine before, ordain, predestinate; same word used in Romans 8:29] he also called [aorist active indicative], and those whom he called [aorist active indicative] he also justified [aorist active indicative; rendered just, rendered innocent, freed, justified; same word used in Romans 2:13; 3:4, 20, 24, 26, 28, 30; 4:2, 5; 5:1, 9; 6:7], and those whom he justified [aorist active indicative; rendered just, rendered innocent, freed, justified; same word used in Romans 2:13; 3:4, 20, 24, 26, 28, 30; 4:2, 5; 5:1, 9; 6:7; earlier in Romans 8:30] he also glorified [aorist active indicative; render glorious, glorify, honor, magnify; same word used in Romans 1:21].

Are there any repeated words?

Spirit, God, glory, groan, hope, Son, creation, etc.

Are there any repeated topics?

Weakness/insufficiencies, hope in a better future fashioned by God

What are some observations of the text?

18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed [Morris: The glory will be revealed, not created. The implication is that it is already existent, but not apparent.] to us. 19 For the creation waits with eager longing [Paul anthropomorphizes creation here by giving it a desire like a human would have] for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the
freedom of the glory of the children of God [Godet: [Nature] possesses in the feeling of her unmerited suffering a sort of presentiment of her future deliverance.].

22 For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. 23 And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons [Hughes: We are tiptoe waiting for our deliverance], the redemption of our bodies. 24 For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

26 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words [Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: It is a picturesque word of rescue by one who “happens on” . . . one who is in trouble and “in his behalf” . . . pleads “with unuttered groanings” . . . or with “sighs that baffle words” (Denney).]. 27 And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God [Mounce: The Spirit comes to the aid of believers baffled by the perplexity of prayer and takes their concerns to God with an intensity far greater than we could ever imagine. Darla Skinner: Well, this relieves quite a bit of pressure from "what to pray."]

28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good [Chris Arnold: God has everything worked out and factored in], for those who are called according to his purpose [Perhaps since the showbread was always before God, this is God’s way of saying we are always before Him as He works all things together for good?]. 29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son [The Bible teaches predestination], in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. 30 And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified [Note that ‘glorified’ is assumed to already be complete—most believe this is due to Paul’s strong belief that what God starts, He finishes (therefore, our glorification is as good as done). God finishes.]

Apply (What is the point?)

1. The future cannot be compared to the present (for the believer)
2. Freedom and help will come (for the believer)
3. There will be groaning now (for the believer)

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. Look to the Father for a better home
2. Look to the Spirit for a better prayer
3. Look to the Son for a better image
Next week: God’s Everlasting Love (8:31-39)

31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? 33 Who shall bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? 36 As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”

37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

Romans 8 introduces the profound liberation that comes from the Holy Spirit . . . now in verses 17-18 Paul contrasts this rising hope with the inescapable reality of the pain of human existence and declares that our pain is not worthy to be compared with the coming glory.
This is an astounding statement. It is even more astounding that Paul should apply it to himself. He’s been stoned, robbed, whipped and imprisoned and yet he has realized that our sufferings here do not compare to the glory that is to come.

We are described as waiting "eagerly" (v 23). This same strong word is used of creation's waiting (v 19). We are tiptoe waiting for our deliverance. In verses 24, 25 . . . here we again find the same strong word, "waiting for it with patience." We are on tiptoe, and we wait with perseverance.

Someday we will know the fullness of our salvation.

How marvelous this all is. We have two intercessors: One in Heaven—our Lord Jesus who intercedes for our sins and one in our hearts (the Holy Spirit) himself. How greatly we are loved!!

The Holy Spirit says things those things that we want to say but cannot mouth. How beautiful! May we appreciate our wealth.

While our lives here can consist of a lot of groaning, I am grateful to have the Spirit to groan when I have no words.

Chris Arnold (Barclay)

Romans 8:18-25

Paul has just been speaking of the glory of adoption into the family of God; and then he comes back to the troubled state of this present world. When Paul was painting this picture, he was working with ideas that any Jew would recognize and understand. He talks of this present age and of the glory that will be disclosed. Jewish thought divided time into two sections—this present age and the age to come. This present age was wholly bad, subject to sin, and death and decay. Some day there would come The Day of the Lord. That would be a day of judgment when the world would be shaken to its foundations; but out of it there would come a new world.

The dream of the renovated world was dear to the Jews. Paul knew that, and here he, as it were, endows creation with consciousness. He thinks of nature longing for the day when sin's dominion would be broken, death and decay would be gone, and God's glory would come. With a touch of imaginative insight, he says that the state of nature was even worse than the state of men. Man had sinned deliberately; but it was involuntarily that nature was subjected. Unwittingly she was involved in the consequences of the sin of man. "Cursed is the ground because of you," God said to Adam after his sin (Genesis 3:17). So here, with a poet's eye, Paul sees nature waiting for liberation from the death and decay that man's sin had brought into the world.
Man, there sure is a lot of groaning. I see it as labor pains. There is so much more to come, that the current world cannot hardly take the delay. The fulfillment of Christ WANTS to occur. The delay hurts. But through our patience, and through pain, we will come through . . . and how much sweeter will the fulfillment of Christ’s promise be in the new world!

**Romans 8:26-30**

There are two very obvious reasons why we cannot pray as we ought. First, we cannot pray aright because we cannot foresee the future. We cannot see a year or even an hour ahead; and we may well pray, therefore, to be saved from things which are for our good and we may well pray for things which would be to our ultimate harm. Second, we cannot pray aright because in any given situation we do not know what is best for us. We are often in the position of a child who wants something which would be bound only to hurt him; and God is often in the position of a parent who has to refuse his child’s request or compel him to do something he does not want to do, because he knows what is to the child’s good far better than the child himself.

The reason we cannot pray as we ought is more than just an inability to “foresee the future.” (What Piffle!) It is more that we see God as Santa and we are caught up in our own desires and immediate concerns. We cannot see past our own concerns and issues because of the immediacy of our desires and the intensity of our human frailties. They blind us to the things and nature of God, who is able to take “the long view” while more than adequately securing our short-term needs.

But Paul goes on from there. He says that those who love God, and who are called according to his purpose, know well that God is intermingling all things for good to them. It is the experience of life for the Christian that all things do work together for good. We do not need to be very old to look back and see that things we thought were disasters worked out to our good; things that we thought were disappointments worked out to greater blessings.

He says that all things work together for good, but only to them that love God. If a man loves and trusts and accepts God, if he is convinced that God is the all-wise and all-loving Father, then he can humbly accept all that he sends to him. A man may go to a physician, and be prescribed a course of treatment which at the time is unpleasant or even painful; but if he trusts the wisdom of the man of skill, he accepts the thing that is laid upon him. It is so with us if we love God. But if a man does not love and trust God, he may well resent what happens to him and may well fight against God’s will. It is only to the man who loves and trusts that all things work together for good, for to him they come from a Father who in perfect wisdom, love and power is working ever for the best.
I’ve always taken some comfort in Romans 8:28. Not in the sense that there is an omnipotent umbrella keeping the acid rain of sin from falling on my head, but in the sense that, when I can be bothered to stop stressing and calm down a bit, I am reminded the God has everything worked out and factored in. My worry won’t necessarily abate, but the amount of change I can affect by worrying over matters beyond my ken has already been determined as 0%. So, I take peace in knowing that, God has all the details worked into the system and that I am one who loves God. I trust the redeemer. Which, is really all God has asked us to do. Trust Him. Accept His gift, freely, trusting that the gift is more priceless than our wildest imaginings. Trust that the true value of the gift will not be revealed in its fullness in our earthly life, but will become exceedingly glorious in the fullness of time.

Paul goes further; he goes on to speak of the spiritual experience of every Christian. The King James Version rendering is famous. "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. 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." This is a passage which has been very seriously misused. If we are ever to understand it we must grasp the basic fact that Paul never meant it to be the expression of theology or philosophy; he meant it to be the almost lyrical expression of Christian experience. If we take it as philosophy and theology and apply the standards of cold logic to it, it must mean that God chose some and did not choose others. But that is not what it means.

It is the deep experience of the Christian that all is of God; that he did nothing and that God did everything. That is what Paul means here. He means that from the beginning of time God marked us out for salvation; that in due time his call came to us; but the pride of man's heart can wreck God's plan and the disobedience of man's will can refuse the call.

^^This^^

While God certainly can choose the predestine the sanctification and salvation of some, I feel that would make God capricious. While I truly know that God is fully aware that some will choose not to accept Christ, the fact of the matter is that He set up apart and made us save-able, through Christ. He provided the manner of our salvation, not to exclude or be exclusionary, but to be inclusive and accepting of all who choose to answer the call. Therefore, it is not our place to place limits on this passage by saying “so-and-so is not of the chosen,” but to stand back and let God’s unwavering and unselfish love for everyone be answered by everyone in their own heart.
Darla Skinner (Mounce)

God understands what the Spirit desires even though it is inexpressible in human terms (v. 27). God is the one who has complete access to the heart. His knowledge is direct, not dependent upon one’s ability to articulate concerns. God is a searcher of hearts and knows the desires of the Spirit as the Spirit intercedes for us. He knows that the Spirit is interceding for saints in harmony with his will. No passage of Scripture provides greater encouragement for prayer. The Spirit comes to the aid of believers baffled by the perplexity of prayer and takes their concerns to God with an intensity far greater than we could ever imagine.

Well, this relieves quite a bit of pressure from "what to pray."

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

Suffering is the necessary prelude to glory. The glory awaits us; the suffering is now. Kroll points out that all of creation suffers because of man sinning. We often use that as the reason for why natural disasters occur. Although I know that all of the earth groans waiting for the day that it will be cursed no longer due to our sin, reading it again in this chapter of Kroll's shed fresh light on the impact of that one fateful sin in the garden truly did effect everything.

Kroll likens the indwelling spirit in Christians as a "down payment" on the eternal glory that awaits both believers and creation. He also points out that the Holy Spirit is the One that helps our weakness. When your whole world collapses around you and you can't even pray, the Spirit grieves with you and prays for you. But His grief exceeds yours, and He groans with feelings too deep for words. The Father searches the mind of the Spirit, interprets these groanings, and knows what His Holy Spirit is thinking as He prays in your behalf. When Paul says that "all things to work together for good," it does not mean that "all things" is a promise that every detail or event in your life will turn from bad to good. It means that "all things" is that nothing is excluded from God's sovereign control.

Paul uses 5 theological words to describe 5 works of grace that God performs in our behalf to insure that our future is what He intended it to be before the world began: foreknew, predestined, called, justified, and glorified.

Kroll calls this the prospect of the unbroken chain which reminds me of the phrase "you're only as strong as your weakest link." These links are powerful and equal in strength, making this an indestructible chain.
Romans

God’s Everlasting Love (Romans 8:31-39)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

✓ Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17) (four weeks)
✓ Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20) (six weeks)
✓ Saving Righteousness (3:21-4:25) (three weeks)
7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 8:31-39) is the tenth part of this major section.
Read: God’s Everlasting Love (8:31-39)

31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? 33 Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? 36 As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”

37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Explain: God’s Everlasting Love (8:31-39)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions. Are there any literary/structural observations?

What do the words mean?

31 What then shall we say [future active indicative] to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare [aorist middle (Robertson) indicative; abstain, treat leniently, forbear, spare] his own Son [child, son; same word used in Romans 1:3, 4, 9; 5:10; 8:3, 14, 19, 29] but gave him up [aorist active indicative; surrendered, yielded up, entrusted, transmitted, betrayed, brought forth, cast, committed, delivered, gave over, gave up, hazarded, put in prison, recommended; same word used in Romans 1:24, 26, 28; 4:25; 6:17] for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us [future active indicative; to grant as a favor, ‘gratuitously, in kindness, pardon or rescue,’ deliver, forgive, freely give, grant] all things? 33 Who shall bring any charge [future active indicative; to call in (as a debt or demand), bring to account, accuse, call in question, implead, lay to the charge] against God's elect [select, favorite, chosen, elect]? It is God who justifies [present active participle; rendered just, rendered innocent, freed, justified; same word used in Romans 2:13; 3:4, 20, 24, 26, 28, 30; 4:2, 5; 5:1, 9; 6:7; 8:30 (twice)]. 34 Who is to condemn [present/future (Robertson) active participle; judge against, sentence, condemn, damn;
same word used in Romans 2:1; 8:3? Christ Jesus is the one who died [second aorist active participle; has died off, is dead, died, lies a-dying, is slain; same word used in Romans 5:6, 7, 8, 15; 6:2, 7, 8, 9, 10 (twice), 7:2, 3, 6, 9; 8:13]—more than that, who was raised [aorist middle participle; woke, roused, lifted up, raised again, stood, took up; same word used in Romans 4:24, 25; 6:4, 9; 7:4; 8:11]—who is [present middle indicative] at the right hand [right hand, right side] of God, who indeed is interceding [present active indicative; chance upon, confer with, entreat, deal with, make intercession; same word used in Romans 8:27] for us. 35 Who shall separate [future active indicative; place room between, go away, depart, put asunder, separate] us from the love [agape] of Christ? Shall tribulation [pressure, affliction, anguish, burden, persecution, tribulation, trouble; same word used in Romans 2:9; 5:3 (twice)], or distress [narrowness of room, calamity, anguish, distress; same word used in Romans 2:9], or persecution, or famine [scarcity of food, death, famine, hunger], or nakedness [nudity, nakedness], or danger [danger, peril], or sword [knife, dirk, war, judicial punishment, sword]? 36 As it is written [perfect middle indicative], “For your sake [on account of, because, for cause, for sake, wherefore, by reason of, that] we are being killed [present active (Robertson) indicative; become dead, put to death, killed, mortified; same word used in Romans 7:4] all the day long; we are regarded [logizoma; aorist middle indicative; taken inventory, estimated, concluded, esteemed, imputed, numbered, reasoned, reckoned; same word used in Romans 2:3, 26; 3:28; 4:3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 22, 23, 24; 6:11; 8:18] as sheep to be slaughtered [butchered, sacrificed, destroyed, slaughtered].”

37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors [present active indicative; to vanquish beyond, gain a decisive victory, more than conquer] through [dia] him who loved [agape; aorist active participle] us. 38 For I am sure [perfect passive (Robertson) participle (Robertson); convinced, assented, rely, agreed, assured, believed, have confidence in, contented, make friend, obeyed, persuaded, trusted, yielded; same word used in Romans 2:8, 19] that neither death nor life, nor angels [messenger, pastor, angel] nor rulers [chiefs, beginnings, corners, magistrates, powers, principalities, principles, rulers], nor things present [perfect active participle; place on hand, impend, be instant, come, be at hand, present] nor things to come [present active participle; intend, be about; same word used in Romans 4:24; 5:14; 8:13, 18], nor powers [dynamis; force, miraculous power, ability, abundance, meaning, might, miracle, strength, violence, mighty work; same word used in Romans 1:4, 16, 20], 39 nor height [an elevated place or thing, altitude, barrier, height, high thing] nor depth [profundity, extent, mystery, deep, deepness, deep things, depth], nor anything else in all creation [original formation, building, creation, creature, ordinance; same word used in Romans 1:20, 25; 8:19, 20, 21, 22], will be able [dynamai; future active indicative; able, possible,
be of power; same word used in Romans 8:7, 8 to separate us [aorist active infinitive; place room between, go away, depart, put asunder, separate; same word used in Romans 8:35] from the love [agape] of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Are there any repeated words?

Are there any repeated topics?

What are some observations of the text?

31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? 33 Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. [Ironside: Every voice is silenced. Every accusation is hushed. Our standing in Christ is complete. Kroll: The only one who could legitimately condemn us is the very person who died for us.] 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? [Hughes: Paul is speaking autobiographically, having experienced all that he writes about here, and he affirms that none of this—in fact nothing at all—can separate use from Christ's love.] 36 As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”

37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Apply (What is the point?)

1. Security of the believer
2. Bad stuff happens . . .
3. God's got this

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. You + God = win!
2. Be quick to consider other believers. God uses everything!
3. Worry is real, but so is God!

Next week: God’s Sovereign Choice (9:1-29) (1/2)

1 I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit—2 that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh. 4 They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. 5 To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.

6 But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, 7 and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but “Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.” 8 This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring. 9 For this is what the promise said: “About this time next year I will return, and Sarah shall have a son.” 10 And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, 11 though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God’s purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls—12 she was told, “The older will serve the younger.” 13 As it is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.”

14 What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God’s part? By no means! 15 For he says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.” 16 So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy. 17 For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, “For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.” 18 So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.

19 You will say to me then, “Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?” 20 But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, “Why have you made me like this?” 21 Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use? 22 What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, 23 in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory—24 even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles? 25 As indeed he says in Hosea,
“Those who were not my people I will call ‘my people,’
and her who was not beloved I will call ‘beloved.’”

26 “And in the very place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’
there they will be called ‘sons of the living God.’”

27 And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: “Though the number of the sons of Israel be
as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved, 28 for the Lord will carry
out his sentence upon the earth fully and without delay.” 29 And as Isaiah predicted,

“If the Lord of hosts had not left us offspring,
we would have been like Sodom
and become like Gomorrah.”

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

The name of this chapter is Super Conquerors, I find great comfort that through Christ I
can be a Super Conqueror.

In verse 35 Paul is speaking autobiographically, having experienced all that he writes
about here, and he affirms that none of this—if fact nothing at all—can separate us
from Christ’s love.

We may be defeated at this moment, but evil will never prevail. We are always being
led to victory in Christ. . . . God is for us.

God is for me, He is for us all. He spares nothing and will stop at nothing. He freely
gave us His son, He stands for us and He will not let us separate. While there are times
that we feel alone, He has never left us. We may move but He . . . He stays steady and always at the ready.

**Jessica Norris (Kroll)**

The only one who could legitimately condemn us is the very person who died for us. Only God could come up with a plan like that!

Tribulation: *thlipsis* in Greek which means "pressure" such as pressed together in a vice. This reminds me of how diamonds are formed.

Distress: *stenochoria* in Greek and denotes a narrow place, a tight squeeze.

Persecution: *diogmos* and is referring to any form of harassment.

Famine: *limos* in Greek and is the death of anything but especially food which of course leads to hunger.

Nakedness: *gumnos* in Greek and is referring to the nakedness of the body.

Peril: *kindunos* in Greek and denotes any kind of danger or jeopardy.

Sword: *machaira* in Greek and identifies either a large knife or a small sword.

Paul searches the entire universe and is unable to find anything that can separate us from God and His love for his children. Not tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, or sword.

**Sean McGarvey (Ironside)**

There is no answer possible. Every voice is silenced. Every accusation is hushed. Our standing in Christ is complete, and our justification unchangeable.

Even though exposed as sheep to the slaughter, yet death but ushers us into the presence of the Lord. In all circumstances we more than conquer, we triumph in Christ.

And so, as he began with this portion with “no condemnation,” he ends with “no separation.”
Romans

God’s Sovereign Choice (Romans 9:1-29)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

- Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17) (four weeks)
- Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20) (six weeks)
- Saving Righteousness (3:21-4:25) (three weeks)
- Righteous Freedom (5:1-8:39) (11 weeks)
7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 9:1-29) is the first part of this major section.

Review #1: all that God does is good, right, and holy—whether or not we understand and/or can explain it.
Review #2: contradiction = I am wearing a shirt and I am not wearing a shirt. Not a contradiction = I am wearing a red shirt and I am wearing a white shirt. Be very wary claiming contradictions in the Bible (and don’t write off what you don’t understand).

Review #3: Israeli family history

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**Read: God’s Sovereign Choice (9:1-29)**

1 I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit— 2 that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh. 4 They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. 5 To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.

6 But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, 7 and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but “Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.” 8 This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring. 9 For this is what the promise said: “About this time next year I will return, and Sarah shall have a son.” 10 And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, 11 though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God’s purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls— 12 she was told, “The older will serve the younger.” 13 As it is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.”

14 What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God’s part? By no means! 15 For he says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.” 16 So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but
on God, who has mercy. 17 For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, “For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.” 18 So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.

19 You will say to me then, “Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?” 20 But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, “Why have you made me like this?” 21 Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use? 22 What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, 23 in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory— 24 even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles? 25 As indeed he says in Hosea,

“Those who were not my people I will call ‘my people,’
and her who was not beloved I will call ‘beloved.’”

26 “And in the very place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’
there they will be called ‘sons of the living God.’”

27 And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: “Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved, 28 for the Lord will carry out his sentence upon the earth fully and without delay.” 29 And as Isaiah predicted,

“If the Lord of hosts had not left us offspring,
we would have been like Sodom
and become like Gomorrah.”

**Explain: God’s Sovereign Choice (9:1-29)**

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

**Are there any literary/structural observations?**

We move into this new major section and Paul again begins to quote Old Testament passages in Romans 9:1-13 (we’re splitting this large text of Romans 9:1-29 into two weeks of Sunday school classes): Genesis 21:12; 18:10; 25:23; Malachi 1:2-3.

**Why?** Because he’s talking to his Jewish brothers and sisters again and the Jews would know the Old Testament and Paul is going to use the Old Testament to lay down doctrine they needed to know.

Note: Paul’s audience for this major section are Jews (this section does not apply to Gentiles).
What do the words mean?

1 I am speaking [present active indicative] the truth in Christ—I am not lying [present middle indicative]; my conscience [co-perception, moral consciousness, conscience; same word used in Romans 2:15] bears me witness [present active participle; symmartyreo (with + martyr); to testify jointly, corroborate by concurrent evidence, testify unto, bear witness with; same word used in Romans 2:15; 8:16] in the Holy [sacred, pure, consecrated, holy, saint; same word used in Romans 1:2, 7; 5:5; 7:12; 8:27] Spirit [pneuma]—2 that I have [present middle indicative] great [megas; big, exceedingly, great, high, large, loud, mighty, sore afraid, strong; Jim’s note: it seems odd to me that such a common concept as large hasn’t been used by Paul to this point in Romans (especially given some of the severity to which some of the ideas he’s communicated have stretched)] sorrow [sadness, grief, heaviness, sorrow] and unceasing [unintermitted, permanent, without ceasing, continual] anguish [grief, dejection, sorrow] in my heart. 3 For I could wish [imperfect (action continually or repeatedly happening in past time) middle indicative; wish, pray, will] that I myself were accursed [anathema; present middle infinitive; banned, excommunicated, accursed, anathema, cursed] and cut off from [away from, separation, departure, cessation, completion, reversal] Christ for the sake of [above, beyond, across, for the sake of, instead, regarding, more than, on behalf of, on the part of] my brothers, my kinsmen [syngenes; relative, countryman, cousin, kinfolk, kinsman] according to the flesh. 4 They are [present middle indicative] Israelites, and to them belong the adoption [the placing as a son, adoption of children, adoption of sons; same word used in Romans 8:15, 23], the glory [very apparent glory, dignity, glory, honor, praise, worship; same word used in Romans 1:23; 2:7, 10; 3:7, 23; 4:20; 5:2; 6:4; 8:18, 21], the covenants [disposition, contract, will, covenant, testament], the giving of the law [nomothesia; legislation, giving of the law], the worship [ministration, worship, divine service], and the promises [announcement, message, promise; same word used in Romans 4:13, 14, 16, 20]. 5 To them belong [present middle participle] the patriarchs [fathers, parents], and from their race, according to the flesh, is [present middle participle] the Christ, who is [present middle participle] God over all, blessed [adorable, blessed; same word used in Romans 1:25] forever [for an age, in perpetuity, for the duration of the world, present age, future age, eternal, forever, without end; same word used in Romans 1:25]. Amen [firm, trustworthy, surely, so be it, amen, verily; same word used in Romans 1:25].

6 But it is not as though the word [logos] of God has failed [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) active indicative; dropped away, driven out of its course (like a golf cart driven off the cart path), lose, become inefficient, be cast away, fail, fall away, fall off, take none effect]. For not all who are descended from [’of’ in Greek] Israel belong to Israel [Paul talked about a very similar concept in Romans 4] by saying
keeping the Law doesn’t make you a son of Abraham—faith makes [in this context a Jew] you a son of Abraham. And he expands on a similar concept here. Similarly, the American Great Awakening had a similar concept that was made popular: God has no grandchildren. The thrust was focused on the fact that you (personally) are either a child of God or you are not—there’s no other way to a relationship than personally.), 7 and not all are [present middle indicative] children [children, daughters, sons; same word used in Romans 8:16, 17, 21] of Abraham because they are his offspring [sperma; seed, offspring, remnant, issue; same word used in Romans 1:3; 4:13, 16], but [Genesis 21:12] (God speaking to Abraham about the future birth of his son) “Through Isaac shall your offspring [sperma; seed, offspring, remnant, issue; same word used in Romans 1:3; 4:13, 16, and earlier in 9:7] be named [future middle indicative; this may be talking about the title of “Israelites” that God would give His children through Isaac’s son Jacob].” 8 This means that it is [present middle indicative] not the children [children, daughters, sons; same word used in Romans 8:16, 17, 21; 9:7] of the flesh [not the physical body] who are the children [children, daughters, sons; same word used in Romans 8:16, 17, 21; 9:7] of God, but the children [children, daughters, sons; same word used in Romans 8:16, 17, 21; 9:7, and earlier in 9:8] of the promise [announcement, message, promise; same word used in Romans 4:13, 14, 16, 20; 9:4] are counted [logizomai; present middle indicative; taken inventory, estimated, concluded, esteemed, imputed, numbered, reasoned, reckoned; same word used in Romans 2:3, 26; 3:28; 4:3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 22, 23, 24; 6:11; 8:18, 36] as offspring [sperma; seed, offspring, remnant, issue; same word used in Romans 1:3; 4:13, 16; 9:7 (twice); the Jews’ biological father does not guarantee their spiritual father]. 9 For this is what the promise [announcement, message, promise; same word used in Romans 4:13, 14, 16, 20; 9:4, 8] said [logos]: [Genesis 18:10] “About this time [occasion, proper time, opportunity, season, time, while; same word used in Romans 3:26; 5:6; 8:18] next year I will return [future active indicative], and Sarah shall have [future middle indicative] a son [child, son; same word used in Romans 1:3, 4, 9; 5:10; 8:3, 14, 19, 29, 32].” 10 And not only so, but also when Rebekah [Isaac’s wife] had conceived [kōiē; present active participle; couch, cohabitation, bed, chambering, conceive] children by one man, our forefather Isaac, 11 though they were not yet born [aorist middle participle; procreated, regenerated, born, beget, brought forth, conceived, delivered, gendered, made, sprung] and had done [perform repeatedly, habitually, execute, accomplish, collect, fare, commit, deeds, do, exact, keep, require, use arts; same word used in Romans 1:32; 2:1, 2, 3, 25; 7:15, 19] nothing either good [benefit, good, well; same word used in Romans 2:7, 10; 3:8; 5:7; 7:12, 13, 18, 19; 8:28] or bad [foul, flawy, wicked, evil]—in order that God’s purpose [setting forth, proposal, intention, the show bread as exposed before God, purpose, showbread] of election [selection, chosen, election] might continue [present active subjunctive (probability or possibility); stay, abide,
continue, dwell, endure, be present, remain, stand, tarry; God chose which one He was going to use before they were born (soak on that!), not because of works [works, toils, effort, occupation, act, doing, labor; same word used in Romans 2:6, 7, 15; 3:20, 27, 28; 4:2, 6] but because of him who calls [present active participle; Who calls? God]— 12 she was told [aorist middle indicative; flow (as in flowing words)], [Gen 25:23] “The older [larger in age, elder, greater, more] will serve [douleuo; future active indicative; be a slave, be in bondage, do service; same word used in Romans 6:6; 7:6, 25] the younger [smaller in age, less, under, worse, younger].” 13 As it is written [perfect (completed action with the results continuing) middle indicative], [Mal 1:2-3] “Jacob I loved [agapao; aorist active indicative], but Esau I hated [aorist active indicative; detest, love less, hate; same word used in Romans 7:15].”

Week 25 homework:

- Write down what Romans 9:14-29 says and think about the implications of those statements.
- Extra credit homework: review Exodus 33; 8-9; Isaiah 28-29; Hosea
- Thought to keep in mind: God never got off His path.

The rest of this lesson (Romans 9:14-29, repeated words, repeated topics, observations, applications, personalizations) will be reviewed in week 26.

14 What shall we say [future active indicative] then? Is there injustice [legal injustice, moral wrongfulness, iniquity, unrighteousness, wrong; same word used in Romans 1:18, 29; 2:8; 3:5; 6:13] on God’s part? By no means [second aorist active optative (possibility (more remotely possible than subjunctive)); to become, to come into existence, begin to be, receive being; same phrase used in Romans 3:4, 6, 31; 6:2, 15; 7:7, 13; 9:14; 11:1, 11]! 15 For he says [lego; present active indicative] to Moses, “I will have mercy on [future active indicative; have compassion on, have pity on, have mercy on, show mercy on] whom I have mercy [present active subjunctive; have compassion on, have pity on, have mercy on, show mercy on; same word used earlier in Romans 9:15], and I will have compassion [future active indicative] on whom I have compassion [present active subjunctive].” 16 So then it depends not on human will [present active participle; determine, choose, prefer, wish, inclined, be about, delight in, desire, intend, list, love, mean, please, will; same word used in Romans 1:13; 7:15, 16, 18, 19 (twice), 20, 21] or exertion [trecho; present active participle; course, run], but on God, who has mercy [present active participle; have compassion on, have pity on, have mercy on, show mercy on; same word used in Romans 9:15 (twice)]. 17 For the Scripture says [present active indicative] to Pharaoh [Egyptian king], [Ex 9:16; but see also Ex 8:15, 32; 9:34] “For this very purpose [the same] I have raised you up [roused fully, resuscitate from death, release from infliction, raised up], that I might show [indicate, do, show; same word used in Romans 2:15] my power [dynamis; force, miraculous
power, ability, abundance, meaning, might, miracle, strength, violence, mighty work; same word used in Romans 1:4, 16, 20; 8:38] in you, and that my name might be proclaimed [second aorist passive (Robertson) subjunctive; declared, preached, signified] in all the earth.” 18 So then he has mercy on [present active indicative; have compassion on, have pity on, have mercy on, show mercy on; same word used in Romans 9:15 (twice), 16] whomever he wills [present active indicative; determine, choose, prefer, wish, inclined, be about, delight in, desire, intend, list, love, mean, please, will; same word used in Romans 1:13; 7:15, 16, 18, 19 (twice), 20, 21; 9:16], and he hardens [present active indicative; renders stubborn, harden; Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: This . . . word is used by the Greek physicians Galen (~200 AD) and Hippocrates (~400 BC)] whomever he wills [present active indicative; determine, choose, prefer, wish, inclined, be about, delight in, desire, intend, list, love, mean, please, will; same word used in Romans 1:13; 7:15, 16, 18, 19 (twice), 20, 21; 9:16, earlier in 9:18].

19 You will say [future active indicative] to me then, “Why does he still find fault [present middle indicative; blame, find fault]? For who can resist [perfect active indicative; resist, stand against, oppose, withstand] his will [resolve, purpose, will]?” 20 But who are [present middle indicative] you, O man, to answer back [present middle participle; contradict, dispute, answer again, reply against] to God? Will what is molded [thing formed] say [future active indicative] to its molder [aorist active participle; shaper, fabricator, former], “Why have you made [aorist active indicative] me like this?” 21 Has [present active indicative] the potter [kerameus] no right [authority, jurisdiction, liberty, power, right, strength] over the clay, to make [aorist active infinitive] out of the same lump one vessel [skeuos (Jim’s note: reminds me of SKU); goods, sail, stuff, vessel] for honorable [value, money paid, valuables, esteem dignity, honor, preciousness, price; same word used in Romans 2:7, 10] use and another for dishonorable [infamous, indignity, disgraceful, dishonorable, reproach, shameful, vile; same word used in Romans 1:26] use? 22 What if God, desiring [present active participle; determine, choose, prefer, wish, inclined, be about, delight in, desire, intend, list, love, mean, please, will; same word used in Romans 1:13; 7:15, 16, 18, 19 (twice), 20, 21; 9:16, earlier in 9:18 (twice)] to show [indicate, do, show; same word used in Romans 2:15; 9:17] his wrath [desire, violent passion, abhorrence, punishment, anger, indignation, vengeance, wrath; same word used in Romans 1:18; 2:5, 8; 4:15; 5:9] and to make known [aorist active infinitive; certified, declared, made known, made to understand] his power [dynateo; able, could, mighty, possible, power, strong; same word used in Romans 4:21], has endured [aorist active indicative; borne, carried, endured] with much patience [longanimity, forbearance, fortitude, longsuffering, patience; same word used in Romans 2:4] vessels [skeuos; goods, sail, stuff, vessel; same word used in Romans 9:21] of wrath [desire, violent passion, abhorrence, punishment, anger, indignation,
vengeance, wrath; same word used in Romans 1:18; 2:5, 8; 4:15; 5:9; earlier in 9:22] prepared [perfect middle participle; fitted, framed, mended, made perfectly joined together, prepared, restored] for destruction [damnation, destruction, death, perdition, perish, pernicious ways, waste; Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: not annihilation], 23 in order to make known [aorist active subjunctive; certified, declared, made known, made to understand; same word used in Romans 9:22] the riches [wealth, fullness, money, possessions, abundance, richness, valuable bestowment, riches; same word used in Romans 2:4] of his glory [very apparent glory, dignity, glory, honor, praise, worship; same word used in Romans 1:23; 2:7, 10; 3:7, 23; 4:20; 5:2; 6:4; 8:18, 21; 9:4] for vessels [skeuos; goods, sail, stuff, vessel; same word used in Romans 9:21, 22] of mercy [compassion, tender mercy], which he has prepared beforehand [aorist active indicative; ordained before, prepared before, fitted up in advance] for glory [very apparent glory, dignity, glory, honor, praise, worship; same word used in Romans 1:23; 2:7, 10; 3:7, 23; 4:20; 5:2; 6:4; 8:18, 21; 9:4, earlier in 9:23]— 24 even us whom he has called [aorist active indicative], not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles [ethnos; race, tribe, foreigner, Gentile, heathen, nation, people]? 25 As indeed he says [present active indicative] in Hosea, [Hosea 2:23]

“Those who were not my people I will call [future active indicative] ‘my people,’ and her who was not beloved [agapao; perfect middle participle] I will call ‘beloved [agapao; perfect middle participle].’”

26 “And in the very place [topos; spot, space, location, condition, opportunity] where it was said [aorist middle indicative] to them, [Hosea 1:10] ‘You are not my people,’ there they will be called [future middle indicative] ‘sons [child, son; same word used in Romans 1:3, 4, 9; 5:10; 8:3, 14, 19, 29, 32; 9:9] of the living [present active participle] God.’”

27 And Isaiah cries out [present active indicative; croak, scream, call aloud, shriek, exclaim, intreat, cry, cry out; same word used in Romans 8:15] concerning Israel [Isaiah 10:22]: “Though the number [arithmos] of the sons [child, son; same word used in Romans 1:3, 4, 9; 5:10; 8:3, 14, 19, 29, 32; 9:9, 26] of Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant [remainder, few, remnant] of them will be saved [future middle indicative; saved, delivered, protected, healed, preserved, made whole; same word used in Romans 5:9, 10; 8:24], [Isaiah 28:22] 28 for the Lord will carry out [present active participle; complete entirely execute, end, finish, fulfill, make] his sentence [logos] upon the earth fully and without delay [present active participle; contract by cutting, do concisely, cut short].” 29 And as Isaiah predicted [perfect active indicative; said already, predicted, foretold, said before],

“If the Lord of hosts [armies] had not left [second aorist active indicative; left behind, let remain over, desert, forsake, left] us offspring [sperma; seed, offspring, remnant,
issue; same word used in Romans 1:3; 4:13, 16; 9:7 (twice),
we would have been [aorist middle indicative] like Sodom
and become like [aorist middle indicative; assimilated, compared to, become similar to, be like, resemble] Gomorrah.”

Are there any repeated words?
Children, offspring, vessels,

What are some observations of the text?

Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: There is a national election as seen in Romans 9:7-13

1 I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit—2 that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh. 4 They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. 5 To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all [Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: A clear statement of the deity of Christ], blessed forever. Amen.

6 But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel [Remember in Romans 4 Paul made a similar type of argument], 7 and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but “Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.” 8 This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring. 9 For this is what the promise said: “About this time next year I will return, and Sarah shall have a son.” 10 And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, 11 though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God’s purpose of election might continue, not because of works [God’s sovereign choice to save is based on God’s sovereign choice and not on our future works (even a future work of faith)] but because of him who calls—12 she was told, “The older will serve the younger.” 13 As it is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.”

Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: There is a national election as seen in Romans 9:7-13, but here Paul deals with the election of individuals

14 What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God’s part? By no means! 15 For he says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.” 16 So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy. 17 For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, “For this very purpose I
have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.” 18 So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.

19 You will say to me then, “Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?” 20 But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, “Why have you made me like this?” 21 Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use? 22 What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, 23 in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory— 24 even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles? 25 As indeed he says in Hosea,

“Those who were not my people [Hosea had a son (Hosea 1:8-9) named Loammi (not my people)] I will call ‘my people,’

and her who was not beloved [Hosea had a daughter (Hosea 1:6-7) named Loruhamah (not pitied)] I will call ‘beloved.’”

26 “And in the very place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ there they will be called ‘sons of the living God.’”

27 And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: “Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved, 28 for the Lord will carry out his sentence upon the earth fully and without delay.” 29 And as Isaiah predicted,

“If the Lord of hosts had not left us offspring,

we would have been like Sodom

and become like Gomorrah.”

Hughes: The fact is, God is perfect. Perfect in knowledge, wisdom, power, presence, faithfulness, goodness, justice, mercy, grace, love, and holiness. Therefore he is perfect in His choices. . . . God does not answer to anyone, is not responsible to anyone. He is totally, absolutely sovereign.

Verse-by-verse observations (Jim’s homework from week 25):

- 14: There is no injustice on God’s part
- 15: God’s mercy and compassion are solely His to dispense
- 16: Man cannot want or work to overcome God’s sovereignty
- 17: The proclamation of God’s name was the reason for raising up (and bring down) Pharaoh
- 18: God’s mercy and hardening are solely His to dispense
- 19: Men will ask questions
• 20: Man has no right to question God’s actions/intent
• 21: God has a sovereign right to do as He wills with His creation
• 22: God may have prepared some people for destruction showing His wrath and His power
• 23: God may have prepared some people for destruction to show His glory to His children
• 24: God chooses both Jews and Gentiles
• 25: God will choose those outside of “His people” to be “His people”
• 26: God will choose those outside of “His people” to be “sons of the living God”
• 27: Not all genetic Israelites will be saved
• 28: The sovereign judge will judge promptly
• 29: Without God, we are like Sodom and Gomorrah

Apply (What is the point?)

1. God is **sovereign** (and it fits Him)
2. God sovereignly **chooses** (and it fits Him)
3. God has been sovereignly choosing (and it fit Him)

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. Submit to His sovereignty (because sovereignty doesn’t fit us)
2. Submit to His present sovereign choices (because sovereignty can’t fit us)
3. Submit to His past sovereign choices (because sovereignty never fit us)

Next week: Israel’s Unbelief (9:30-10:4)

30 What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith; 31 but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law. 32 Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone, 33 as it is written,

“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

1 Brothers, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved. 2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.
**Homework**

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: *Romans* (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read *(Romans)*
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

**Quotes & Observations**

**Amy Valovcin (Hughes)**

It seems that Paul takes a rather sharp turn with this chapter. He really pours out his heart in the beginning, saying that he wishes it could be him that is cut off from Christ rather than *"his brothers."* However, he is quick to clarify that the word has not failed, God has not failed.

Luther put it this way . . . “Love is not only pure joy, and delight, but also great and deep heaviness of heart and sorrow.” Paul's immense heart bore an ache for all Israel.

The fact is, God is perfect. Perfect in knowledge, wisdom, power, presence, faithfulness, goodness, justice, mercy, grace, love, and holiness. Therefore he is perfect in His choices.

I could think of many more adjectives to list in the line above. God is perfect, in all He does and in everything He is. We are His creation and while we question the way things are and the way we are, we can fully lean on the fact that He is perfect in His choices.

Going through the homework for this week and vs 21 has me thinking of a lot of things. "The potter can do what he wants with the clay." (Amy V Translation)

God is in control and we are His (25) It all depends on Him (16) and He uses who He chooses (17).

**God does not answer to anyone, is not responsible to anyone. He is totally, absolutely sovereign.**
Darla Skinner (Mounce)

Although the text says repeatedly, however, that God hardened Pharaoh’s heart, it also stresses that Pharaoh hardened himself (cf. Exodus 7:13-14, 22; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:7, 34-35). Morris notes that “neither here nor anywhere else is God said to harden anyone who had not first hardened himself.”

God’s freedom to do that which is in accordance with his will does not sit well with many moderns whose philosophy of life stems from a combination of relativism and belief in personal autonomy. For the Christian, however, it is important to build one’s theology not on personal perceptions of what ought to be but upon the biblical revelation of the character and purpose of God. The unalterable nature of God and the absolute justice of his actions are undoubtedly more difficult for the twentieth-century reader to understand than for those who lived in the biblical period, but a proper hermeneutic calls for us to interpret Scripture in its historical context. While its meaning will never change, how it is to be applied will depend upon the context of the reader. To fault God for showing mercy to some while hardening others is to require that he conform to our fallible and arbitrary concept of justice.

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

Kroll: Paul makes the distinction between Jews and Israelites. Not all that are racially Jewish are descendants in faith form Israel. God has always made a distinction between Abraham’s descendants and others that are of Jewish faith. If it appears that the Word of God has failed the Jews, it is because the Jews have failed the God of their fathers. God still sovereignly declares righteous all who put their faith in Him for salvation.

God was breaking the rules of tradition (or laws) even back in the Old Testament by not always "choosing" the first born as an heir. This is shown in the stories of Ishmael and Isaac, Jacob and Esau, and are examples of God’s personal choice. To judge the validity of God's actions is to imply that humans are more righteous than God; to judge the wisdom of God's movements is to imply that humans are wiser than God.

We as humans tend to get hung up on what we perceive as fairness. It is either black or white with not a lot of gray area in our minds as to how things should turn out. I love the illustration of the potter’s clay and that we are all just vessels for God’s plan. It is hard for me to wrap my brain around, especially when you expect a certain circumstance to turn out in a way that you believe is right and fair and it doesn’t. I can see how for the unbeliever their view on God gets skewed due to how they have determined a situation should pan out and that they feel God is unfair when it doesn’t. When you switch your logical mind off and your spiritual mind on and know that it is perfectly fine to not understand why God allows things to happen the way that might
seem unfair, it really does take the pressure off of trying to have answers. Being a logical minded person who likes things simple and clean with straight answers for everything, I still do get caught up in the fair v. unfair game.
Romans

Israel’s Unbelief (Romans 9:30-10:4)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

✔ Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17) (four weeks)
✔ Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20) (six weeks)
✔ Saving Righteousness (3:21-4:25) (three weeks)
✔ Righteous Freedom (5:1-8:39) (11 weeks)
7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 9:30-10:4) is the second part of this major section.
Read: Israel’s Unbelief (9:30-10:4)

30 What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith; 31 but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law. 32 Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone, 33 as it is written,

“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

1 Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved. 2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

Explain: Israel’s Unbelief (9:30-10:4)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

The first thing you may notice is the split between the chapter divisions. This split should underscore an important point about our modern chapters and verses: they don’t always get the sentences in a single verse and they don’t always get the thoughts in a single chapter.

For a nicely summarized history of chapters and verses in the Bible, see the Wikipedia article on Chapters and verses of the Bible.

What do the words mean?

30 What shall we say [future active indicative], then? That Gentiles [ethnos; race, tribe, foreigner, Gentile, heathen, nation, people] who did not pursue [present active participle; pursue, persecute, ensue after, given to, press toward] righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 11 (twice), 13, 22; 5:17, 21; 6:13, 16, 18, 19, 20; 8:10] have attained it [second aorist active indicative], that is, a righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 11 (twice), 13, 22; 5:17, 21; 6:13, 16, 18, 19, 20; 8:10; earlier in 9:30] that is by faith [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; used around two dozen times in Romans so far]; 31 but that Israel who pursued [present active participle; pursue, persecute,
ensue after, given to, press toward; same word used in Romans 9:30] a law [nomos] that would lead to righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 11 (twice), 13, 22; 5:17, 21; 6:13, 16, 18, 19, 20; 8:10; 9:30 (twice)] did not succeed [aorist active indicative] in reaching [already attain, come, prevent] that law [nomos]. 32 Why? Because they did not pursue [did not pursue is not present in the Greek] it by faith [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; used around two dozen times in Romans so far], but as if it were based on works [works, toils, effort, occupation, act, doing, labor; same word used in Romans 2:6, 7, 15; 3:20, 27, 28; 4:2, 6; 9:11]. [Paul is about to quote from Isaiah 8:14] They have stumbled over [aorist active indicative; strike at, surge against (as water), stub on, trip up, beat upon, dash, stumble at] the stumbling [stub, occasion of apostasy, offence, stumbling block, stumbling stone] stone, 33 as it is written [perfect middle indicative], [the quote is from Isaiah 28:16] “Behold [second aorist active imperative; behold, lo, see], I am laying [present active indicative; same word used in Romans 4:17] in Zion [a hill of Jerusalem (figuratively the church); also spelled Sion] a stone of stumbling [stub, occasion of apostasy, offence, stumbling block, stumbling stone; same word used in Romans 9:32], and a rock [petra; rock] of offense [skandalon; snare, occasion to fall, offence, thing that offends, stumbling-block]; and whoever believes [present active participle; have faith in, credit, entrust, believe, commit to, put in trust with; used over a dozen times in Romans] in him will not be put to shame [future middle indicative; shame down, disgrace, put to the blush, confound, dishonor; same word used in Romans 5:5].”

1 Brothers [adelphos; brothers], my heart’s desire [satisfaction, delight, kindness, wish, purpose, desire, good pleasure] and prayer [petition, prayer, request, supplication] to God for them is that they may be saved [soteria; rescue, safety; deliver, health, salvation, save, saving; same word used in Romans 1:16]. 2 For I bear them witness [present active indicative; martyreo; originally it meant to be a witness, to testify, to charge, to give evidence, to bear record, to give a good/honest report, to give testimony, to witness; over time, however, the meaning changed to martyr as many who testified of Jesus ended up dying because of their testimony; same word used in Romans 3:21] that they have a zeal [present active indicative; zelos; heat, emulation, envy, fervent mind, indignation, jealousy, zeal] for God, but not according to knowledge [recognition, full discernment, acknowledgement, knowledge; same word used in Romans 1:28; 3:20]. 3 For, being ignorant [present active participle; not to know, ignore, be ignorant, not understand, unknown; same word used in Romans 1:13; 2:4; 6:3; 7:1] of the righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used
in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 11 (twice), 13, 22; 5:17, 21; 6:13, 16, 18, 19, 20; 8:10; 9:30 (twice), 31] of God, and seeking [present active participle; seek, worship, plot, desire, endeavor, enquire, require, seek after; same word used in Romans 2:7] to establish [aorist active infinitive; stand, abide, appoint, bring, continue, covenant, establish, hold up, lay, present, set up, stanch; same word used in Romans 3:31; 5:2] their own, they did not submit [hypotasso; second aorist passive (Robertson) indicative; subordinate, obey, be under obedience, put under, subdue under, make subject, put in subjection to, submit self to; same word used in Romans 8:7; 8:20 (twice)] to God's righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 11 (twice), 13, 22; 5:17, 21; 6:13, 16, 18, 19, 20; 8:10; 9:30 (twice), 31; earlier in 10:3].  

4 For Christ is the end [limit, conclusion, result, impost, levy, custom, ending, finally, uttermost; same word used in Romans 6:21, 22] of the law [nomos] for righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 11 (twice), 13, 22; 5:17, 21; 6:13, 16, 18, 19, 20; 8:10; 9:30 (twice), 31; 10:3 (twice)] to everyone who believes [present active participle; have faith in, credit, entrust, believe, commit to, put in trust with; used over a dozen times in Romans].

Are there any repeated words?

Righteousness, law, stumbling stone,

What are some observations of the text?

30 What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith; 31 but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law [Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: Legal righteousness Israel failed to reach, because to do that one had to keep perfectly all the law]. 32 Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone [Norris: The Jews seriously could not see the forest for the trees], 33 as it is written,

“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; 
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

1 Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved [Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: It is noteworthy that, immediately after the discussion of the rejection of Christ by the Jews, Paul prays so earnestly for the Jews. . . . Clearly Paul did not feel that the case was hopeless for them in spite of their conduct.]. 2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge [Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: They became zealous for the letter and the form instead of for God himself]. 3 For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's
righteousness. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. [Mounce: The approach that says righteousness can be earned fails to grasp the enormity of sin]

So . . . what do we conclude? Hughes: The answer is: It is all faith.

Apply (What is the point?)

1. It’s easy to stumble
2. Law that doesn’t end at Jesus is lethal
3. Hope is alive while man is alive

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. Fix our eyes on Jesus
2. Filter the Law through salvation by faith alone
3. Never stop praying for the unsaved

Next week: The Message of Salvation to All (10:5-21) (1/2)

5 For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them. 6 But the righteousness based on faith says, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’” (that is, to bring Christ down) 7 “or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8 But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); 9 because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. 11 For the Scripture says, “Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.” 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. 13 For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? 15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!” 16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?” 17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

18 But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have, for
“Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.”

19 But I ask, did Israel not understand? First Moses says, “I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation; with a foolish nation I will make you angry.”

20 Then Isaiah is so bold as to say, “I have been found by those who did not seek me; I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me.”

21 But of Israel he says, “All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people.”

**Homework**

Resources (our helps—order matters)

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- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

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- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

**Quotes & Observations**

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

The answer is: It is all faith.

I trust that we are each resting on the Rock today.

About the rock, "but others come and rest on it in faith and thus find salvation."

Darla Skinner (Mounce)

God does not allow himself to be put in debt to people and their best efforts. The approach that says righteousness can be earned fails to grasp the enormity of sin.
Jessica Norris (Kroll)

The Jews seriously could not see the forest for the trees. Unfortunately for the Jews they were blind but their partial blindness opened the door for God’s grace to His unchosen people.
Romans

The Message of Salvation to All (Romans 10:5-21)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

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7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 10:5-21) is the third part of this major section.
Read: The Message of Salvation to All (10:5-21)

5 For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them. 6 But the righteousness based on faith says, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’” (that is, to bring Christ down) 7 “or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8 But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); 9 because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. 11 For the Scripture says, “Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.” 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. 13 For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? 15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!” 16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?” 17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

18 But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have, for “Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.”

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20 Then Isaiah is so bold as to say, “I have been found by those who did not seek me; I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me.”

21 But of Israel he says, “All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people.”

Explain: The Message of Salvation to All (10:5-21)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.
Are there any literary/structural observations?

In week one, we are going to work through all the Old Testament (and New Testament) references for this text.

In week two, we’ll do the remaining questions.

But before we jump into week two, let’s introduce a new Bible study tool that should assist in helping with the ‘little’ words in the Greek: the preposition circle.

The words in italics are the Greek words and the words in non-italics are the most common definition for the Greek words. The lines connected to each word illustrate the relationship that the word has to the circle.

Examples:

1. *Epi* (upon): this means to rest on top of
2. *Eis* (into): this meant to move into a thing

(you’ll notice *dia* doesn’t go through the center of the circle—technically speaking, dia just has to go through something (but going through it is going through it regardless of where you go through it))
What do the words mean?

5 For Moses writes [grapho; present active indicative; in Leviticus 18:5] about the righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 11 (twice), 13, 22; 5:17, 21; 6:13, 16, 18, 19, 20; 8:10; 9:30 (twice), 31; 10:3 (twice), 4] that is based on the law [nomos], that the person who does [aorist active participle] the commandments shall live [future active indicative] by them. 6 But the righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 11 (twice), 13, 22; 5:17, 21; 6:13, 16, 18, 19, 20; 8:10; 9:30 (twice), 31; 10:3 (twice), 4, 5] based on faith [pistis] says [present active indicative], “Do not say [second aorist active subjunctive] in your heart, ‘Who will
ascend [future active indicative; arise, ascend up, climb, go up, grow up, rise up, spring up, come up] into heaven [the second, and last time Paul uses the word 'heaven' in Romans?" (that is [present middle indicative], to bring Christ down [second aorist active infinitive; to lead down, to moor a vessel, bring down, bring forth, bring to land, touch]) 7 or Who will descend [future active indicative; come get, come go, come step down, descend, fall down] into the abyss [deep, bottomless pit]?” (that is [present middle indicative], to bring [second aorist active infinitive] Christ up [to lead up, to bring out, to sail away, bring again, bring forth, bring up again, depart, launch forth, lead up, loose, offer, sail, set forth, take up] from the dead). 8 But what does it say [present active indicative]? “The word is [present middle indicative] near [at hand, near, nigh at hand, nigh unto, ready] you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is [present middle indicative], the word of faith [pistis] that we proclaim [present active indicative; herald, preach, proclaim, publish; same word used in Romans 2:21]); 9 because, if you confess [homologeo; aorist active subjunctive; to assent, to covenant, to acknowledge, confess, profess, confession is made, give thanks, promise] with your mouth that Jesus is Lord [kyrios; supreme in authority, controller, God, Lord, master, Sir; Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: No Jew would do this who had not really trusted Christ, for kuriōs—Kurios in the LXX is used of God. No Gentile would do it who had not ceased worshipping the emperor as kurios.] and believe [pisteuo; aorist active subjunctive; have faith in, credit, entrust, believe, commit to, put in trust with; used over a dozen times in Romans] in your heart that God raised [aorist active indicative; woke, roused, lifted up, raised again, stood, took up; same word used in Romans 4:24, 25; 6:4, 9; 7:4; 8:11, 34] him from the dead [nekros], you will be saved [future middle indicative; saved, delivered, protected, healed, preserved, made whole; same word used in Romans 5:9, 10; 8:24; 9:27]. 10 For with the heart one believes [present passive (Robertson) indicative; have faith in, credit, entrust, believe, commit to, put in trust with; used over a dozen times in Romans] and is [eis; to, into] justified [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 11 (twice), 13, 22; 5:17, 21; 6:13, 16, 18, 19, 20; 8:10; 9:30 (twice), 31; 10:3 (twice), 4, 5, 6], and with the mouth one confesses [homologeo; present middle indicative; to assent, to covenant, to acknowledge, confess, profess, confession is made, give thanks, promise; same word used in Romans 10:9] and is [eis; to, into] saved [soteria; rescue, safety; deliver, health, salvation, save, saving; same word used in Romans 1:16; 10:1]. 11 For the Scripture says [present active indicative; Isaiah 28:16], “Everyone who believes [present active participle; have faith in, credit, entrust, believe, commit to, put in trust with; used over a dozen times in Romans] in [epi; on—see note about prepositions] him will not be put to shame [shame down, disgrace, put to the blush, confound, dishonor; same word used in Romans 5:5; 9:33].” 12 For there is [present middle indicative] no distinction [variation, difference, distinction; same word used in
Romans 3:22] between Jew and Greek [Hellen]; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches [present active participle; becoming wealthy, increasing with goods, being made rich] on all who call [present middle participle; entitle, invoke, appeal unto, call on, call upon] on him. 13 For [Joel 3:5] “everyone who calls [aorist middle subjunctive; entitle, invoke, appeal unto, call on, call upon; same word used in Romans 10:12] on the name of the Lord will be saved [future middle indicative; saved, delivered, protected, healed, preserved, made whole; same word used in Romans 5:9, 10; 8:24; 9:27; 10:9].”

14 How then will they call [aorist middle indicative; entitle, invoke, appeal unto, call on, call upon; same word used in Romans 10:12, 13] on him in whom they have not believed [aorist active indicative; have faith in, credit, entrust, believe, commit to, put in trust with; used over a dozen times in Romans]? And how are they to believe in [aorist active subjunctive; have faith in, credit, entrust, believe, commit to, put in trust with; used over a dozen times in Romans] him of whom they have never heard [akouo; aorist active indicative; hear, give in the audience of, come to the ears, be noised, be reported, understand]? And how are they to hear [aorist active subjunctive; hear, give in the audience of, come to the ears, be noised, be reported, understand; same word used earlier in Romans 10:14] without someone preaching [present active participle; herald, preach, proclaim, publish; same word used in Romans 2:21; 10:8]? 15 And how are they to preach [herald, preach, proclaim, publish; same word used in Romans 2:21; 10:8, 14] unless they are sent [apostello; second aorist middle subjunctive; set apart, put in, send away, send forth, send out, set at liberty]? As it is written [perfect middle indicative; Isaiah 52:7], “How beautiful [beautiful, belonging to the right hour or season (timely), flourishing] are the feet of those who preach the good [good, beneficial] news [euangelizo; to announce good news, evangelize, declare, bring glad tidings, preach the gospel; same word used in Romans 1:15]!” 16 But they have not all obeyed [aorist active indicative; hear under, listen attentively, heed, conform; same word used in Romans 6:12, 16, 17] the gospel [gospel, good message; used in Romans 1:1, 9, 16; 2:16]. For Isaiah says [present active indicative; Isaiah 53:1], “Lord, who has believed [aorist active indicative; have faith in, credit, entrust, believe, commit to, put in trust with; used over a dozen times in Romans] what he has heard from us [hearing, audience, ear, fame, what you heard, preached, report, rumor]? 17 So faith [pistis] comes from hearing [hearing, audience, ear, fame, what you heard, preached, report, rumor; same word used in Romans 10:16], and hearing [hearing, audience, ear, fame, what you heard, preached, report, rumor; same word used in Romans 10:16 and earlier in Romans 10:17] through [dia] the word of Christ.
18 But I ask [present active indicative], have they not heard [aorist active indicative; hear, give in the audience of, come to the ears, be noised, be reported, understand; same word used in Romans 10:14 (twice)]? Indeed they have, for

“Their voice [phthongos; utterance, musical note, sound] has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends [extremities, ends, uttermost parts] of the world [land, globe, earth, world].”

19 But I ask [present active indicative], did Israel not understand [second aorist active indicative]? First Moses says [present active indicative; Deuteronomy 32:21],

“I will make you jealous [future active indicative; stimulate alongside, excite to rivalry, provoke to jealousy] of those who are not a nation [ethnos]; with a foolish [unintelligent, wicked, foolish, without understanding; same word used in Romans 1:21, 31] nation [ethnos] I will make you angry [future active indicative; anger alongside, enrage, anger, provoke to wrath].”

20 Then Isaiah is so bold [present active indicative; ventures plainly, is very bold] as to say [present active indicative; Isaiah 65:1],

“I have been found [aorist passive (Robertson) indicative; find, get, obtain, perceive, see; same word used in Romans 4:1, 7:10, 21] by those who did not seek me [present active participle; seek, worship, plot, desire, endeavor, enquire, require, seek after; same word used in Romans 2:7; 10:3]; I have shown myself [second aorist active indicative; manifest, openly] to those who did not ask for me [present active participle; asked questions, demanded, desired, questioned].”

21 But of Israel he says [present active indicative; Isaiah 65:2], “All day long I have held out [stretched forth, fly out, extended] my hands [hands, figuratively power, means or instrument] to a disobedient [present active participle; disbelieve (willfully and perversely), not believe, disobedient, obey not, unbelieving; same word used in Romans 2:8] and contrary people [present active participle; dispute, refuse, answer again, contradict, deny, gainsayer, speak against].”

Are there any repeated words?

Believe, says, confess, Lord, God, Christ,

**Apply (What is the point?)**

1. Salvation is for all peoples
2. Paul is clear about the expected response to the Gospel (Bible study tip: where the Scripture is clear and passionate, be clear and passionate, but where the Scripture is not as clear and dispassionate, let’s not be jerks)
3. Heaven is not the end goal of the Gospel (God is)

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. **Share** with all peoples (especially those we look down on—just as the Jews looked down on the Gentiles)
2. Be **clear** with the expected response to the Gospel (repentance and faith)
3. Stop emphasizing heaven over **God**

**Next week: The Remnant of Israel (11:1-10)**

1 I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he appeals to God against Israel? 3 “Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life.” 4 But what is God's reply to him? “I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.” 5 So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace. 6 But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.

7 What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened, 8 as it is written,

“God gave them a spirit of stupor,
   eyes that would not see
   and ears that would not hear,
   down to this very day.”

9 And David says,

   “Let their table become a snare and a trap,
   a stumbling block and a retribution for them;
10 let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see,
   and bend their backs forever.”

**Homework**

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS
Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

The good news is the ultimate in simplicity and mystery. We will never completely understand it in this world.

Religious zeal is not an infallible sign that one knows the truth.

The gospel of Christ—the word of faith—was (and is) available, accessible and simple.

Vs. 9: He just wants us to call out to Him and Trust Him.

Vs. 12: He is the Lord overall. He hears us, comes to us, loves us the same.

Vs. 15: Our job is similar, and it is indeed beautiful!

Vs. 21: Disobedient & contrary people. The Message says, "cold shoulders and icy stares." God had shown love to Israel and they turned away, God had his hand out towards them. I can picture the outstretched hand—a sign of help, willingness, comfort, and peace. The amazing thing is God has, and will continue to stretch out His hands to us. The cross comes to mind, He willingly stretched out His hands for the world and again was met with some who were disobedient.

Vs. 13: What a comfort to know that we are “whosoever.” Not the perfect, the law keeping, the talented or the scholars but whosoever calls upon Him will be saved.

I have been enjoining His beauty and His peace and am in awe that He listens to the whosoevers when they call upon His name.

Chris Arnold (Barclay)

So Paul has hammered away at the Jewish people and their admirable stamina in adhering to the law. He also brings them to the cross. Now, I can see where it would be reasonable to assume that the Jewish people would not WANT to be brought to the cross. To accept the cross, they have to deny their steadfast adherence to the law. This is a law that clearly defines sinful behavior and what the cost of that sin is, but never allows you to get “in front of it.” It never allows you to feel assured that you are not, but intent or ignorance, somehow falling short. But even if they do not accept the
cross, they are forced to deal with the idea that their law, their relational foundation to God Himself, still leaves them lacking.

Paul takes a loving tone and pleads with the Jews here, not berating or abusing the Jewish adhesion to legal structure, but inviting them to open their eyes and see Jesus as the ultimate fruition of the law. Barclay says it this way:

The whole Jewish approach was that by this kind of obedience to the law a man earned credit with God. ... It was all a matter of law and achievement. To this Paul answers: "Christ is the end of the law." What he meant was: "Christ is the end of legalism." The relationship between God and man is no longer the relationship between a creditor and a debtor, between an earner and an assessor, between a judge and a man standing at the bar of judgment. Because of Jesus Christ, man is no longer faced with the task of satisfying God's justice; he need only accept his love. He has no longer to win God's favour; he need simply take the grace and love and mercy which he freely offers.

Barclay summarizes that Paul is asking the Jews to take their impressive zeal and turn that to Christ. With the discipline, and effort, and enforced inconveniences associated with adherence to the law, think of what joy the freedom of Christ could bring. Think what a weight would be lifted from the shoulders of one who never had assurance, but now finds redemption given without merit or effort on the part of the receiver.

Wow! No words.

And it is simple. As Paul says in verses 9-10, You just have to 1) confess Christ as Lord; 2) believe that Christ rose from the dead (because our God is ALIVE!); and 3) confess with your mouth.

A good Jewish person would have a problem with this.

How can the law and tradition be set aside and faith placed in the actions of one man? What do you mean, there’s no catch? I don’t have to do anything other than believe? Why would this just be given to me?

These questions, though, almost inherently scream out that the answer is known and the value is at least hinted at. Thus, the disbelief became a matter of considering one’s own worth in the face of God’s.

The Jew would also have a problem trying to see why the gift of Christ would be open to all when any good practicing and conscientious Jew would have worked so hard up to that point. That smacks a bit of pride and envy to me. But Paul shuts that argument by citing the prophets Isaiah and Joel.
First, he cites Isaiah 28:16: "Every one who believes in him will not be put to shame." There is nothing about law there; it is all based on faith. Second, he cites Joel 2:32: "All who call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered." There is no limitation there; the promise is to everyone; therefore, there is no difference between Jew and Greek.

Barclay says: In essence this passage is an appeal to the Jews to abandon the way of legalism and accept the way of grace. It is an appeal to them to see that their zeal is misplaced. It is an appeal to listen to the prophets who long ago declared that faith is the only way to God, and that that way is open to every man.

Emphasis on “Every Man.”

There is hope in Christ. There is only duty to the law. And that is the stumbling block upon which many a Christian falls.

So then the theme shifts to Paul presenting the arguments by which a Jewish man could limit Christ and continue to adhere to the law.

Barclay says: Basically the scheme is this--in the previous passage Paul has been saying that the way to God is not that of works and of legalism, but of faith and trust. The objection is: But what if the Jews never heard of that? It is with that objection Paul deals; and, as he deals with it in its various forms, on each occasion he clinches his answer with a text from scripture.

I present Barclay’s summary below because there is no need to further invent the wheel:

(i) The first objection is: "You cannot call on God unless you believe in him. You cannot believe in him unless you hear about him. You cannot hear about him unless there is someone to proclaim the good news. There can be no one to proclaim the good news unless God commissions someone to do so." Paul deals with that objection by quoting Isaiah 52:7. There the prophet points out how welcome those are who bring the good news of good things. So Paul’s first answer is: "You cannot say there was no messenger; Isaiah describes these very messengers; and Isaiah lived long ago."

(ii) The second objection is: "But, in point of fact, Israel did not obey the good news, even if your argument is true. What have you to say to that?" Paul's answer is: "Israel’s disbelief was only to be expected, for, long ago, Isaiah was moved to say in despair: 'Lord, who has believed what we have heard?" (Isaiah 53:1.) It is true that Israel did not accept the good news from God, and in their refusal they were simply running true to form; history was repeating itself.
(iii) The third objection is a restatement of the first: But, what if I insist that they never got the chance to hear? This time Paul quotes Psalms 19:4: "Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." His answer is: "You cannot say that Israel never got the chance to hear; for scripture plainly says that God's message has gone out to all the world."

(iv) The fourth objection is: "But what if Israel did not understand?" Apparently the meaning is: "What if the message was so difficult to grasp that even when Israel did hear it they were unable to grasp its significance?" Here is where the passage becomes really difficult. But Paul's answer is: "Israel may have failed to understand; but the Gentiles did not. They grasped the meaning of this offer all right, when it came to them unexpectedly and unsought." To prove this point Paul quotes two passages. One is from Deuteronomy 32:21 where God says that, because of Israel's disobedience and rebellion, he will transfer his favour to another people, and they will be forced to become jealous of a nation which has no nation. The second passage is from Isaiah 65:1 where God says that, in a strange way, he has been found by a people who were not looking for him at all.

Finally, Paul insists that, all through history, God has been stretching out hands of appeal to Israel, and Israel has always been disobedient and perverse.

To be told that God has been actively reaching out for you while you have been actively turning away….While at the same time declaring your holiness and faithfulness?

Boom.

Paul shows the Jews that their faithfulness was to the law, not the lawgiver. Duty and obligation are not love. Gove offers us love. Let us not mistakenly deny that the law, itself, is love. The law showed love through proscribed practices to keep God’s people safe, to keep them aware, to keep them away from bad influences. This is the same type of parental love that you show when you tell your child not to run with scissors, and not to play with fire, and to stay away from strangers. But when God personified His eternal Love in the form of Christ, He transcended the limitations of the law and established a relationship that the strictures of the law cannot contain or comprehend. Gone were the requirements and duties of mankind as they relate to the law. Jesus brought the law home by fulfilling the law in the place of man, satisfying the law, and relieving man of the burden to pay for the vagaries and whims of personal understanding. Jesus paid it all. So we don’t have to.
Jessica Norris (Kroll)

Verses 5-8 remind me of how people feel like they have to chase "religion" sometimes and that they forget or don’t even realize that a relationship with God is only a few words away. I know Paul is referencing the Jews and that the words are "in their mouths and hearts" because of their dedication to studying the Law but Jesus makes it available to all by only asking, believing, and accepting Him with their own mouths and hearts. It is our job though as Christians to spread that knowledge as commanded by Jesus and a good many of us could improve in that area. And like a good attorney, Paul makes sure to use proper citations in support of his argument by referring back to various Old Testament verses. 😊

Token intellectual assent that Jesus is Lord and that He rose from the dead is never sufficient for salvation. . . . We must proclaim the gospel message in every nook and cranny of the globe because we are commissioned to do so.

Sean McGarvey (Ironside)

In my Mind’s Eye, it’s Time Ta Jam with Ironside, who gives us some decent Christian talk on how to be Heavenbound. He takes a Dive into this chapter and gains some good Momentum. I will admit to hearing a Nu Thang from his perspective on what God’s Love Feels Like. He notes how Paul did not take it easy on the Jews, but rather went The Hardway to explain how ALL, whether Jew or gentile, could be Free At Last. Just Between You and Me, and being a Jesus Freak, this passage began to Consume Me in a way that can only be explained as Supernatural. Indeed, I am Into Jesus, My Friend, and so was Paul. I am glad he crafts just the right way to Say The Words, and not Sugarcoat It or be Socially Acceptable (as if seeking the Jews’ Stamp Of Approval), to Talk About Jesus, The King and the one behind the Red Letters, and how we Children Can Live, actively, Day By Day, In The Light, the way it’s Gah Ta Be because Luv Is a Verb.

v 5: This is the law in its very essence, 'Do and live.' But no man ever yet did that which entitled him to life, for if a man should 'keep the whole law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all' (James 2:10)—that is, he is a lawbreaker. He has not necessarily violated every commandment. But a thief is as truly a lawbreaker as a murderer. And the law having been violated, even once, man's title to life thereunder is forfeited. (p. 80)

v 6: Christ has already come down. He has died. God has raised Him from the dead. And upon this depends the entire gospel testimony.

v 8: The gospel has been proclaimed. They have heard it and are familiar with its terms. The question is: Do they believe it and confess the Christ it proclaims as their Lord?
v 10: The apostle is not trying to draw a fine distinction, as some preachers do, between believing with the head and believing with the heart. He does not occupy us with the nature of belief; he does occupy us with the object of faith.

v 11: 'Whosoever' includes the whole world. Already he has established the fact in chapter 3 that there is no difference between Jew and Gentile, so far as sin is concerned. Now he gives the other side of the 'no difference' doctrine.

v 18: Psalm 19 testifies that the voice of God may be heard in His creation: the sun, the moon, the stars—all the marvels of this wonderful universe—testify to the reality of a personal Creator. And so the psalmist says, 'Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.' It is not a new thing, then, for God to speak to Gentiles. All that is new about it is that He is now speaking more fully, more clearly than He ever spoke before.
Romans

The Remnant of Israel (Romans 11:1-10)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

✓ Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17) (four weeks)
✓ Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20) (six weeks)
✓ Saving Righteousness (3:21-4:25) (three weeks)
✓ Righteous Freedom (5:1-8:39) (11 weeks)
7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 11:1-10) is the fourth part of this major section.
Read: The Remnant of Israel (11:1-10)

1 I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he appeals to God against Israel? 3 “Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life.” 4 But what is God’s reply to him? “I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.” 5 So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace. 6 But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.

7 What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened, 8 as it is written,

“God gave them a spirit of stupor,
  eyes that would not see
  and ears that would not hear,
  down to this very day.”

9 And David says,

“Let their table become a snare and a trap,
  a stumbling block and a retribution for them;
10 let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see, and bend their backs forever.”

Explain: The Remnant of Israel (11:1-10)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

“I ask then” implies that his upcoming question is a result of the prior passages (continuing his argument).

Paul quotes several Old Testament passages to back up his points as well—using Elijah and David as examples this time. (It seems to me Paul is covering a very large number of Old Testament Jewish heroes in his arguments.)

What do the words mean?

1 I ask [present active indicative], then, has God rejected [aorist middle (Robertson) indicative; to push off, to reject, cast away, put away from, thrust away from] his people? By no means [second aorist active optative (possibility (more remotely
possible than subjunctive); to become, to come into existence, begin to be, receive being; same phrase used in Romans 3:4, 6, 31; 6:2, 15; 7:7, 13; 9:14; 11:1, 11]! For I myself am [present middle indicative] an Israelite, a descendant [sperma; seed, offspring, remnant, issue; same word used in Romans 1:3; 4:13, 16; 9:7 (twice), 29] of Abraham, a member of the tribe [offshoot, race, clan, kindred, tribe] of Benjamin [Jacob’s twelfth son]. 2 God has not rejected [aorist active indicative; to push off, to reject, cast away, put away from, thrust away from; same word used in Romans 11:1] his people whom he foreknew [to know beforehand, foresee, foreknow, ordain, know before; same word used in Romans 8:29]. Do you not know [perfect active indicative; see, know] what the Scripture says [lego; present active indicative] of Elijah, how he appeals [present active indicative; chance upon, confer with, entreat, deal with, make intercession; same word used in Romans 8:27, 34] to God against Israel? [1 Kings 19] 3 “Lord [kyrios], they have killed [aorist active indicative; put to death, killed, slayed; same word used in Romans 7:11] your prophets [foretellers, inspired speakers, poets, prophets; same word used in Romans 1:2; 3:21], they have demolished [aorist active indicative; undermined, destroyed, dug down, ruined] your altars [places of sacrifice, altars], and I alone am left [aorist passive (Robertson) indicative; left, left under, left behind, remain, survive], and they seek [present active indicative; seek, worship, plot, desire, endeavor, enquire, require, seek after; same word used in Romans 2:7; 10:3, 20] my life [psyche; breath, spirit, soul].” 4 But what is [present active indicative] God’s reply [divine response, revelation, answer of God] to him? “I have kept [second aorist active indicative; forsaken, left, reserved] for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed [aorist active indicative; bent, bowed] the knee to Baal [a Phoenician deity used as a symbol of idolatry].” 5 So too at the present time [occasion, proper time, opportunity, season, time, while; same word used in Romans 3:26; 5:6; 8:18; 9:9] there is [second perfect active indicative] a remnant [remainder, remnant], chosen [selection, chosen, election; same word used in Romans 9:11] by grace [charis; graciousness, acceptable, benefit, favor, gift, gracious, grace, joy, liberality, pleasure, thanks, thankworthy; same word used multiple times in Romans]. 6 But if it is by grace [charis], it is no longer on the basis of works [works, toil, labor]; otherwise grace [charis] would no longer be [present middle indicative] grace [charis].

To give you a flavor of what Paul wrote in the original, here is a literal transliteration of Romans 11:6 (brackets indicate distinct words): [If/whether] [but/and/also/moreover/now] [grace] [no longer] [from out of/after] [works/toil/labor] [because/else/for/otherwise/since/when] [the/this/that/one/he/she] [grace] [but/and/also/moreover/now] [to cause to be/to become] [grace]

7 What then? Israel failed to obtain [second aorist active indicative; obtain, chance upon, attain] what it was seeking [present active indicative; desire, enquire, seek after,
seek for, search for, demand, crave. The elect [selection, chosen, election; same word used in Romans 9:11; 11:5] obtained [second aorist active indicative; obtain, chance upon, attain; same word used earlier in Romans 11:7] it, but the rest [other, which remain, remnant, residue, rest, remaining ones; same word used in Romans 1:13] were hardened [aorist passive (Robertson) indicative; blinded, hardened, petrified, indurated (render stupid or callous); Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: to cover with thick skin], 8 as it is written [perfect middle indicative] [Deuteronomy 19:4; Isaiah 29:10; 6:9],

“God gave [aorist active indicative] them a spirit [pneuma] of stupor [slumber, prickling (sensation, as of the limbs asleep), stupor, lethargy], eyes [ophthalmos; vision, eyes, sight, envy (from the jealous side glance); same word used in Romans 3:18] that would not see [present active infinitive; look, behold, beware, lie, look on, perceive, regard, see, take heed; same word used in Romans 7:23; 8:24, 25]

and ears that would not hear [present active infinitive; hear, give in the audience of, come to the ears, be noised, be reported, understand; same word used in Romans 10:14 (twice), 18],
down to this very day.”

9 And David says [present active indicative] [Psalm 69:23; 34:8; 28:4],

“Let their table [bank (a counter for money or a broker’s office for loans at interest), meat (a table or stool that a meal would be served on), table] become [aorist middle imperative] a snare [snare, trap, trick, temptation] and a trap [trap, destruction],
a stumbling block [skandalon; snare, occasion to fall, offence, thing that offends, stumbling-block; same word used in Romans 9:33] and a retribution [recompense, requital] for them;

10 let their eyes [ophthalmos; vision, eyes, sight, envy (from the jealous side glance); same word used in Romans 3:18; 11:8] be darkened [aorist passive (Robertson) imperative; obscured, darkened; same word used in Romans 1:21] so that they cannot see [present active infinitive; look, behold, beware, lie, look on, perceive, regard, see, take heed; same word used in Romans 7:23; 8:24, 25; 11:8],

and bend [aorist active imperative; bow down, bend together, afflict] their backs forever.”

Are there any repeated words?

Rejected, grace,
What are some observations of the text?

1 I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew [Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: The nation of Israel was God’s chosen people and so all the individuals in it could not be cast off]. Do you not know [side note: KJV: “Wot ye not?” Great example of completely archaic word choice necessitating a more modern translation] what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he appeals to God against Israel? 3 “Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life.” 4 But what is God’s reply to him? “I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.” 5 So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace [Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: The election is all of God]. 6 But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace. [Hughes: Paul explains that they have been judicially hardened because they persist in the pattern of works, thinking they can make themselves righteous]

7 What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened, 8 as it is written,

“God gave them a spirit of stupor,
   eyes that would not see
   and ears that would not hear,
   down to this very day.”

9 And David says,

“Let their table become a snare and a trap,
   a stumbling block and a retribution for them;
10 let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see [This reminds me of the times when Jesus would tell His disciples that His teachings were not for everyone and that not all would understand],
   and bend their backs forever.”

Apply (What is the point?)

1. There is an Israeli remnant (who will be saved)
2. God’s choice is based on grace (not works)
3. God hardens some

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. Evangelize Israelis (since we know at least some of it will be effective)
2. Stop preaching and living works (instead preach and live grace)
3. ______________ (for Jim: don’t apologize to pagans or believers for the hard things God does)

Next week: Gentiles Grafted In (11:11-24)

11 So I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? By no means! Rather, through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous. 12 Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion mean!

13 Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry 14 in order somehow to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them. 15 For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead? 16 If the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, so is the whole lump, and if the root is holy, so are the branches.

17 But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree, 18 do not be arrogant toward the branches. If you are, remember it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you. 19 Then you will say, “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.” 20 That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast through faith. So do not become proud, but fear. 21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. 22 Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God’s kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off. 23 And even they, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again. 24 For if you were cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process
• Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
• Read (Romans)
• Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
• Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

Vss 6-7: Paul explains that they have been judicially hardened because they persist in the pattern of works, thinking they can make themselves righteous.

Where would we be if grace was no longer grace?

God has a plan for His people—and that He has the power to bring it about.

God has not turned His back on us and He has a plan for us.

Some of the Pharisees could not understand what Jesus was saying because they had not appropriated the truth of God they had already received. This is a warning for all of us to never hear the Word of God without responding.

The reason some may doubt, fear or question, could be because they have hardened themselves to see God's plan and the grace that it will bring.

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

I love how Kroll sums up this chapter: Though the Jews do not believe in Christ, God still has a remnant who trust him as Savior. And though the Jews are God's natural branches, they have only temporarily been broken off of the tree of blessing. Gentiles have been grafted into that tree but will someday be broken off and judged. When God has completed His work with the Gentiles, the Jews will again come into favor and receive Christ the Deliverer as their Savior. All things will work for the glory of God!

I really like the analogy with the branches being temporarily broken off and the Gentiles have been grafted.
Romans

Gentiles Grafted In (Romans 11:11-24)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

✓ Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17) (four weeks)
✓ Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20) (six weeks)
✓ Saving Righteousness (3:21-4:25) (three weeks)
✓ Righteous Freedom (5:1-8:39) (11 weeks)
7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 11:11-24) is the fifth part of this major section.
Read: Gentiles Grafted In (11:11-24)

11 So I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? By no means! Rather, through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous.
12 Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion mean!

13 Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry 14 in order somehow to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them. 15 For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead? 16 If the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, so is the whole lump, and if the root is holy, so are the branches.

17 But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree, 18 do not be arrogant toward the branches. If you are, remember it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you. 19 Then you will say, “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.” 20 That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast through faith. So do not become proud, but fear. 21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. 22 Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God’s kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off. 23 And even they, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again. 24 For if you were cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree.

Explain: Gentiles Grafted In (11:11-24)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

There is no Greek verb in Romans 11:12, 15, 16. There are also no Old Testament quotes in this section (perhaps because Paul has used what he needed to use and wants them focused on the here and now?).

What do the words mean?

11 So I ask [lego; present active indicative], did they stumble [aorist active indicative; fall, offend, stumble] in order that they might fall [second aorist active subjunctive; fail, fall, fall down, light on]? By no means [second aorist active optative (possibility (more
remotely possible than subjunctive)); to become, to come into existence, begin to be, receive being; same phrase used in Romans 3:4, 6, 31; 6:2, 15; 7:7, 13; 9:14; 11:1, 11 (this is the last of about 10 times Paul uses this response in Romans—Greek moods)]

Rather, through their trespass [side slip, error, transgression, fall, fault, offense, sin, trespass; same word used in Romans 4:25; 5:15 (twice), 16 (twice), 17, 18, 20] salvation [soteria; rescue, safety; deliver, health, salvation, save, saving; same word used in Romans 1:16; 10:1, 10] has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous [aorist active infinitive; stimulate alongside, excite to rivalry, provoke to jealousy; same word used in Romans 10:19]. 12 Now if their trespass [side slip, error, transgression, fall, fault, offense, sin, trespass; same word used in Romans 4:25; 5:15 (twice), 16 (twice), 17, 18, 20; 11:11] means riches [wealth, fullness, money, possessions, abundance, richness, valuable bestowment, riches; same word used in Romans 2:4; 9:23] for the world [kosmos], and if their failure [diminishing, fault] means riches [wealth, fullness, money, possessions, abundance, richness, valuable bestowment, riches; same word used in Romans 2:4, 9:23; earlier in 11:12] for the Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion [which is put in to fill up, piece that filled up, fulfilling, full, fullness—puzzle piece missing] mean!

13 Now I am speaking [present active indicative] to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am [present middle indicative] an apostle [delegate, ambassador; same word used in Romans 1:1] to the Gentiles, I magnify [present active indicative; render glorious, glorify, honor, magnify; same word used in Romans 1:21; 8:30] my ministry [diakonia; ministering, ministration, ministry, office, relief, relief, service, servicing] 14 in order somehow to make my fellow Jews jealous [aorist active subjunctive; stimulate alongside, excite to rivalry, provoke to jealousy; same word used in Romans 10:19; 11:11], and thus save [aorist active subjunctive (Greek moods); saved, delivered, protected, healed, preserved, made whole; same word used in Romans 5:9, 10; 8:24; 9:27; 10:9, 13] some of them. 15 For if their rejection [casting away, loss, rejection, loss] means the reconciliation [exchange, restoration to favor, atonement, reconciliation; same word used in Romans 5:11] of the world [kosmos], what will their acceptance [receiving, admission] mean but life from the dead [nekros]? 16 If the dough offered as firstfruits [beginning of sacrifice, first fruits; same word used in Romans 8:23] is holy [sacred, pure, consecrated, holy, saint; same word used in Romans 1:2, 7; 5:5; 7:12; 8:27; 9:1], so is the whole lump [lump; same word used in Romans 9:21], and if the [Note: all of the following words are so well translated in the ESV that there is no reason to type the same words in brackets after each one: root, branches, broken off, grafted in] root is holy [sacred, pure, consecrated, holy, saint; same word used in Romans 1:2, 7; 5:5; 7:12; 8:27; 9:1; earlier in 11:16], so are the branches.
17 But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although [present middle participle] a wild olive shoot, were grafted in [aorist middle indicative] among the others and now share [second aorist active indicative; companion, partake, partaker, partake with, co-participate] in the nourishing [fatness, richness; a noun and not an adjective as the ESV translates, so it really should be something like, ‘this fatness, this root;’ insert Sean’s comments here about root and fatness] root of the olive tree, 18 do not be arrogant [present middle imperative (Greek moods); boast, glory, rejoice against, exult against] toward the branches. If you are [present middle indicative; boast, glory, rejoice against, exult against; same word used earlier in Romans 11:18], remember it is not you who support [present active indicative; bear, carry, take up] the root, but the root that supports you. 19 Then you will say [future active indicative], “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in [aorist middle subjunctive].”” 20 That is true [good, honestly, recover, well]. They were broken off because of their unbelief [apistia; faithlessness, disbelief, unfaithfulness, unbelief; same word used in Romans 3:3; 4:20], but you stand fast [perfect active indicative; stand, abide, appoint, bring, continue, covenant, establish, hold up, lay, present, set up, stanch; same word used in Romans 3:31; 5:2; 10:3] through faith [pistis]. So do not become proud [present active imperative; high/esteemed/lofty + (phroneo) exercise the mind, entertain or have a sentiment or opinion, be (mentally) disposed, to interest oneself in, set the affection on, mind, regard, savor, think], but fear [phobeo; present middle imperative; to frighten, be alarmed, be in awe of, revere, be sore afraid, fear exceedingly, reverence; Proverbs taxonomy of learning]. 21 For if God did not spare [aorist active indicative; abstain, treat leniently, forbear, spare; same word used in Romans 8:32] the natural branches, neither will he spare [future active indicative; abstain, treat leniently, forbear, spare; same word used in Romans 8:32; earlier in 11:21] you. 22 Note then [aorist active imperative; be aware, behold, consider, look on, perceive, see, be sure, tell, understand, know] the kindness [usefulness, moral excellence, gentleness, goodness, kindness; same word used in Romans 2:4; 3:12] and the severity [severity, decisiveness, rigor] of God: severity [severity, decisiveness, rigor; same word used earlier in Romans 11:22] toward those who have fallen [second aorist active participle; fail, fall, fall down, light on; same word used in Romans 11:11], but God’s kindness [usefulness, moral excellence, gentleness, goodness, kindness; same word used in Romans 2:4; 3:12; earlier in 11:22] to you, provided you continue [present active subjunctive; stay over, remain, abide, continue, tarry; same word used in Romans 6:1] in his kindness [usefulness, moral excellence, gentleness, goodness, kindness; same word used in Romans 2:4; 3:12; twice earlier in 11:22]. Otherwise you too will be cut off [second future middle indicative; cut down, cut off, cut out, hewn down, hindered]. 23 And even they, if they do not continue [present active subjunctive; stay over, remain, abide, continue, tarry; same word used in Romans 6:1; 11:22] in their unbelief [apistia;
faithlessness, disbelief, unfaithfulness, unbelief; same word used in Romans 3:3; 4:20; 11:20, will be grafted in [future middle indicative], for God has [present middle indicative] the power [dynateo; able, could, mighty, possible, power, strong; same word used in Romans 4:21; 9:22] to graft them in [aorist active infinitive] again [again. Jim’s note: it is helpful to me to think about the grafting in and out as opportunity that God makes available and takes away]. 24 For if you were cut [cut down, cut off, cut out, hewn down, hindered; same word used in Romans 11:22] from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted [aorist middle indicative], contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into [future middle indicative] their own olive tree.

Are there any repeated words?

Trespass, Gentiles, holy, branches, broken, grafted, olive tree, severity, kindness, cut off,

What are some observations of the text?

13 Paul clarifies his ministerial target as an apostle to the Gentiles

17 - 22 Paul’s imperatives aren’t about physical action, but rather thinking a certain way

17-22: The grafting imagery is harsh, but the results can be beautiful (show grafting)

Apply (What is the point?)

1. God is sovereign (Amy Valovcin: We are to not get comfortable, God can (and will) deal with us the way he did with the "dead branches." He can also graft the dead branches back in, because He’s God and can prune and add to the tree as He chooses.)

2. Hope remains

3. There is no place for arrogance (Joy? Yes. Arrogance? No. Here’s the difference:

   Joy: We get in! We get in! We get in! How kind is God? 😊

   Arrogance: We get in! We get in! We get in! How good am I/are we? 😊)

   Hughes: We who are Gentiles are fortunate to have any part in the tree at all. This is a call to profound humility. Kroll: Gentiles must be careful not to become arrogant because just as the Jews of the Old Testament became proud, the same thing may happen to Gentiles in the New Testament era.

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. Submit to His choices (and His voice)

2. Talk about the hope and live hopeful lives

3. Rejoice in God’s kindness and fear God (taxonomy)
Next week: The Mystery of Israel’s Salvation (11:25-36)

25 Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. 26 And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written,

“The Deliverer will come from Zion, 
he will banish ungodliness from Jacob”;
27 “and this will be my covenant with them 
when I take away their sins.”

28 As regards the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. But as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. 29 For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. 30 For just as you were at one time disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their disobedience, 31 so they too have now been disobedient in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may now receive mercy. 32 For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all.

33 Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

34 “For who has known the mind of the Lord, 
or who has been his counselor?”
35 “Or who has given a gift to him 
that he might be repaid?”

36 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)
Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

The Message: Be humbly mindful of the root that keeps you lithe and green

We who are Gentiles are fortunate to have any part in the tree at all. This is a call to profound humility.

I am glad (blessed) to be a part of the tree, to be grafted in.

We are to not get comfortable, God can (and will) deal with us the way he did with the "dead branches." He can also graft the dead branches back in, because He's God and can prune and add to the tree as He chooses.

As harsh as this may seem to some (dead trees, God pruning), I take this as a strong reminder to remain faithful and steadfast. To not look upon myself as better or higher than those that are not a part of the tree. Also, to not look at people with condemnation, because I don't know the "pruning" that is taking place in their lives.

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

If Israel's blindness brought salvation to the Gentile world, what will God's renewal of Israel's faith bring? The ultimate reception of a repentant Israel will bring revival on an unprecedented scale.

Israel is not only the first fruits in God's program of salvation, but also the nation in which that salvation is rooted. There is still hope for Israel as long as the root is healthy.

Gentiles must be careful not to become arrogant because just as the Jews of the Old Testament became proud, the same thing may happen to Gentiles in the New Testament era.

McGarvey (Ironside)

Let me first say that this passage is really good stuff! Ours is the God of second (and third, and fourth...) chances. He wants His people, and He wants His people back!

With holy enthusiasm he exclaims: 'Now if the [defection] of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?' (v. 12). It is well to note the use he makes of this word fullness, as we shall come upon it lower down in the chapter. The fullness of Israel will be the conversion of Israel—the fulfillment of God's purpose regarding them. (p. 85)

One getting grafted into the vine does not preclude another who has broken off being grafted back in.
Thus Jew and Gentile believing together partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree. (p 85)

Root and Fatness—restaurant chain, rock and roll band, new American church plant . . . take your pick, and the name would be great! (“We are Root and the Fatness. Thanks for coming out, Chattanooga! Good night! –drops mic—)
Romans

The Mystery of Israel’s Salvation (Romans 11:25-36)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

✓ Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17) (four weeks)
✓ Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20) (six weeks)
✓ Saving Righteousness (3:21-4:25) (three weeks)
✓ Righteous Freedom (5:1-8:39) (11 weeks)
7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 11:25-36) is the sixth, and final, part of this major section.
Read: The Mystery of Israel’s Salvation (11:25-36)

25 Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. 26 And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written,

“The Deliverer will come from Zion,
he will banish ungodliness from Jacob”;
27 “and this will be my covenant with them
when I take away their sins.”

28 As regards the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. But as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. 29 For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. 30 For just as you were at one time disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their disobedience, 31 so they too have now been disobedient in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may now receive mercy. 32 For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all.

33 Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

34 “For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?”
35 “Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?”
36 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

Explain: The Mystery of Israel’s Salvation (11:25-36)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

Paul wraps up this section very cleanly—it’s difficult to read this passage without feeling a sense of closure at the end of Romans 11:36. This sense of closure is what drives most scholars to mark Romans 11:36 as another endpoint for a major section of Romans.

As last week’s text had several verses with no verbs, so does this week’s text. Romans 11:28-29, 33, and 36 contain no verbs in the Greek.
What do the words mean?

25 Lest you be [present middle subjunctive] wise [thoughtful, sagacious, discreet, conceited, wise] in your own sight, I do not want [present active indicative; determine, choose, prefer, wish, inclined, be about, delight in, desire, intend, list, love, mean, please, will; same word used in Romans 1:13; 7:15, 16, 18, 19 (twice), 20, 21; 9:16, 18 (twice), 22] you to be unaware [present active infinitive; not to know, ignore, be ignorant, not understand, unknown; same word used in Romans 1:13; 2:4; 6:3; 7:1; 10:3] of this mystery, brothers [adelphos; brothers]: a partial [piece, part, portion, some] hardening [second perfect active indicative; blindness, hardness (the root word means stupidity or callousness)] has come upon Israel, until the fullness [which is put in to fill up, piece that filled up, fulfilling, full, fullness—puzzle piece missing; same word used in Romans 11:12] of the Gentiles has come in [second aorist active subjunctive; entered, came into, entered in to; same word used in Romans 5:12].

26 And in this way all Israel will be saved [future middle indicative; saved, delivered, protected, healed, preserved, made whole; same word used in Romans 5:9, 10; 8:24; 9:27; 10:9, 13; 11:14], as it is written [perfect middle indicative],

“The Deliverer [present middle participle; rescue, deliver (through the idea of a current); same word used in Romans 7:24] will come [note: “will come” is not in the Greek—the verb is ‘Deliverer;’ present middle participle] from Zion [a hill of Jerusalem (figuratively the church); also spelled Sion; same word used in Romans 9:33],

he will banish [apostrepheo; future active indicative; bring again, pervert, turn away (from)] ungodliness [impiety, wickedness, ungodliness; same word used in Romans 1:18] from Jacob [same word used in Romans 9:13 of the son God loved]”;

27 “and this will be my covenant [disposition, contract, will, covenant, testament; same word used in Romans 9:4] with them

when I take away [second aorist middle subjunctive; cut off, take away] their sins [offense, sin].”

28 As regards the gospel [gospel, good message; used in Romans 1:1, 9, 16; 2:16; 10:16], they are enemies [enemies, foes, hateful, odious, hostile, adversaries; same word used in Romans 5:10] for your sake [for you]. But as regards election [selection, chosen, election; same word used in Romans 9:11; 11:5, 7], they are beloved [agapetos; beloved, dear; same word used in Romans 1:7] for the sake of [dia] their forefathers [fathers].

29 For the gifts [gratuity, deliverance, endowment, qualification; same word as used in Romans 1:11; 5:15, 16; 6:23] and the calling [calling, invitation] of God are irrevocable [irreversible, without repentance, not to be repented of].

30 For just as you were at one time disobedient [aorist active indicative; disbelieve (willfully and perversely), not believe, disobedient, obey not, unbelieving; same word used in Romans 2:8; 10:21] to God but now have received mercy [aorist middle indicative; have
compassion on, have pity on, have mercy on, show mercy on; same word used in Romans 9:15 (twice), 16, 18 because of their disobedience [disobedience, unbelief, disbelief], 31 so they too have now been disobedient [aorist active indicative; disbelieve (willfully and perversely), not believe, disobedient, obey not, unbelieving; same word used in Romans 2:8; 10:21; 11:30] in order that by the mercy [compassion, tender mercy; same word used in Romans 9:23] shown to you they also may now receive mercy [aorist passive (Robertson) subjunctive; have compassion on, have pity on, have mercy on, show mercy on; same word used in Romans 9:15 (twice), 16, 18; 11:31]. 32 For God has consigned [aorist active indicative; conclude, enclose, shut up] all to disobedience [disobedience, unbelief, disbelief], that he may have mercy [aorist active subjunctive; have compassion on, have pity on, have mercy on, show mercy on; same word used in Romans 9:15 (twice), 16, 18; 11:30, 31] on all.

33 Oh, the depth [profundity, extent, mystery, deep, deepness, deep things, depth; same word used in Romans 8:39] of the riches [wealth, fullness, money, possessions, abundance, richness, valuable bestowment, riches; same word used in Romans 2:4; 9:23; 11:12] and wisdom and knowledge [knowing, knowledge, science; same word used in Romans 2:20] of God! How unsearchable [unsearchable, not searched out, inscrutable] are his judgments [avenge, condemned, condemnation, damnation, go to law, judgment; same word used in Romans 2:2, 3; 3:8; 5:16] and how inscrutable [past finding out, unsearchable, not tracked, untraceable] his ways! [Isaiah 40:13]

34 “For who has known [second aorist active indicative] the mind [mind, understanding; same word used in Romans 1:28; 7:23, 25] of the Lord, or who has been [second aorist active indicative] his counselor [counselor, adviser]?”

35 “Or who has given [aorist active indicative; first give, to give before the other party has given] a gift [note: ‘a gift’ is not present in the Greek] to him that he might be repaid [future passive (Robertson) indicative; to requite, recompense, render, repay]?”

36 For from him and through [dia] him and to him are all things. To him be glory [very apparent glory, dignity, glory, honor, praise, worship; same word used in Romans 1:23; 2:7, 10; 3:7, 23; 4:20; 5:2; 6:4; 8:18, 21; 9:4, 9:23 (twice)] forever. Amen [firm, trustworthy, surely, so be it, amen, verily; same word used in Romans 1:25; 9:5].

Are there any repeated words?

Disobedient, mercy,
What are some observations of the text?

25 Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. 26 And in this way all Israel will be saved [Question: Who is ‘Israel’ in this sentence? Genetic Israel or spiritual/theological Israel or another option? I would argue it’s not genetic Israel (we have multiple examples of pagan Jews in the Bible and in our lives today), but rather spiritual Israel (the Israel that God has grafted in). But open hand here. We must be careful not to see this as applying to us otherwise we risk devolving into replacement theology.], as it is written,

“The Deliverer will come from Zion,
he will banish ungodliness from Jacob”;
27 “and this will be my covenant with them
when I take away their sins.”

28 As regards the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. But as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. 29 For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. 30 For just as you were at one time disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their disobedience, 31 so they too have now been disobedient in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may now receive mercy. 32 For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all.

There are a lot of different ways to look at these next few verses. Here’s one thought: Paul has just laid out some incredibly complex theology—he calls it a ‘mystery.’ I don’t think he fully explains the mystery—but he does explain quite a bit of it.

But rather than be frustrated with the complexity of the mystery and his own (perhaps) lack of understanding on this point (see the following verses as evidence), he explodes into praise and awe and glorifying of God. His lack of understanding (or at least his knowledge that not all of his audience would understand) resulted in Paul praising God. He did not make it all about him (woe is me, I don’t understand), but rather he said, ‘Our God is amazing. How awesome is He!’

33 Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

34 “For who has known the mind of the Lord,
or who has been his counselor?”
35 “Or who has given a gift to him
that he might be repaid?”

36 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.
Apply (What is the point?)
1. **Mysteries** exist
2. All Israel **will** be saved
3. God and His ways have **no equal**

Personalize (What do we do with that?)
1. Let mysteries **exist** (put away our theological trampolines)
2. Evangelize
3. **Glorify** God

Next week: A Living Sacrifice (12:1-2)
1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)
- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process
- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read **(Romans)**
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

vv. 25-32: No matter, how insurmountable the difficulties, the land and the people will one day be reunited. . . . The stage appears to be well set.

vv. 33-36: God’s glory should be our sole and constant desire. . . . Through Him...are all things. This is a Puggle lesson for sure! God made everything! He simply spoke, and
the heavens flashed into being. . . . Matter is not God, but God is in everything, and nothing works or exists except through His might.

**Darla Skinner (Mounce)**

His decisions are beyond human ken. How unsearchable are his ways. . . . Newman and Nida comment that “the first of these terms describes something that cannot be found by searching for it, while the other suggests footprints that cannot be tracked down” (A Handbook on Paul’s Letter to the Romans [New York: UBS, 1973], 230).

**Jessica Norris (Kroll)**

Kroll cites Stephen Kreloff when explaining “all of Israel will be saved.” Kreloff’s references the tribulation period when Satan will attempt to destroy Israel. He goes back to Zechariah 13:8 which states that 2/3 of the Jewish people will die. The remaining 1/3 will be alive at the end of the tribulation and will constitute the entire nation of Israel. The “fullness of the Gentiles” refers to 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 when God takes his church home.

In referring back to the olive tree in which the Gentiles have been grafted on, when the rapture occurs God will remove those grafted branches and place back a 1/3 of the natural branches. The tree may not be as full as it once could have been but it will be restored to resemble more of what it was intended to look like.

**McGarvey (Ironside)**

And so, in verses 25-32, we see just what must take place before this regrafting, and what will follow afterward.

This, then is one of the secret things hidden in the mind of God until the due time for its revelation: Israel will be blinded in part, but, thank God, only in part, until the present work of God among the Gentiles be completed.

God’s gifts and calling He never retracts. Take a moment there...

Whether Jew or Gentile, all alike are saved on the same principle, 'For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all' (v. 32).

The last four verses are in the nature of a Doxology. The apostle's heart is filled with worship, praise, and admiration as the full blaze of the divine plan fills the horizon of his soul.
Romans

A Living Sacrifice (Romans 12:1-2)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

✓ Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17) (four weeks)
✓ Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20) (six weeks)
✓ Saving Righteousness (3:21-4:25) (three weeks)
✓ Righteous Freedom (5:1-8:39) (11 weeks)
✓ Righteousness → Jews (9:1-11:36) (eight weeks)
6. Righteous Living (12:1-15:13) (September to October) (nine weeks)
7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 12:1-2) is the first part of this major section.
Read: A Living Sacrifice (12:1-2)

1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Explain: A Living Sacrifice (12:1-2)

What do the words mean?

1 I appeal [present active indicative; call near, invite, invoke, beseech, call for, comfort, desire, exhort, intreat, pray] to you therefore, brothers, by [dia] the mercies [pity, mercy] of God, to present [aorist active infinitive; stand beside, exhibit, proffer, recommend, substantiate, be at hand, aid; same word used in Romans 6:13 (twice), 16, 19 (twice)] your bodies as a living [present active participle] sacrifice [sacrifice (the act or the victim)], holy [sacred, pure, consecrated, holy, saint; same word used in Romans 1:2, 7; 5:5; 7:12; 8:27; 9:1; 11:16] and acceptable [fully agreeable, acceptable, well pleasing] to God, which is your spiritual [logikos; rational, reasonable, of the word] worship [ministration, worship, divine service; same word used in Romans 9:4]. 2 Do not be conformed [syschematizo; present active imperative; to fashion alike, conform to the same pattern, conform to, fashion self according to] to this world [aion], but be transformed [metamorphoo; present middle imperative; transformed, changed, transfigured] by the renewal [renovation, renewing] of your mind [mind, understanding; same word used in Romans 1:28; 7:23, 25; 11:34], that by testing [note: ‘that by testing’ does not appear to be in the Greek manuscripts the ESV is based upon—it is perhaps a further definition/expansion of the word for discern/prove] you may discern [present active infinitive; test, approve, allow, discern, examine, like, prove, try; same word used in Romans 1:28; 2:18] what is the will [determination, choice, purpose, decree, volition, inclination, desire, pleasure, will; same word used in Romans 1:10; 2:18] of God, what is good [good, beneficial] and acceptable [fully agreeable, acceptable, well pleasing; same word used in Romans 12:1] and perfect [complete, completeness, of full age, man, perfect].

Paul’s appeal is based upon all that has been said in Romans 1-11. Romans 1-11 is the context for Romans 12:1-2. Here Paul changes direction. He has laid out his case before us and has reached his conclusion. He says, “I beg of you,” by the mercies of God. What mercies? The mercies of God that Paul has told us about throughout the first eleven chapters of Romans. The gist of which is: God has made Himself known to man and even in man’s rejection and rebellion against Him, God through His judgment
and righteousness has made a way for man to be redeemed. By faith. In Christ Jesus. This redemption is not limited to Israel nor is it only to the Gentile. It is for all who believe.

Mercies is a description of the character God’s compassion.

Present means to show oneself, place beside, to yield. It is a technical term used to describe the presenting of Levitical sacrifices and offerings.

Bible-History.com:

The Burnt Offerings

The burnt offering was a sacrifice that was completely burnt. None of it was to be eaten at all, and therefore the fire consumed the whole sacrifice. It is also important to note that the fire on the altar was never to go out:

Lev 6:13: A fire shall always be burning on the altar; it shall never go out.

Lev 1:3: Let him offer a male without blemish; he shall offer it of his own free will at the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the LORD.

Lev 1:4-9: Then he shall put his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him. He shall kill the bull before the LORD; and the priests, Aaron’s sons, shall bring the blood and sprinkle the blood all around on the altar that is by the door of the tabernacle of meeting . . . and the priest shall burn all on the altar as a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD.

Lev 1:6-9: And he shall skin the burnt offering and cut it into its pieces. The sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire on the altar, and lay the wood in order on the fire. Then the priests, Aaron’s sons, shall lay the parts, the head, and the fat in order on the wood that is on the fire upon the altar; ‘but he shall wash its entrails and its legs with water.

The common Israelite worshipper brought a male animal (a bull, lamb, goat, pigeon, or turtledove depending on the wealth of the worshipper) to the door of the tabernacle.

The animal had to be without blemish. The worshipper then placed his hands upon the head of the animal and in awareness that this innocent animal was standing in for the sinner he would seek the Lord for forgiveness and then killed the animal immediately. The priests were also responsible to wash various parts of the animal before putting it on the altar.

The Burnt offering was performed to atone for the people’s sins against the Lord and was a dedication offering of one’s life before the Lord continually.
Vincent: In the Levitical sacrifices the offerer placed his offerings so as to face the Holy Place, thus bringing it before the Lord.

Body refers to the physical body of the believer. It is to be a living sacrifice in contrast to the slain offerings. Compare Romans 6:8-11. In Greek, the word order is different. It is a sacrifice, living, holy, acceptable to the God. I like this order.

Vincent (quoting Chrysostom): How can the body become a sacrifice? Let the eye look on no evil, and it is a sacrifice. Let the tongue utter nothing base, and it is an offering. Let the hand work no sin, and it is a holocaust. But more, this suffices not, but besides we must actively exert ourselves for good; the hand giving alms, the mouth blessing them that curse us, the ear ever at leisure for listening to God.

The Greek word, hagios, means set apart. In Greek culture, it did not have a sense of purity or freedom from evil. But in Christian usage it does, in that God Himself is infinitely pure and free from sin. So, the physical body of the believer put at God’s disposal, presented to Him, is holy, both in the sense of being set apart for His use, and holy in the sense of being used for pure and righteous purposes and free from sinful practices.

Acceptable, euareston, is a compound word made up of arestos meaning acceptable, pleasing, approved, satisfactory, and eu meaning good or well. It speaks of something that is well-approved, eminently satisfactory, or extraordinarily pleasing.

Spiritual worship. The King James translates the word spiritual in this verse as reasonable. I believe this is the more correct way. Here is why. The Greek word is logikane. It is an adjective formed from logos. We hear logos and many of us automatically think “Word.” But it also has the meaning of reason of the mind. Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words: pertaining to the reasoning faculty, reasonable, rational. So, what we have here is a worship that is well thought out, reasoned. This is worship on purpose.

This does not take away from spontaneous worship. It is a different thing. Here, in this usage, it is directly tied to our “sacrifice, living, holy and acceptable.”

Worship is also translated “service.” It is in reference to the priestly service in the temple. When the priests offered sacrifices in the temple they were performing their daily service or their daily worship. Plug this into your mind when you are working in the nursery, choir, Awana, or teaching Sunday school or any number of other things. “My service in X is my worship.”

Our reasonable worship is to present our bodies a sacrifice, living, holy and acceptable to God.

Romans 12:2
World, aion, it means the age, or time. According to Trench it means, “All that floating mass of thoughts, opinions, maxims, speculations, hopes, impulses, aims, aspirations, at any time current in the world, which it may be impossible to seize and accurately define, but which constitutes a most real and effective power, being the moral, or immoral atmosphere which at every moment of our lives we inhale, again inevitably to exhale, —all this is included in the aion, which is, as Bengel has expressed it, ‘the subtle informing spirit of the kosmos, or world of men who are living alienated and apart from God.’”

Object lesson: Playdough (always changing to cover the believer and is always against God)

Do not be conformed.

Conformed means to assume an outward expression that does not come from within us and is not representative of our inner heart. It means to shape one thing to be like another. It refers to things that are transitory, unstable, changeable. This word can never be used to speak of an inner transformation.

When believers are conformed to the world they are not being changed into the world, they are instead hiding who they really are.

But be transformed, metamorphosis. Meta meaning change and morphe meaning form. When I hear the term metamorphosis I always think of caterpillars and butterflies. This transformation is from within the inner man. We are to be completely changed from the inside out. We are to do so by the renewing of our mind. But in the end, it is not us that makes the change, it is the Holy Spirit working in us as we yield to Him. As we definitely, intelligently, and habitually yield to the Spirit He will put sin out of our life and produce His own fruit within us.

Testing, to test or prove with the expectation of approving and finding that the thing tested is true. When the Spirit has control of our minds, when we are “being renewed,” we are able to put our lives to the test for the purpose of approving it. When our minds conform to the Word of God, and we experience what obedience is to the Word, we find out what it means to have the Word saturate and control our lives, so we see that it really is the Word of God and thus approve it. John 7:17: If anyone’s will is to do God’s will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority.

I beg of you my brothers, by the mercies of God, that you present yourselves a sacrifice, living, holy, acceptable to God, which is your well reasoned worship. Do not be conformed to this age but be completely changed by the renewing of your inner
man, that by testing you may understand the will of God, what is good, and acceptable and complete.

**Apply (What is the point?)**

**Personalize (What do we do with that?)**

**Next week: Gifts of Grace (12:3-8)**

3 For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. 4 For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, 5 so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. 6 Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; 7 if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; 8 the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

**Homework**

Resources (our helps—order matters)

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- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)
Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

The Christian is to allow himself to be continually changed so that his life conforms more and more to that of Christ.

Nothing but total commitment of our lives to God make any sense.

Hughes talks about these two verses express the basis, character, demands and effects of our commitment.

Two beautiful verses with heavy impact.

Darla Skinner (Mounce)

In view of God's acts of mercy it is entirely fitting that we commit ourselves without reservation to him. To teach that accepting the free gift of God's grace does not necessarily involve a moral obligation on our part is a heresy of gigantic proportions. p. 232

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

With all of the distractions of our modern world it is easier than ever to fall into the "patterns of the world." This is a good reminder to push the reset button daily or hourly if need be when we find ourselves straying from behavior or thinking things that are pleasing to God.

McGarvey (Ironside)

The first two verses of chapter 12 are the introduction to this entire practical part of the letter, based upon the revelation given in chapters 1-8. For we may very properly consider chapters 9-11 as a great parenthesis, occasioned because of the necessity of clearing the mind of the believing Jew in regard to the ways of God.

The opening words necessarily link with the closing part of chapter 8: 'I beseech you, therefore, brethren' (12:1). The 'therefore' refers clearly to the magnificent summing up of Christian standing and eternal blessing in the eighth chapter. Because you are in Christ free from all condemnation; because you are indwelt by the Holy Spirit; because you are sons by adoption; because you are eternally linked up with Christ; because you are the elect of God, predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son; because you are beyond all possibility of condemnation, since Christ has died and been raised again and sits at God's right hand; because no charge can ever be laid against the believer that God will hear; because there is no separation from the love of God for those who are in Christ Jesus — 'I beseech you [to] present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your [intelligent] service!' (v. 1).
That’s a pretty loaded "therefore!" Entertaining a picture in your mind, if that loaded "therefore" were a loaded baked potato, it's toppings would exceed the entire volume of the Ryan’s buffet selection (without being sneezed upon, mishandled, and otherwise inappropriately groped and fondled, of course...and more than enough to feed the colony)!

We are not to suppose that nonconformity to the world necessarily involves awkwardness of behavior, peculiarity of dress, or boorishness in manner. But the entire world system is summed up in three terms: (1) the lust of the flesh; (2) the lust of the eye; and (3) the pride of life, or the ostention [That's right...ostentation] of living. Therefore, nonconformity to the world implies holding the body and its appetites in subjection to the Spirit of God, subjecting the imagination to the mind of Christ, and walking in lowliness of spirit through a scene where self-confidence and boasting are the order of the day.

Tim & Mila Archer (MacLaren)

Romans 12:1

Paul, in beginning his practical exhortations, lays as the foundations of them all two compassion precepts. One, with which we have to deal, affecting mainly the outward life: it’s twin sister, which follows in the next verse, affection mainly the inward life.

I. We observe that we have here, first, an all-inclusive directory for the outward life. There are two thoughts for the outward life of a Christian is sacrifice. That, again, includes two things; 1) self-surrender and 2) surrender to God.

“I remember a quaint old saying of a Germans schoolmaster, who apostrophized his body, thus” I go with you three times a day to eat; you must come with me three times a day to pray. Subjugate the body, and lit it be the servant and companion of the devout spirit.

Sacrifice is the keynote—moaning thereby surrender, control and stimulus of the corporeal frame, surrender to God, in regard to the impressions which we allow to be made upon our senses, to the indulgence which we grant to our appetites, and the satisfaction which we seek for our needs, and the activities we engage in the by means of this wondrous instrument with which God has trusted us.

II. The relation between this priestly service and other kinds of worship.

Paul is not meaning to depreciate the sacrificial ritual, from which he drew his emblem. But He is meaning to assert that the devotion of the life, manifested through bodily activity, is higher in its nature than the symbolical worship of any alter and of any sacrifice.
Remember, that whilst life is the field of worship there must be the inward worship within the shrine, if there is to be the outward service.

III. The equally comprehensive motive and ground of this all-inclusive directory for conduct.

The sacrifice of Christ is the ground on which our sacrifices can be offered and accepted, for it was the sacrifice of a depth propitiatory and cleansing, and on it, as the ancient ritual taught us, may be reared the enthusiastic service of a life—a “thankoffering” for it.

If we will open our hearts to the sacrifice of Christ, we shall be able to offer ourselves as thankofferings. If we will let His love sway our wills and consciences, He will give our wills and consciences power to master and to offer up our flesh.

Romans 12:2

I. The foundation of all transformation of character and conduct is laid deep in a renewed mind.

It is a new gift of a life which will unfold itself after its own nature, desires, tastes, directions, and renewing the whole nature. And so, say Paul, the beginning of transformation of character is the renovation in the very centre of the being, and the communication of a new impulse and power to the inward self.

II. A transfigured life

Life is to be transformed. The transformation is to be into His likeness who is the pattern of all perfections. Transformation is not a sudden or magical thing.

III. The great reward and crown of this transfigured life

The issue of such a life is, to put it into plain English, and increased power of perceiving, instinctively and surly, what it is God’s will that we should do, and that is the reward. To know beyond doubt what I ought to do, and knowing, to have no hesitation or reluctance in doing it, seems to me to have no hesitation or man that has it needs be little more. This, then, is the reward. Each peak we climb opens wider and clearer prospects into the untraveled land before us.
Romans

Gifts of Grace (Romans 12:3-8)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

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- Righteousness → Jews (9:1-11:36) (eight weeks)
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- Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
- Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 12:3-8) is the second part of this major section.
Read: Gifts of Grace (12:3-8)

3 For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. 4 For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, 5 so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. 6 Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; 7 if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; 8 the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

Explain: Gifts of Grace (12:3-8)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

Today’s text is the output of the input of last week’s text of being conformed. If we’re not conformed to last week’s commands, we’re not going to be living out the gifts as we should. These are connected thoughts. Context matters.

FYI on mea culpa on “genetic Jews”—more details on that next week when I have the prior words (verbal and visual) corrected/amended. When I do, you’ll see the page numbers change since I’m also taking out the longer readings from the teacher notes.

What do the words mean?

3 For by [dia] the grace [charis; graciousness, acceptable, benefit, favor, gift, gracious, grace, joy, liberality, pleasure, thanks, thankworthy; same word used multiple times in Romans] given [aorist middle participle] to me I say [lego; present active indicative] to everyone among [present middle participle] you not to think of himself more highly [present active infinitive; to esteem oneself over much, be vain or arrogant, think more highly] than he ought [present active indicative; necessary, what must be met; same word used in Romans 1:27; 8:26] to think [phroneo; present active infinitive; exercise the mind, entertain or have a sentiment or opinion, be (mentally) disposed, to interest oneself in, set the affection on, mind, regard, savor, think; used as part of a compound word in Romans 8:5; 11:20], but to think [present active infinitive; exercise the mind, entertain or have a sentiment or opinion, mentally disposed, interest oneself, set the affection on, be careful, mind, regard, savor, think; same word used in Romans 8:5] with sober judgment [present active infinitive; be of sound mind, sane, moderate, be in right mind, be sober minded, soberly], each according to the measure [metron; measure, meter, limited portion, degree] of faith [pistis] that God has assigned [aorist...
active indicative; part, apportion, bestow, share, disunite, differ, deal, be difference between, distribute, divide, give part]. 4 For as in one body we have [present active indicative] many members [limbs, members], and the members [limbs, members] do not all have [present active indicative] the same function [deeds, offices, works; same word used in Romans 8:13], 5 so we, though many, are [present middle indicative] one body in Christ, and individually members [limbs, members] one of another. 6 Having [present active participle] gifts [gratuity, deliverance, endowment, qualification; same word as used in Romans 1:11; 5:15, 16; 6:23] that differ [varying, surpassing, differing, divers, more excellent] according to the grace [charis] given [aorist middle participle] to us, let us use them: if prophecy [prophecy, prediction, prophesying], in proportion to our faith [pistis]; 7 if service [diakonia; ministering, ministration, ministry, office, relief, relief, service, servicing; same word used in Romans 11:13], in our serving [diakonia; ministering, ministration, ministry, office, relief, relief, service, servicing; same word used in Romans 11:13; earlier in 12:7]; the one who teaches [present active participle; teach], in his teaching [instruction, doctrine, learning, teaching]; 8 the one who exhorts [parakaleo; present active participle; call near, invite, invoke, beseech, call for, comfort, desire, exhort, intreat, pray; same word used in Romans 12:1], in his exhortation [paraklesis; imploration, hortation, solace, comfort, consolation, exhortation, intreaty]; the one who contributes [present active participle; give over, share, give, impart; same word used in Romans 1:11], in generosity [singleness, sincerity (without dissimulation or self seeking), generosity (copious bestowal), bountifulness, liberality, simplicity]; the one who leads [present middle participle; stand before, preside, practice, maintain, be over, rule], with zeal [spoude; speed, dispatch, eagerness, earnestness, business, earnest carefulness, diligence forwardness, haste]; the one who does acts of mercy [present active participle; have compassion on, have pity on, have mercy on, show mercy on; same word used in Romans 9:15 (twice), 16, 18; 11:30, 31, 32], with cheerfulness [hilarotes; alacrity, cheerfulness].

Are there any repeated words?

Think, one, members, grace, many,

What are some observations of the text?

3 For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned [This implies God gives us each different measures of faith—so we cannot be proud about what God has given out because we had nothing to do with it]. 4 For as in one body [unity] we have many members [diversity], and the members do not all have the same function [unity and diversity working together—a small (and non-personal and completely insufficient) shadow of a
concept at work in the Trinity—unity and diversity], 5 so we, though many, are one body in Christ [this ‘one body’ concept obviously spans across local churches because Paul includes himself and he himself had never been to see them but included himself in their one body], and individually members one of another [universal body membership is explicitly called out here—and is the focus of the rest of the NT’s teaching on ‘member’ship]. 6 Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us [again, we did not pick our gifts, but they were given to us—many truths can follow from this truth: (1) we should not be proud, (2) we should not look down on others, (3) we should not be jealous, (4) we should praise God for His wise choices, etc.], let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; 7 if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; 8 the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. [6-8 Note that this is not a comprehensive list of spiritual gifts (others are mentioned in other passages), so the point here may be to use what you’ve been given (as opposed to any serious doctrinal teaching on these as individual gifts)—I think much of the rest of Romans will be presented this way by Paul.]

Apply (What is the point?)

1. **Thinking** rightly matters (I didn’t pick the gift and I didn’t pick the degree). Amy Valovcin: The title of this chapter is Renewed Thinking. Hughes discusses how we can take these few verses and "think rightly" about 1) Ourselves, 2) Fellow Believers, and 3) Our gifts.
2. Different is **good** (I didn’t pick the gift and I didn’t pick the degree)
3. Gifts are for **using** (I didn’t pick the gift and I didn’t pick the degree)

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. Stay **sober** (and lovingly let each other know when we’re not)
2. Praise God for His wisdom (think about the complexity of this design)
3. **Use** our gifts (and celebrate others’ usages of their gifts—no Admiral Akbar)

Next week: Marks of the True Christian (12:9-21)

9 Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. 10 Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. 11 Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. 12 Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. 13 Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.
14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. 16 Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. 17 Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” 20 To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

**Homework**

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

**Quotes & Observations**

**Amy Valovcin (Hughes)**

The title of this chapter is Renewed Thinking. Hughes discusses how we can take these few verses and "think rightly" about 1) Ourselves, 2) Fellow Believers, and 3) Our gifts. He talks about Christ being our standard. When He is our standard our thinking should align with that standard. His people are there to help us as we journey through life together, which is why we should "think rightly" of ourselves and other believers.

Our gifts are from Him and should be used to glorify Him.

**Darla Skinner (Mounce)**

Biblical leadership is essentially carried out for the benefit of others.

“Encouraging” translates the same verb . . . used in 12:1. Phillips calls the gift “the stimulating of the faith in others.” Luther says that “teaching is means for the ignorant and exhortation for those who know” (Commentary on the Epistles to the Romans,
trans. J. T. Mueller [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1954], 156). Teaching, however, was not simply doctrinal instruction but included guidance in ethical conduct. Its goal should be a changed life as well as in informed mind. Jesus connected teaching and obedience (Matt 28:20). H. C. G. Moule insists that teaching “first passes through the teacher’s own soul into his own life” before it is given to others (The Epistle to the Romans [London: Pickering & Inglis, n.d.] 324).

McGarvey (Ironside)

Through the rest of the chapter we have God’s good will in regard to our relations, particularly to fellow believers.

Ironside presents a case for the body of Christ in this context (with support from 1 Cor. 12:26) meaning the suffering saints on earth, as opposed to views encompassing those who have already gone on to glory. Citing a regiment of Highlanders that had fought in the battle of Waterloo, though none of the men standing in formation before him had actually been in that battle, he writes, "So it is with the body of Christ on earth. Believers die and depart to be with Christ and join the choir invisible above. Others take their places here below, and thus the church continues from century to century."

Kind of like sunburns peeling, blood and bone cells being recycled, and skin regularly sloughing off and being replaced, it’s the same body with different cells.
Romans

Marks of the True Christian (Romans 12:9-21)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

1. Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17) (four weeks)
2. Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20) (six weeks)
3. Saving Righteousness (3:21-4:25) (three weeks)
5. Righteousness ➔ Jews (9:1-11:36) (eight weeks)
6. Righteous Living (12:1-15:13) (September to October) (nine weeks)
7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 12:9-21) is the third part of this major section.

Before we read this text, my mea culpa about us being genetic Jews. Context matters and running to extremes helps (replacement theology). 5 hours ➔ 4:15 removed.
Read: Marks of the True Christian (12:9-21)

9 Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. 10 Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. 11 Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. 12 Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. 13 Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. 16 Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. 17 Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” 20 To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Explain: Marks of the True Christian (12:9-21)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

Today’s text is primarily a list of do’s and don’ts for believers. Paul simply gives us a glimpse into this large ‘practical’ section of Scripture by showing us more of what it looks like to live out Romans 1-12:2.

What do the words mean?

9 Let love [agape] be genuine [undissembled, sincere, without dissimulation (hypocrisy), unfeigned]. Abhor [present active participle; detest utterly, abhor] what is evil [hurtful, evil, calamitous, ill, diseased, culpable, derelict, vicious, facinorous, mischief, malice, guilt, devil, sinners, bad, grievous, harm, lewd, malicious, wicked]; hold fast [present middle participle; glue, stick, cleave, join (self), keep company] to what is good [good, beneficial]. 10 Love [philostorgos; cherishing one’s kindred (especially parents or children), font of natural relatives, fraternal towards fellow Christians, kindly affectioned] one another with brotherly affection [philadelphia; fraternal affection, brotherly love (kindness), love of the brethren]. Outdo [present middle participle; lead the way for others, show deference, prefer] one another in showing honor [value, money paid, valuables, esteem dignity, honor, preciousness, price; same word used in Romans 2:7, 10; 9:21]. 11 Do not be slothful [tardy, indolent, irksome, grievous, slothful] in zeal [spoude; speed, dispatch, eagerness, earnestness,
business, earnest carefulness, diligence forwardness, haste], be fervent [present active participle; hot, boil (of liquids), glow (of solids), fervid, earnest, fervent] in spirit [pneuma], serve [douleuo; present active participle; be a slave, be in bondage, do service; same word used in Romans 6:6; 7:6, 25; 9:12] the Lord. 12 Rejoice [present active participle; be full of cheer, calmly happy or well off, be well, farewell, be glad, God speed, greeting, hail, joyfully, rejoice] in hope [expectation, confidence, faith, hope; same word used in Romans 4:18 (twice); 5:2, 4, 5; 8:20; 8:24 (thrice)], be patient [present active participle; stay under (behind), remain, undergo, bear (trials), have fortitude, persevere, abide, endure, (take) patiently, suffer, tarry behind] in tribulation [pressure, affliction, anguish, burden, persecution, tribulation, trouble; same word used in Romans 2:9; 5:3 (twice); 8:35], be constant [present active participle; earnest towards, persevere, be constantly diligent, attend assiduously all the exercises, adhere closely to, attend continually, continue, wait on continually] in prayer [prayer, worship, oratory, pray earnestly; same word used in Romans 1:9]. 13 Contribute [koinoneo; present active participle; share with others, communicate, distribute, be partaker] to the needs [employment, an affair, occasion, demand, requirement, destitution, business, lack, necessity, need, use, want] of the saints [sacred, pure, consecrated, holy, saint; same word used in Romans 1:2, 7; 5:5; 7:12; 8:27; 9:1; 11:16; 12:1] and seek [present active participle; pursue, persecute, ensue after, given to, press toward; same word used in Romans 9:30; 31] to show hospitality [hospitableness, entertain strangers, hospitality].

14 Bless [present active imperative; speak well of, bless (thank or invoke a benediction upon, prosper), praise] those who persecute [present active participle; pursue, persecute, ensue after, given to, press toward; same word used in Romans 9:30; 31; 12:13] you; bless [present active imperative [note: there are nine imperatives from Romans 12:14-21]; speak well of, bless (thank or invoke a benediction upon, prosper), praise; same word used earlier in Romans 12:14] and do not curse [present middle imperative; execrate [Webster: feel or express great loathing for, curse, swear]], doom, curse] them. 15 Rejoice [present active infinitive; be full of cheer, calmly happy or well off, be well, farewell, be glad, God speed, greeting, hail, joyfully, rejoice; same word used in Romans 12:12] with those who rejoice [present active participle; be full of cheer, calmly happy or well off, be well, farewell, be glad, God speed, greeting, hail, joyfully, rejoice; same word used in Romans 12:12, earlier in Romans 12:15], weep [present active infinitive; wail aloud, bewail, weep] with those who weep [present active participle; wail aloud, bewail, weep; same word used earlier in Romans 12:15]. 16 Live in harmony [phroneo; present active participle; exercise the mind, entertain or have a sentiment or opinion, be (mentally) disposed, to interest oneself in, set the affection on, mind, regard, savor, think; used as part of a compound word in Romans 8:5; 11:20; 12:3] with one another. Do not be haughty [phroneo; present active participle; exercise
the mind, entertain or have a sentiment or opinion, be (mentally) disposed, to interest oneself in, set the affection on, mind, regard, savor, think; used as part of a compound word in Romans 8:5; 11:20; 12:3, earlier in Romans 12:16; the next word means high/esteemed/lofty, but is not used in the ESV; same word used in Romans 11:20, but associate [present middle participle; take off together, transport with (seduce, passively yield), carry (lead) away with, condescend] with the lowly [depressed, humiliated, base, cast down, humble, of low degree (estate), lowly]. Never be [present middle imperative] wise [thoughtful, sagacious, discreet, conceited, wise; same word used in Romans 11:25] in your own sight. 17 Repay [present active participle; give away, deliver, give, repay, perform, recompense, render, require, restore, reward, sell, yield; same word used in Romans 2:6] no one evil [worthless, depraved, bad, evil, harm, ill, noisome, wicked; same word used in Romans 1:30; 2:9; 3:8; 7:19, 21] for evil [worthless, depraved, bad, evil, harm, ill, noisome, wicked; same word used in Romans 1:30; 2:9; 3:8; 7:19, 21, earlier in Romans 12:17], but give thought to do [present middle participle; consider in advance, look out for beforehand, provide for] what is honorable [beautiful, good, valuable, virtuous, better, fair, good, honest, meet, well, worthy; same word used in Romans 7:16, 18, 21] in the sight [in his face, before, in his presence; same word used in Romans 3:20] of all. 18 If possible [dynateo; able, could, mighty, possible, power, strong; same word used in Romans 4:21; 9:22; 11:23], so far as it depends on you, live peaceably [present active participle; to be peaceful, be at peace, live peaceably] with all. 19 Beloved [agapetos; beloved, dear; same word used in Romans 1:7; 11:28], never avenge [present active participle; vindicate, retaliate, punish, revenge] yourselves, but leave [second aorist active imperative] it [topos; spot, space, location, condition, opportunity; same word used in Romans 9:26] to the wrath [desire, violent passion, abhorrence, punishment, anger, indignation, vengeance, wrath; same word used in Romans 1:18; 2:5, 8; 4:15; 5:9; 9:22] of God, for it is written [grapho; perfect middle indicative], “Vengeance [vindication, retribution, vengeance, punishment] is mine, I will repay [future active indicative; to requite, recompense, render, repay; same word used in Romans 11:35], says [present active indicative] the Lord.” 20 To the contrary, “if your enemy [enemies, foes, hateful, odious, hostile, adversaries; same word used in Romans 5:10] is hungry [present active subjunctive; famish, crave, be hungered], feed [present active imperative; supply with bits, nourish, feed] him; if he is thirsty [present active subjunctive], give him something to drink [present active imperative]; for by so doing [present active participle] you will heap [future active indicative; pile up, heap, load] burning coals [anthrax; a burning or live coal; the ESV omits pyr—the word for “fire”] on his head.” 21 Do not be overcome [present passive (Robertson) imperative; subdue, conquer, overcome, prevail, get the victory; same word used in Romans 3:4] by evil [worthless, depraved, bad, evil, harm, ill, noisome, wicked; same word used in Romans 1:30; 2:9; 3:8; 7:19, 21; 12:17 (twice)],
but overcome [present active imperative; subdue, conquer, overcome, prevail, get the victory; same word used in Romans 3:4; earlier in Romans 12:21] evil [worthless, depraved, bad, evil, harm, ill, noisome, wicked; same word used in Romans 1:30; 2:9; 3:8; 7:19, 21; 12:17 (twice), earlier in Romans 12:21] with good [good, beneficial].

Are there any repeated words?

If, love, not,

What are some observations of the text?

9 Let love be genuine. [Valovcin: It is foundational to Christian conduct. Once again, we see love as the wrapper that drives the motives for all of the rest of this thought. Valovcin: There is something indescribable that happens when believer after believer reach out to meet needs.] Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. 10 Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. 11 Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. 12 Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. 13 Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. 15 Rejoice with [perhaps locationally-based?] those who rejoice, weep with [perhaps locationally-based?] those who weep. 16 Live in harmony with one another [Mounce: Like spokes in a wheel that converge at the hub, the closer we are to God the closer we come to one another.]. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. 17 Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all [Ironside: Savonarola said, 'A Christian's life consists in doing good and suffering evil.']. 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” 20 To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Apply (What is the point?)

1. Christian behavior is **hard**
2. Christian behavior is **simple**
3. Christian behavior looks like **Jesus** life

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. Ask for **help** (the Holy Spirit is ready to help)
2. Review often (print this text off and put it where you see it often)
3. Live like Jesus (study Jesus’ life to see how He lived)

Next week: Submission to the Authorities (13:1-7)

1 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. 3 For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, 4 for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God’s wrath on the wrongdoer. 5 Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God’s wrath but also for the sake of conscience. 6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. 7 Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

This was my favorite chapter in Hughes book yet.

Let love be genuine. It is foundational to Christian conduct.

Paul tells us that we must get beyond pretense, we must sincerely love.
Explicit counsel for loving a hostile world. This is supremely radical because it is supremely unnatural.

Our class has lived out these verses to my family. Celebrating with us, crying with us and reaching out to us. There is something indescribable that happens when believer after believer reach out to meet needs (sometimes before you know it’s a need) without even asking. Loving us, with the true love of the Lord.

Love in the church and love for the world go together. They are the demands of commitment. Our minds have been renewed. Our lives have been transformed. And the Holy Spirit can do all this through us.

**Darla Skinner (Mounce)**

Pride sows the seeds of discord. The tendency to regard oneself as worthy of preferential treatment is universal in scope. The entire range of personal conflict, which reaches all the way from minor squabbles to international wars, reflects the misguided idea that we are better than they or that they have done something against us. So Paul counseled us to “live in harmony with one another” (v. 16). This unity is less the result of accommodation to the other person’s point of view than it is the result of arriving at a mutual understanding of God’s way of thinking. Like spokes in a wheel that converge at the hub, the closer we are to God the closer we come to one another. Paul admonished his readers not to be proud since it is pride more than anything else that destroys the harmony of the body.

**Jessica Norris (Kroll)**

Kroll sums up this section with 28 servant actions:

1. Love without hypocrisy
2. Hate everything evil
3. Hold on to everything good
4. Be devoted in brotherly love
5. Give preference to others
6. Be diligent
7. Be fervent
8. Serve the Lord
9. Rejoice in hope
10. Persevere in tribulation
11. Be committed to prayer
12. Contribute to the saints
13. Practice hospitality
14. Speak well of your persecutors
15. Rejoice with those who rejoice  
16. Mourn with those who mourn  
17. Preserve harmony in the church  
18. Do not be huge-headed  
19. Befriend the unlikely  
20. Be honest with yourself  
21. Don’t repay evil for evil  
22. Respect what is right  
23. Live in peace with all  
24. Never take personal revenge  
25. Allow God to make things right  
26. Treat your enemy with respect  
27. Do not be overpowered by evil  
28. Overpower evil with good

Mourn with those who mourn got me and reminded me of how our country is currently doing that with the recent destruction from the hurricanes. Prior to the hurricanes, it has been pointed out, the hot topic was the removal of the Confederate statues. Did God allow the hurricanes to get the country’s focus back on to what matters which is to love one another instead of tearing each other down? I don’t know. Maybe. I can see both sides of that and think it is a very tricky argument that further alienates non-believers. I do find it funny though that in this chapter, Kroll quotes Robert E. Lee when referring to his servant action #14 “speak well of your persecutors.” The story goes that a soldier asked General Robert E. Lee what he thought about a subordinate who had been particularly critical of him. General Lee replied that he thought that the man was a good soldier. When asked if he knew what the officer had been saying about him and if that would change his opinion, General Lee replied, “You asked me what I thought of him, not what he thought of me.” As a whole how often does our society speak well of our persecutors and would rather take the more childish route of “I know you are but what am I?” I think that I’m going to print off this list and put it in my cubicle as a good reminder of how I need to be behaving every minute of every day because it is SO easy for me to just want to disregard nearly every one of these servant actions.

**McGarvey (Ironside)**

It’s hardly necessary to take up each verse in detail. The exhortations are too plain to be misunderstood. . . . The last five verses possibly have the world in view rather than fellow Christians, and yet it is unhappily true that even in all dealings with fellow believers the same admonitions are needed.
Savonarola said, 'A Christian's life consists in doing good and suffering evil.' By the way, Girolamo Savonarola was a Florentine friar, which is also a decent MMA fighter name, I should think. Get that one out, Bruce Buffer!

Ironside this week also uses the phrase "inculcating condescension," if perchance you seek potential names for a new band . . . or VIP handling service . . . or technical support vendor.

But here we have exhortation to walk in accord with the new nature that we possess as children of God. . . . It is the manifestation of the Spirit's work in those who belong to the new creation.

Overall, this is your quintessential "that's what we do" passage.
Romans

Submission to the Authorities (Romans 13:1-7)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

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Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

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✓ Righteous Freedom (5:1-8:39) (11 weeks)
✓ Righteousness ➔ Jews (9:1-11:36) (eight weeks)
6. Righteous Living (12:1-15:13) (September to October) (nine weeks)
7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 13:1-7) is the fourth part of this major section.
Read: Submission to the Authorities (13:1-7)

1 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. 3 For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, 4 for he is God’s servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God’s wrath on the wrongdoer. 5 Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God’s wrath but also for the sake of conscience. 6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. 7 Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.

Explain: Submission to the Authorities (13:1-7)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

No, but a couple of things to be aware of to put this passage in context: the government Paul was under during his writing of Romans and the totality of Scripture.

- This is not the Bible’s full teaching on this concept—additional passages add subjection to government must not interfere with God’s laws (as we are subjects of a heavenly kingdom first) and there are many examples of civil disobedience
- There is no distinction made between a good government and a bad government—at this time, the ‘government’ was the emperor Nero (one of the most evil men to ever rule), but Paul’s primary concern in this passage is encouraging the readers to do good inside a good government (evil governments are discussed elsewhere in Scripture)

What do the words mean?

1 Let every person be subject [hypotasso; present middle imperative] subordinate, obey, be under obedience, put under, subdue under, make subject, put in subjection to, submit self to; same word used in Romans 8:7, 20 (twice); 10:3] to the governing [present active participle; to hold oneself above, excel, superior, superiority, better, excellency, higher, pass, supreme] authorities [authority, jurisdiction, liberty, power, right, strength; same word used in Romans 9:21]. For there is [present middle indicative] no authority [authority, jurisdiction, liberty, power, right, strength; same word used in Romans 9:21; earlier in Romans 13:1; note: there are a variety of ways to
translate these two words, but they all (especially when the context of the paragraph is included) end up in this same governmental space] except from God, and those that exist [present middle participle] have been [present middle indicative] instituted [tasso; perfect passive (Robertson) participle; to arrange in an orderly manner, to assign or dispose to a certain position, addict, appoint, determine, ordain, set] by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists [present middle participle; range oneself against, oppose, oppose themselves, resist] the authorities [authority, jurisdiction, liberty, power, right, strength; same word used in Romans 9:21; 13:1 (twice)] resists [perfect active indicative; resist, stand against, oppose, withstand; same word used in Romans 9:19] what God has appointed [arrangement, institution, instrumentality], and those who resist [perfect active participle; resist, stand against, oppose, withstand; same word used in Romans 9:19, earlier in Romans 13:2] will incur [future middle (Robertson) indicative] judgment [avenge, condemned, condemnation, damnation, go to law, judgment; same word used in Romans 2:2, 3; 3:8; 5:16; 11:33]. 3 For rulers [first, chief, ruler, magistrate, prince] are [present middle indicative] not a terror [phobos; fear, alarm, fright, terror; same word used in Romans 3:18; 8:15] to good [good, beneficial] conduct [works, toil, labor], but to bad [worthless, depraved, bad, evil, harm, ill, noisome, wicked; same word used in Romans 1:30; 2:9; 3:8; 7:19, 21; 12:17 (twice), 21 (twice)]. Would [present active indicative; determine, choose, prefer, wish, inclined, be about, delight in, desire, intend, list, love, mean, please, will; same word used in Romans 1:13; 7:15, 16, 18, 19 (twice), 20, 21; 9:16, 18 (twice), 22; 11:25] you have no fear [present middle infinitive] of the one who is in authority [authority, jurisdiction, liberty, power, right, strength; same word used in Romans 9:21; 13:1 (twice), 2]? Then do [present active imperative] what is good [good, beneficial], and you will receive [present active indicative] his approval [laudation, commendable thing, praise; same word used in Romans 2:29], 4 for he is [present middle indicative] God's servant [diakonos; to run errands, attendant, waiter, deacon, deaconess, minister, servant] for your good [good, beneficial]. But if you do [present active subjunctive] wrong [worthless, depraved, bad, evil, harm, ill, noisome, wicked; same word used in Romans 1:30; 2:9; 3:8; 7:19, 21; 12:17 (twice), 21 (twice); 13:3], be afraid [phobeo; present middle imperative; to frighten, be alarmed, be in awe of, revere, be sore afraid, fear exceedingly, reverence; same word used in Romans 11:20], for he does not bear [present active indicative; to have a burden, to wear as clothing or a constant accompaniment, bear, wear] the sword [knife, dirk, war, judicial punishment, sword; same word used in Romans 8:35] in vain [idly, without reason, without effect, without a cause, in vain]. For he is [present middle indicative] the servant [diakonos; to run errands, attendant, waiter, deacon, deaconess, minister, servant; same word used earlier in Romans 13:4] of God, an avenger [carrying justice out, punisher, a revenger] who carries out God's wrath [desire, violent passion, abhorrence, punishment, anger,
indignation, vengeance, wrath; same word used in Romans 1:18; 2:5, 8; 4:15; 5:9; 9:22; 12:19] on the wrongdoer [note: this English word combines a Greek verb and a Greek adjective; the verb: present active participle; perform repeatedly, habitually, execute, accomplish, collect, fare, commit, deeds, do, exact, keep, require, use arts; same word used in Romans 1:32; 2:1, 2, 3, 25; 7:15, 19; 9:11; the adjective: worthless, deprived, bad, evil, harm, ill, noisome, wicked; same word used in Romans 1:30; 2:9; 3:8; 7:19, 21; 12:17 (twice), 21 (twice); 13:3, earlier in 13:4]. 5 Therefore one must be [constraint, distress, must needs, of necessity, needful] in subjection [hypotasso; present middle infinitive; subordinate, obey, be under obedience, put under, subdue under, make subject, put in subjection to, submit self to; same word used in Romans 8:7, 20 (twice); 10:3; 13:1], not only [merely, alone, but, only] to avoid [dia] God's wrath [desire, violent passion, abhorrence, punishment, anger, indignation, vengeance, wrath; same word used in Romans 1:18; 2:5, 8; 4:15; 5:9; 9:22; 12:19; 13:4] but also for the sake of [dia] conscience [co-perception, moral consciousness, conscience; same word used in Romans 2:15; 9:1]. 6 For because [dia] of this you also pay [present active indicative] taxes [load, tax, tribute], for the authorities are [present middle indicative] ministers [leitourgos; public servant, functionary in the Temple or Gospel, worshipper of God or benefactor of man, minister] of God, attending [present active participle; earnest towards, persevere, be constantly diligent, attend assiduously all the exercises, adhere closely to, attend continually, continue, wait on continually; same word used in Romans 12:12] to this very thing. 7 Pay [second aorist active imperative; completes, executes, concludes, discharges, accomplishes, makes an end, expires, fills up, finishes, goes over, pays, performs; same word used in Romans 2:27] to all what is owed [indebtedness, a sum owed, obligation, duty, debt, due] to them: taxes [load, tax, tribute; same word used in Romans 13:5] to whom taxes [load, tax, tribute; same word used in Romans 13:5; earlier in Romans 13:7] are owed, revenue [limit, conclusion, result, impost, levy, custom, ending, finally, uttermost; same word used in Romans 6:21, 22; 10:4] to whom revenue [limit, conclusion, result, impost, levy, custom, ending, finally, uttermost; same word used in Romans 6:21, 22; 10:4; earlier in Romans 13:7] is owed, respect [phobos] to whom respect [phobos] is owed, honor [value, money paid, valuables, esteem dignity, honor, preciousness, price; same word used in Romans 2:7, 10; 9:21; 12:10] to whom honor [value, money paid, valuables, esteem dignity, honor, preciousness, price; same word used in Romans 2:7, 10; 9:21; 12:10; earlier in Romans 13:7] is owed.

Are there any repeated words?

Authority, resist, fear, good, wrath, subject(ion), taxes, revenue, respect, honor, servant, God’s, owed
What are some observations of the text?

1. Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. 2. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. 3. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, 4. for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. 5. Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. 6. For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. 7. Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.

Apply (What is the point?)

1. Christians are subjects (to God first and to governments later)
2. Christians doing good have nothing to fear
3. Christians should pay what Christians owe

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. Submit
2. Do good
3. Pay up

Next week: Fulfilling the Law Through Love (13:8-14)

8. Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. 9. For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” 10. Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

11. Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. 12. The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. 13. Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. 14. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.
Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

Many of the difficulties found in this chapter result from what is read into it rather than from what it actually teaches.

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

God established three institutions: the family, the church, and the government. He meant for the government to be led by godly people but this was never realized because of humankind’s sin. God did not create government the way we see it today but Kroll points out that when bad government prevails, we attempt to change it. But we still pay our taxes in the meantime.

Jim Fleming (Piper)

desiringgod.org/messages/the-limits-of-submission-to-man
Fulfilling the Law Through Love (Romans 13:8-14)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

✓ Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17) (four weeks)
✓ Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20) (six weeks)
✓ Saving Righteousness (3:21-4:25) (three weeks)
✓ Righteous Freedom (5:1-8:39) (11 weeks)
✓ Righteousness \(\rightarrow\) Jews (9:1-11:36) (eight weeks)

6. Righteous Living (12:1-15:13) (September to October) (nine weeks)
7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 13:8-14) is the fifth part of this major section.
I. Scripture

Read: Fulfilling the Law Through Love (13:8-14)

8 Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. 9 For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” 10 Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

11 Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. 12 The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. 13 Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. 14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

There are some parallel passages: 1 Peter 4:7-11; John 13:35; Galatians 5:16

Explain: Fulfilling the Law Through Love (13:8-14)

II. About Darla

1. Introvert
2. Rope holder (see Jim’s lesson on Bible Characters You’ve (Probably) Never Heard Of on October 3, 2010)

What do the words mean?

8 Owe [owe, be under obligation, fail in duty, behove, be bound, be in debt, be due, be guilty (indebted), needs, ought, should] no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. 9 For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor [neighbor, fellow, near] as yourself.” 10 Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

11 Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. 12 The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. 13 Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. 14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.
What are some observations of the text?

III. Love is the standard

These passages and the entirety of Scripture convey the principle that loving is what is expected of us.

Problem: we fall short . . . “I love me some me” (Brian Smith)

We’ve been declared righteous, not made righteous, and the day-to-day sanctification is where I am being made righteous.

Today I want to share how I have learned to love by watching love modeled for me.

Apply (What is the point?)

1. Who we love: the one anothers
   Visual: dolls; Thing 1 & Thing 2

2. How we love is individual
   Huggers – my hugging friend STOP
   Side huggers – I’m getting there
   Wavers – that’s what I’m waiting on as an option
   You know how some things just make you cringe?
   “love on” vs. “lean in”
   My love language is acts of service—and this takes thought and time. If you’ve done something for me, it speaks volumes to me—you’ve invested your time.

   Rick Warren: Sacrifice is the essence of love.

3. Where we love: the context of the church

   Rick Warren (from The Purpose Driven Life): God wants you to be in regular, close fellowship with other believers so you can develop the skill of loving. Love cannot be learned in isolation. You have to be around people—irritating, imperfect, frustrating people.

   I would add this: this works in the other direction also: you learn to love by watching loving people. I have learned to love.

   Rick Warren (from The Purpose Driven Life): A church family moves you out of self-centered isolation. It is the classroom for learning how to get along in God’s family. It is a lab for practicing unselfish, sympathetic love.

   Rope holding—prayer list
Invite someone to serve with you—What’s in your hand? You don’t have to create some gift.

Lori McDonald, Sandra Willard, Red Hall, Shanda Arter

Modeling love rubs off on people.

*Wayne Grudem:* Where love abounds in a fellowship of Christians, many small offenses and even some large ones, are readily overlooked and forgotten. But where love is lacking, every word is viewed with suspicion, every action is liable to misunderstanding and conflicts abound—to Satan’s perverse delight. *(found in Guzik)*

4. When we love: **now**

This last part of today’s Romans passage reminds me of a sermon from my growing up days in another type of church.

- **Wake** up – *v. 11-12a* (we don’t have time to waste)
- **Take** up – *v. 12b* (Jim: I don’t think he’s referring to light sabers here, so put down your light sabers)
- **Shape** up – *v. 13*
- **Dress** up (like Jesus) – *v. 14*

Remember the upper room “love one another?” Jesus’ example was girding Himself and washing the disciples’ feet.

**Personalize (What do we do with that?)**

1. Loving is **hard**—look at the **cross**
2. Loving is **costly**—pay your **debts** (but know we are not free from the debt of love)
3. Loving cannot **wait**—start loving **today**

**Next week: Do Not Pass Judgment on One Another *(14:1-12)***

1. As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. 2 One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. 3 Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. 4 Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

5. One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. 6 The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord,
since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. 7 For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. 8 For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s. 9 For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

10 Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; 11 for it is written, “As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.”

12 So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

Romans 13:8-14 contains a similarly profound call to love our fellow man, to develop a deep horizontal love, to love on the level.

Let us consciously put off the works of darkness and put on Jesus . . . every day!

He talks about loving our neighbors now, while we have the time. Paul has a sense of urgency in these verses and we must take the opportunity daily to show others the love of Christ.

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

After reading this, I am reminded that I “continue to be in debt” to love others even when I may not want to. Even when it’s messy and I’d really rather run away or when I’d
rather shake sense into a person because they are on a one-way track to self and family destruction but are too blinded by feelings to see it. This passage in combination with the experience this weekend has certainly driven home many reminders for me in how we are commanded to behave, think, walk, and talk.

**Sean McGarvey (Ironside)**

Regarding the Christian's relation to society in general, "He is to maintain the attitude not of a debtor but a giver — to owe no man anything but rather to let love flow out freely to all."

In speaking to loving neighbor as self, "He who thus loves could, by no possibility, ever be guilty of adultery, murder, theft, lying, or covetousness. It is impossible that love should be manifested in such ways as these." Not sure if the wording that just because love does no wrong it is the fulfilling of the law sits right with me. Still mulling it over, but without a Greek source. The law is there to protect and provide, true, but just doing no wrong to a neighbor leaves a void. I mean, the law shows boundaries where love sees starting blocks. Love is what overflows the law . . . and perhaps "overflowing" satisfactorily replaces "fulfilling." Love soaks into those pockets and crevices that the law misses, and it spills over to others beyond its initial recipient. Love is the why of the law . . . but it's not just "do no harm."

And because all I ever need to know I learned from DC Talk, Luv Is A Verb...or as some hack stole later Love DOES.

Then there was a story about Augustine of Hippo (reminding me, as it will, of a rhino, which is called a chubby unicorn on a t shirt at the Rainforest Cafe) who was apparently unsure of public confession of Christ because it would mean no more orgies or some such, and we all know how hard it is, especially the guys, to make no provision for the flesh to gratify its ardent desires. But on the serious tip, "the Spirit of God opened his eyes to see that the power for victory was not in himself but in the fact that he was identified with a crucified and risen Savior."
Romans

Do Not Pass Judgment on One Another (Romans 14:1-12)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

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6. Righteous Living (12:1-15:13) (September to October) (nine weeks)
7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 14:1-12) is the sixth part of this major section, and the first week of a three-week span focusing on our relationship to weaker brothers and sisters.
Read: Do Not Pass Judgment on One Another (14:1-12)

1 As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. 2 One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. 3 Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. 4 Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

5 One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. 6 The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. 7 For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. 8 For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s. 9 For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

10 Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; 11 for it is written, “As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.”

12 So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

Explain: Do Not Pass Judgment on One Another (14:1-12)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

Paul continues this larger section of Romans by showing us more of what it looks like to live our righteousness, but this section begins a three-week span focusing on our relationship to weaker brothers and sisters.

There may be a hint of, ‘look how God relates to us as weaker,’ in this section too, but I’m not sure about it. Paul sends us back to Isaiah 45 to remind us of judgement from God, so that’s always looming in Paul’s mind relative to how we treat each other (not out of fear of punishment/condemnation, but out of positional perspective).

What do the words mean?

1 As for the one who is weak [present active participle; be feeble, impotent, sick, weaken; same word used in Romans 4:19; 8:3] in faith [pistis; persuasion, moral
conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, the system of religious truth, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity], welcome [present middle imperative; take to oneself, use (food), lead (aside), admit (to friendship or hospitality), receive, take unto] him, but not to quarrel [judicial estimation, discerning, disputation] over opinions [discussion, internal consideration, external debate, dispute, imagination, reasoning, thought; same word used in Romans 1:21]. 2 One person believes [present active indicative; have faith in, credit, entrust, believe, commit to, put in trust with; used over a dozen times in Romans] he may eat [second aorist active infinitive; eat, meat; used twice more in Romans 14] anything, while the weak [present active participle; be feeble, impotent, sick, weaken; same word used in Romans 4:19; 8:3; 14:1] person eats [present active indicative; eat, devour, live; a different word than used earlier in Romans 14:2, but used for eat 10 more times in Romans 14] only vegetables [vegetables, herbs]. 3 Let not the one who eats [present active participle] despise [present active imperative (Robertson); contemptible, despise, least esteemed, set at naught] the one who abjures [present active participle], and let not the one who abjures [present active participle] pass judgment [krino; present active imperative; distinguish, decide, try, condemn, punish, avenge, conclude, condemn, damn, decree, determine, esteem, judge, sue, ordain, call in question, sentence, think; same word used many times in Romans 2-3] on the one who eats [present active participle], for God has welcomed [second aorist middle indicative; take to oneself, use (food), lead (aside), admit (to friendship or hospitality), receive, take unto; same word used in Romans 14:1] him. 4 Who are [present middle indicative] you to pass judgment [krino; present active participle] on the servant [fellow resident, menial domestic, household servant (not doulos)] of another [another’s, not one’s own, foreign, not akin, hostile, alien, strange]? It is before his own master [kyrios; supreme in authority, controller, God, Lord, master, Sir] that he stands [present active indicative; to be stationary, to persevere, stand (fast)] or falls [present active indicative; fall, fall, fall down, light on; same word used in Romans 11:11, 22]. And he will be upheld [future passive (Robertson) indicative; stand, abide, appoint, bring, continue, covenant, establish, hold up, lay, present, set up, stanch; same word used in Romans 3:31; 5:2; 10:3; 11:20], for the Lord [kyrios] is [present active indicative] able [dynamio; able, could, mighty, possible, power, strong; same word used in Romans 4:21; 9:22; 11:23; 12:18] to make him stand [aorist active infinitive; stand, abide, appoint, bring, continue, covenant, establish, hold up, lay, present, set up, stanch; same word used in Romans 3:31; 5:2; 10:3; 11:20; earlier in Romans 14:4].

5 One person esteems [krino; present active indicative] one day as better than another, while another esteems [krino; present active indicative] all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced [present passive (Robertson) imperative; carried out fully, completely assured, entirely accomplished, surely believed, fully known, fully persuaded, made full
proof; same word used in Romans 4:21; Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: sense of finishing off or paying off] in his own mind [mind, understanding; same word used in Romans 1:28; 7:23, 25; 11:34; 12:2]. 6 The one who observes [phronteo; present active participle; exercise the mind, entertain or have a sentiment or opinion, be (mentally) disposed, to interest oneself in, set the affection on, mind, regard, savor, think; used as part of a compound word in Romans 8:5; 11:20; 12:3, 16] the day, observes [phronteo; present active indicative; exercise the mind, entertain or have a sentiment or opinion, be (mentally) disposed, to interest oneself in, set the affection on, mind, regard, savor, think; used as part of a compound word in Romans 8:5; 11:20; 12:3, 16; earlier in Romans 14:6] it in honor of the Lord [kyrios]. The one who eats [present active participle], eats [present active indicative] in honor of the Lord [kyrios], since he gives thanks [eucharisteo; present active indicative; to be grateful, to express gratitude (towards), to say grace at a meal, give thanks; same word used in Romans 1:8, 21; 7:25] to God, while the one who abstains [present active participle; literally, eats not], abstains [present active indicative; literally, eats not] in honor of the Lord [kyrios] and gives thanks [eucharisteo; present active indicative] to God. 7 For none of us lives [present active indicative] to himself, and none of us dies [present active indicative; has died off, is dead, died, lies a-dying, is slain; same word used in Romans 5:6, 7, 8, 15; 6:2, 7, 8, 9, 10 (twice), 7:2, 3, 6, 9; 8:13, 34] to himself. 8 For if we live [present active subjunctive], we live [present active subjunctive] to the Lord, and if we die [present active subjunctive; has died off, is dead, died, lies a-dying, is slain; same word used in Romans 5:6, 7, 8, 15; 6:2, 7, 8, 9, 10 (twice), 7:2, 3, 6, 9; 8:13, 34; 14:7], we die [present active indicative; has died off, is dead, died, lies a-dying, is slain; same word used in Romans 5:6, 7, 8, 15; 6:2, 7, 8, 9, 10 (twice), 7:2, 3, 6, 9; 8:13, 34; 14:7, earlier in Romans 14:8] to the Lord. So then, whether we live [present active subjunctive] or whether we die [present active subjunctive; has died off, is dead, died, lies a-dying, is slain; same word used in Romans 5:6, 7, 8, 15; 6:2, 7, 8, 9, 10 (twice), 7:2, 3, 6, 9; 8:13, 34; 14:7, twice earlier in Romans 14:8], we are [present middle indicative] the Lord’s. 9 For this end Christ died [second aorist active indicative; has died off, is dead, died, lies a-dying, is slain; same word used in Romans 5:6, 7, 8, 15; 6:2, 7, 8, 9, 10 (twice), 7:2, 3, 6, 9; 8:13, 34; 14:7, 8 (thrice)] and lived again [aorist active indicative], that he might be Lord [aorist active subjunctive; rule, have dominion over, lord, be lord of, exercise lordship over; same word as used in Romans 6:9, 14; 7:1] both of the dead and of the living [present active participle].

10 Why do you pass judgment [krino; present active indicative] on your brother [ adelphos]? Or you, why do you despise [present active indicative; contemptible, despise, least esteemed, set at naught; same word used in Romans 14:3] your brother [ adelphos]? For we will all stand before [future middle (Robertson) indicative; stand beside, exhibit, proffer, recommend, substantiate, be at hand, aid; same word used in
Romans 6:13 (twice), 16, 19 (twice); 12:1 the judgment seat [bema; step, foot breath, rostrum, tribunal, judgement seat, set (foot) on, throne] of God; 11 for it is written [perfect middle indicative], [Isaiah 45:23b]

“As I live [present active indicative], says [present active indicative] the Lord, every knee shall bow [future active indicative; bent, bowed; same word used in Romans 11:4] to me,

and every tongue [tongues, languages; same word used in Romans 3:13] shall confess [to acknowledge or agree fully, confess, profess, promise] to God.”

12 So then each of us will give [future active indicative] an account [logos] of himself to God.

Are there any repeated words?

God, Lord, judge/judgement, one, eats, abstain, live, die, despise,

What are some observations of the text?

1 As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. 2 One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. 3 Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. 4 Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

Question: Which believer is better? The weak or the not weak? Neither! David Guzik: There are many reasons why a Christian might be weak.

- They may be a babe in Christ (babies are weak)
- They may be sick or diseased (by legalism)
- They may be malnourished (by lack of good teaching)
- They may lack exercise (needing exhortation)

Question: Which believer is weak? The strict one or the less strict one? The strict. David Guzik: Legalism has a way of making us think that we are strong and those who don’t keep the rules the way we do are weak

5 One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. [Be convinced of what we believe (hint: if you’re not sure about something, it’s OK to not have a position until you can be fully convinced)] 6 The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. 7 For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. 8 For if we live, we live
to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we
die, we are the Lord’s. 9 For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be
Lord both of the dead and of the living.

10 Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your
brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; 11 for it is written,
“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall confess to God.”

12 So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

Apply (What is the point?)

1. We belong to the Lord
2. We will give an account to the Lord
3. The Lord will judge

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. Honor the Lord (with our opinions and our convictions)
2. Don’t despise/judge other believers’ opinions
3. Stay in our lane (the Lord doesn’t need us merging into His judging lane)

Next week: Do Not Cause Another to Stumble (14:13-23)

13 Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide
never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother. 14 I know and am
persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself, but it is unclean for
anyone who thinks it unclean. 15 For if your brother is grieved by what you eat, you are
no longer walking in love. By what you eat, do not destroy the one for whom Christ
died. 16 So do not let what you regard as good be spoken of as evil. 17 For the
kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace
and joy in the Holy Spirit. 18 Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and
approved by men. 19 So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual
upbuilding.

20 Do not, for the sake of food, destroy the work of God. Everything is indeed clean,
but it is wrong for anyone to make another stumble by what he eats. 21 It is good not
to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble. 22 The
faith that you have, keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who has no
reason to pass judgment on himself for what he approves. 23 But whoever has doubts
is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.

**Homework**

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

**Quotes & Observations**

**Amy Valovcin (Hughes)**

Some things just don’t matter. May we allow God to give us the wisdom to see what is essential and what is not.

So true, yet we so easily forget this and let the little things stand in our way of being open and welcoming to our fellow brothers or sisters in Christ. We silently (or not so silently) judge others while ignoring the fact that the little things don’t matter.

**Darla Skinner (Mounce)**

There is no room in the family of God for one group to pass judgment on another (v. 10). In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus settled the matter once and for all: “Do not judge, or you too will be judged.” (Matt 7:1). This admonition, however, has often been misinterpreted to meant that we are not to disapprove of anything another person does. But how, then, would we be able to follow through on Jesus’ later instruction that “by their fruit you will recognize them” (Matt 7:16)? It is harsh and censorious criticism that Jesus opposed, not insight conditioned and made possible by biblical truth.
Jessica Norris (Kroll)

Our responsibility to the weak is to take them into our friendship and fellowship; to take them to our heart as fellow strugglers; and not to criticize them, shun them, or ridicule them for their lack of maturity or knowledge.

If every Christian minded themselves and their own business in regard to “traditions” then the non-believers would have far less ammunition to try to pick us apart. When the non-believers see legalistic friction amongst ourselves we are just making it easier for them to get us off course of what our focus should be which is Jesus. Pants v. dresses, church on Saturday v. Sunday, meat eater v. vegetarian, who cares because we should have our eyes on God all day every day!

Sean McGarvey (Ironside)

In chapter 14 and the first seven verses of chapter 15 the Holy Spirit emphasizes the believer’s responsibilities toward his weaker brethren. He is to walk charitably toward those who have less light than himself. (Anyone else hearing DC Talk’s, "In the Light" at the moment?)

So, in the spirit of charity, we probably ought not call our law-encumbered brothers and sisters legalistic dimwits. Gotcha, Henry Allen. (You know, before his preaching tour in New Zealand, he had retired to Winona Lake, Indiana, where I went to school at Grace College. Also, he was born in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, aboot—yes, indeed—two hours from Kitchener-Waterloo, where my dad pastored a church. Ah, the few degrees of separation.)

The one who is 'strong' must not look with contempt upon his overscrupulous brother. On the other hand, the weak one is forbidden to accuse the stronger of insincerity or inconsistency.

These are the ones on which I am ruminating:

Where there is sincerity and it is the glory of the Lord that each has in view, both must endeavor to act as in His presence.

We do not live for ourselves. Whether we will or no, we are constantly affecting others for good or ill. Let us then recognize our individual responsibility to the Lord, whose we are and whom we are to serve, whether in life or in death.

Well that’s some deep stuff . . . with some profound mixed in.

Ironside also co-wrote the hymn "Overshadowed," that my dad used to play on the trombone at the house and in concerts.
Romans

Do Not Cause Another to Stumble (Romans 14:13-23)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

✓ Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17) (four weeks)
✓ Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20) (six weeks)
✓ Saving Righteousness (3:21-4:25) (three weeks)
✓ Righteous Freedom (5:1-8:39) (11 weeks)
✓ Righteousness \(\rightarrow\) Jews (9:1-11:36) (eight weeks)
6. Righteous Living (12:1-15:13) (September to October) (nine weeks)
7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 14:13-23) is the seventh part of this major section, and the second week of a three-week span focusing on our relationship to weaker brothers and sisters.
A Living Sacrifice

1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Gifts of Grace

3 For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. 4 For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, 5 so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. 6 Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; 7 if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; 8 the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

Marks of the True Christian

9 Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. 10 Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. 11 Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. 12 Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. 13 Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. 16 Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. 17 Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” 20 To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Submission to the Authorities

1 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist
will incur judgment. 3 For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, 4 for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. 5 Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. 6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. 7 Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.

Fulfilling the Law Through Love

8 Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. 9 For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” 10 Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

11 Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. 12 The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. 13 Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. 14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Do Not Pass Judgment on One Another (14:1-12)

1 As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. 2 One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. 3 Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. 4 Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

5 One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. 6 The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. 7 For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. 8 For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s. 9 For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.
10 Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; 11 for it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.”

12 So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

Read: Do Not Cause Another to Stumble (14:13-23)

13 Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother. 14 I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself, but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean. 15 For if your brother is grieved by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love. By what you eat, do not destroy the one for whom Christ died. 16 So do not let what you regard as good be spoken of as evil. 17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. 18 Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. 19 So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.

20 Do not, for the sake of food, destroy the work of God. Everything is indeed clean, but it is wrong for anyone to make another stumble by what he eats. 21 It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble. 22 The faith that you have, keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who has no reason to pass judgment on himself for what he approves. 23 But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.

Explain: Do Not Cause Another to Stumble (14:13-23)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

Paul continues this larger section of Romans by showing us more of what it looks like to live our righteousness, but this section is the second in a three-week span focusing on our relationship to weaker brothers and sisters.

Note: today’s text can be confusing since we are not Jewish (clean/unclean doesn’t and never did apply to us), but a helpful perspective might be to place ourselves in the weaker brother’s shoes.
What do the words mean?

13 Therefore let us not pass judgment [krino; present active subjunctive; distinguish, decide, try, condemn, punish, avenge, conclude, condemn, damn, decree, determine, esteem, judge, sue, ordain, call in question, sentence, think; same word used many times in Romans 2-3; 14] on one another any longer, but rather decide [krino; aorist active imperative] never to put [present active infinitive; same word used in Romans 4:17; 9:33] a stumbling block [stub, occasion of apostasy, offence, stumbling block, stumbling stone; same word used in Romans 9:32, 33] or hindrance [skandalon; snare, occasion to fall, offence, thing that offends, stumbling-block; same word used in Romans 9:33; 11:9] in the way of a brother [adelphos]. 14 I know [perfect passive (Robertson) indicative] and am persuaded [perfect middle indicative; convinced, assented, rely, agreed, assured, believed, have confidence in, contented, make friend, obeyed, persuaded, trusted, yielded; same word used in Romans 2:8, 19; 8:38] in the Lord Jesus that nothing [know what this means in the Greek? Nothing (same word used in Romans 8:1)] is unclean [common, shared by all or several, profane, defiled, unclean, unholy] in itself, but it is [present middle infinitive] unclean [common, shared by all or several, profane, defiled, unclean, unholy; same word used earlier in Romans 14:14] for anyone who thinks [logizomai; present middle participle; taken inventory, estimated, concluded, esteemed, imputed, numbered, reasoned, reckoned; same word used in Romans 2:3, 26; 3:28; 4:3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 22, 23, 24; 6:11; 8:18, 36; 9:8] it unclean [common, shared by all or several, profane, defiled, unclean, unholy; same word used twice earlier in Romans 14:14]. 15 For if your brother [adelphos] is grieved [lypeo; present middle indicative; distressed, to be sad, cause grief, grieve, be in heaviness, be sorrowful, be sorry] by what you eat [food, especially (ceremonial) articles allowed or forbidden by the Jewish law, meat, victuals], you are no longer walking [present active indicative; tread all around, walk, live, deport oneself, follow; same word used in Romans 6:4; 8:4] in love [agape]. By what you eat [food, especially (ceremonial) articles allowed or forbidden by the Jewish law, meat, victuals; same word used earlier in Romans 14:15], do not destroy [present active imperative; be destroyed fully, perish, lose, die; same word used in Romans 2:12] the one for whom Christ died [second aorist active indicative; has died off, is dead, died, lies a-dying, is slain; same word used in Romans 5:6, 7, 8, 15; 6:2, 7, 8, 9, 10 (twice), 7:2, 3, 6, 9; 8:13, 34; 14:7, 8 (thrice), 9]. 16 So do not let what you regard as good [good, beneficial] be spoken of as evil [present passive (Robertson) imperative; vilified, spoken impiously of, blasphemed, defamed, railed on, reviled, spoken evil against; same word used in Romans 2:24; 3:8]. 17 For the kingdom [royalty, rule, realm, kingdom, reign] of God is [present middle indicative] not a matter of eating [eating, food, meat] and drinking [drinking, draught, drink] but of righteousness [equity, justification, righteousness; same word used in Romans 1:17;
3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 11 (twice), 13, 22; 5:17, 21; 6:13, 16, 18, 19, 20; 8:10; 9:30 (twice), 31; 10:3 (twice), 4, 5, 6, 10] and peace [peace, prosperity, one, quietness, rest, to be set at one again; same word used in Romans 1:7; 2:10; 3:17; 5:1; 8:6] and joy [cheerfulness, calm delight, gladness, greatly, exceedingly joy (-ful, -fully, -fulness, -ous)] in the Holy [sacred, pure, consecrated, holy, saint; same word used in Romans 1:2; 7; 5:5; 7:12; 8:27; 9:1; 11:16; 12:1, 13] Spirit [pneuma]. 18 Whoever thus serves [douleuo; present active participle; be a slave, be in bondage, do service; same word used in Romans 6:6; 7:6, 25; 9:12; 12:11] Christ is acceptable [fully agreeable, acceptable, well pleasing; same word used in Romans 12:1, 2] to God and approved [properly acceptable, approved, tried] by men. 19 So then let us pursue [present active subjunctive; pursue, persecute, ensue after, given to, press toward; same word used in Romans 9:30; 31; 12:13, 14] what makes for peace [peace, prosperity, one, quietness, rest, to be set at one again; same word used in Romans 1:7; 2:10; 3:17; 5:1; 8:6; 14:17] and for mutual upbuilding [architecture, a structure, confirmation, building, edify (-ic peace, -ion)]

20 Do not, for the sake of food [food, especially (ceremonial) articles allowed or forbidden by the Jewish law, meat, victuals; same word used twice in Romans 14:15], destroy [present active imperative; to loosen down (disintegrate), demolish, halt for the night, destroy, dissolve, be guest, lodge, come to naught, overthrow, throw down] the work [works, toil, labor] of God. Everything is indeed clean [clean, clear, pure], but it is wrong [worthless, depraved, bad, evil, harm, ill, noisome, wicked; same word used in Romans 1:30; 2:9; 3:8; 7:19, 21; 12:17 (twice), 21 (twice); 13:3, 4 (twice), 10] for anyone to make another stumble [stub, occasion of apostasy, offence, stumbling block, stumbling stone; same word used in Romans 9:32, 33; 14:13] by [dia] what he eats [present active participle; eat, devour, live; same word used earlier in Romans 14]. 21 It is good [beautiful, good, valuable, virtuous, better, fair, good, honest, meet, well, worthy; same word used in Romans 7:16, 18, 21; 12:17] not to eat [second aorist active infinitive; eat, meat; same word used earlier in Romans 14] meat [butcher’s meat, flesh] or drink [pino; second aorist active infinitive; imbibe, drink] wine or do anything that causes your brother [adelphia] to stumble [present active indicative; strike at, surge against (as water), stub on, trip up, beat upon, dash, stumble at; same word used in Romans 9:32]. 22 The faith [pistis; persuasion, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, the system of religious truth, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity] that you have [present active indicative], keep [present active imperative] between yourself and God. Blessed [fortunate, well off, happy; same word used in Romans 4:7, 8] is the one who has no reason to pass judgment [krino; present active participle] on himself for what he approves [present active indicative; test, approve, allow, discern, examine, like, prove, try; same word used in Romans 1:28; 2:18; 12:2]. 23 But whoever has doubts [present middle participle; separate thoroughly, withdraw
from, oppose, discriminate, hesitate, contend, differ, discern, doubt, judge, be partial, stagger, waver; same word used in Romans 4:20] is condemned [katakrino; perfect passive (Robertson) indicative; judge against, sentence, condemn, damn; same word used in Romans 2:1; 8:3, 34] if he eats [second aorist active subjunctive; eat, meat; same word used earlier in Romans 14], because the eating is not from faith [pistis; persuasion, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, the system of religious truth, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity]. For whatever does not proceed from faith [pistis; persuasion, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, the system of religious truth, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity] is [present middle indicative] sin [offense, sin].

Are there any repeated words?

God, unclean, faith, one, eat/eats, brother, anyone, good, longer, pass, judgment, whoever, stumble, peace, Christ, destroy

Are there any repeated topics?

Building up and tearing down and food/drink

What are some observations of the text?

13 Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother. 14 I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself, but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean. 15 For if your brother is grieved by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love. By what you eat, do not destroy the one for whom Christ died. 16 So do not let what you regard as good be spoken of as evil. 17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. 18 Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. 19 So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.

20 Do not, for the sake of food, destroy the work of God [God is building His church in the New Testament. Our physical bodies are the fleshing out of the shadow of this thought in the Old Testament with the tabernacle and the temple—objects built with physical hands. God is building His Son’s bride into a beautiful thing.]. Everything is indeed clean, but it is wrong for anyone to make another stumble by what he eats. 21 It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble. 22 The faith that you have, keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who has no reason to pass judgment on himself for what he approves. 23 But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.
Apply (What is the point?)

1. We have a **choice** (between a life of love in the Spirit and stumbling blocks)
2. God is **greater** (than opinions from last week, food and drink from this week, or anything else we can dream of in the future—because Christianity is not about our pleasure, but about His pleasure—and He is pleased when we walk in the Spirit and are known by the fruits of the Spirit)
3. **Faith** is required for life (not just for the conversion portion of salvation, but for the sanctification part too). Maclaren: If you have any doubts, abstain.

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. Choose wisely (decide ahead of time—in faith—what approach you will take)
2. Build up (not trip up) brothers (God gave us pieces to work with—things in our hands. Will we choose to build stumbling blocks or edifices for His glory?) Mounce: Rights are to be laid aside in the interest of love
3. Live in **faith** (sola fide works for sanctification as well as conversion) Hughes: Whether we are strong or weak, we are to live as citizens of the kingdom of God focusing not on the externals, but on the elements of eternity.

Next week: The Example of Christ (15:1-7)

1 We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. 3 For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me." 4 For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. 5 May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, 6 that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 7 Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process
• Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
• Read (Romans)
• Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
• Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

Putting on my TVA HR hat for a minute, these verses read like a good diversity and inclusion message.

We are a diverse lot—there is no doubt about that. Diversity is one of the glories of the community of Christ. But our unity is supremely glorious. Let us seek to enhance it with all that we are.

Hughes breaks the verses into four to-dos:

1. Don’t be a source of stumbling
2. Live as citizens of the kingdom of God
3. Pursue that which brings mural benefits
4. Do all we do with a clear conscience

Whether we are strong or weak, we are to live as citizens of the kingdom of God focusing not on the externals, but on the elements of eternity.

Darla Skinner (Mounce)

While freedom is a right, it is not a guide for conduct. Love serves that purpose. Rights are to be laid aside in the interest of love. That principle was firmly established by the incarnation (Philippians 2:6-11).

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

Kroll quotes Ray Stedman when comparing the strong versus the weak: We can compare this to crossing a swinging bridge over a mountain stream. Some people can run across a bridge like that even though it does not have any handrails. They are not concerned about the swaying of the bridge, or the danger of falling into the torrent below. But others are very uncertain of such a bridge. They shake and tremble; they inch along. They may even get down on their hands and knees and crawl across. But they will make it if you just give them time, if you let them set their own speed. After a few crossings they begin to pick up courage, and eventually they are able to run right across. It is like that with these moral questions. Some people cannot see themselves acting in a certain area that they have been brought up to think is wrong. As in the
case of the swinging bridge, it would be cruel for someone who had the freedom to cross boldly to take the arm of someone who was timid and force him to run across. He might even lose his balance and fall off the bridge. This is what Paul is warning about in verse 15.

After reading this passage the first thing that came to mind is that you are only as strong as your weakest link. If you wanted a strong fence then you wouldn't find the weakest link and then pour a corrosive on it to make it stronger. You instead would try to figure out a way to reinforce that link to make it as strong as the rest of your fence, chain, or whatever. As Christians, we should be building up each other with encouragement instead of placing stumbling blocks in the way because we get enough help with obstacles from the world. We are all supposed to be on the same team.

The bridge analogy really connected to me because I am terrified of heights and would be the one crawling across it, ha, ha! But I also know that there are areas that I am stronger in than others. I work with a girl who is terrified of talking to people. I’m talking breaking out in a cold sweat and hives if she has to make a phone call. At first, I thought this was really odd behavior and that maybe she is in the wrong line of work but I don’t know what has happened to her to get her to the point that she is petrified to talk to people. Sometimes she is assigned to help me on massive cases that is just too much for one person and she immediately will ask that I take the phone call assignments. She literally will do anything else on that list as long as she doesn’t have to talk to people. This used to really annoy me because I don’t necessarily like interviewing people either but I do it because it is part of my job. Over time though I have come to accept that we are working together and if I can take that assignment from her and let her do some other task that I’m not the best at then it helps us all achieve the same goal of defending a case to the best of our team’s ability. Now she may love running across bridges, I don’t know but if that is ever an assignment then I will gladly let her take that task and I know she would do it without complaint.

Tim Archer (Maclaren)

Romans 14:12-23: The Limits of Liberty

Maclaren starts these verses with verse 12. He reiterates that we will give an account of ourselves to God. We need to look inward at our motives and not criticizing others.

13: No Christian is blameless if he voluntarily acts so as to lay a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in another’s path. Man may stumble, and not fall, and that which makes him stumble may possibly indicate a temptation to a less grave evil than that which makes him fall does. Is my liberty to be restricted by the narrow scruples of a “strait-laced” Christian? Yes. Does not that make them masters, and attach too much importance to their narrowness? No. We are flexible as long as possible and let the
weak. Brethren’s scruples restrain our action. But if they insist on things indifferent as essential, a yet higher duty that that of regard to their weak consciences come in, and faithfulness to Christ limits concession to His servants.

Christians have different views of the obligation of Sunday observance; some might see no harm in playing lawn-tennis in the garden on Sunday; but if his do so scandalized, or, as Paul says, “Grieved”. Christians of less advanced views, he would be sinning against the law of love if he did it.

16-18: It displays true character of Christianity, and so reflects honor on the doer.

19-20: Restricting shows the conduct contributing to peace. Concessions to the weak may help them to become strong.

22-23: The Christian is bid to be content with having his wider views or faith, that is, certainty that his liberty is in accordance with Christ’s will. If you have any doubts, abstain.
Romans

The Example of Christ (Romans 15:1-7)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

✓ Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17) (four weeks)
✓ Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20) (six weeks)
✓ Saving Righteousness (3:21-4:25) (three weeks)
✓ Righteous Freedom (5:1-8:39) (11 weeks)
✓ Righteousness → Jews (9:1-11:36) (eight weeks)
6. Righteous Living (12:1-15:13) (September to October) (nine weeks)
7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 15:1-7) is the eighth part of this major section, and the third week of a three-week span focusing on our relationship to weaker brothers and sisters.
A Living Sacrifice

1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Gifts of Grace

3 For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. 4 For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, 5 so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. 6 Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; 7 if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; 8 the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

Marks of the True Christian

9 Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. 10 Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. 11 Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. 12 Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. 13 Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. 16 Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. 17 Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” 20 To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Submission to the Authorities

1 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist
will incur judgment. 3 For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, 4 for he is God’s servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God’s wrath on the wrongdoer. 5 Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God’s wrath but also for the sake of conscience. 6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. 7 Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.

Fulfilling the Law Through Love

8 Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. 9 For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” 10 Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

11 Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. 12 The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. 13 Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. 14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Do Not Pass Judgment on One Another

1 As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. 2 One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. 3 Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. 4 Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

5 One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. 6 The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. 7 For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. 8 For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s. 9 For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.
10 Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; 11 for it is written, “As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.”

12 So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

Do Not Cause Another to Stumble

13 Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother. 14 I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself, but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean. 15 For if your brother is grieved by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love. By what you eat, do not destroy the one for whom Christ died. 16 So do not let what you regard as good be spoken of as evil. 17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. 18 Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. 19 So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.

20 Do not, for the sake of food, destroy the work of God. Everything is indeed clean, but it is wrong for anyone to make another stumble by what he eats. 21 It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble. 22 The faith that you have, keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who has no reason to pass judgment on himself for what he approves. 23 But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.

Read: The Example of Christ (15:1-7)

1 We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. 3 For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.” 4 For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. 5 May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, 6 that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 7 Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.
**Explain: The Example of Christ (15:1-7)**

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

**Are there any literary/structural observations?**

Paul finishes this larger three-week section of Romans by showing us what Jesus looks like in relation to stronger and weaker brothers.

Paul does quote **Psalm 69**—a psalm of David that is a Messianic psalm describing various points of Christ on the cross (which should put in perspective the lengths to which we should take the implications of this passage).

**What do the words mean?**

1 **We who are strong** [able, could, mighty, possible, power, strong; same word used in Romans 4:21; 9:22; 11:23; 12:18; 14:4] **have an obligation** [present active indicative; owe, be under obligation, fail in duty, behave, be bound, be in debt, be due, be guilty (indebted), needs, ought, should; same word used in Romans 13:8] to bear [present active infinitive; bear, carry, take up; same word used in Romans 11:18] with the failings [infirmities] of the weak [could not do, impossible, impotent, not possible, weak; same word used in Romans 8:3], and not to please [present active infinitive; be agreeable, please; same word used in Romans 8:8] ourselves. 2 **Let each of us please** [present active imperative; be agreeable, please; same word used in Romans 8:8; 15:1] his neighbor [neighbor, fellow, near; same word used in Romans 13:9, 10] for his [his neighbor’s] good [good, beneficial], to build him up [architecture, a structure, confirmation, building, edify (-ication, -ing)]. 3 **For Christ did not please** [aorist active indicative; be agreeable, please; same word used in Romans 8:8; 15:1, 2] himself, but as it is written [perfect middle indicative] [Psalm 69:6], “The reproaches [contumely [note: modern translation of contumely is “insolent or insulting language or treatment”], reproach] of those who reproached [present active participle; defame, rail at, chide, taunt, cast in teeth, (suffer) reproach, revile, upbraid [note: this is the verb form of the noun translated ‘reproaches’]] you fell [aorist active indicative; embrace (with affection) or seize (with more or less violence), fall into, fall on, fall upon, lie on, press upon] on me.” 4 **For whatever was written in former days** [prographo; second aorist passive (Robertson) indicative; write previously, announce, prescribe, before ordain, evidently set forth, write afore, write aforetime] **was written** [grapho; second aorist middle indicative] for our instruction [instruction, doctrine, learning, teaching; same word used in Romans 12:7], that through [dia] **endurance** [cheerful/hopeful endurance, constancy, endurance, patience, patient continuance, waiting; same word used in Romans 2:7; 5:3, 4; 8:25] and through [dia] the encouragement [paraklesis; imploration, hortation, solace, comfort, consolation, exhortation, intreaty; same word
used in Romans 12:8 of the Scriptures [grapho] we might have [present active subjunctive (keep on having)] hope [expectation, confidence, faith, hope; same word used in Romans 4:18 (twice); 5:2, 4, 5; 8:20; 8:24 (thrice); 12:12]. 5 May the God of endurance [cheerful/hopeful endurance, constancy, endurance, patience, patient continuance, waiting; same word used in Romans 2:7; 5:3, 4; 8:25; 15:4] and encouragement [paraklesis; imploration, hortation, solace, comfort, consolation, exhortation, intreaty; same word used in Romans 12:8; 15:4] grant [second aorist active optative; give] you to live in such harmony [phroneo; present active infinitive; exercise the mind, entertain or have a sentiment or opinion, be (mentally) disposed, to interest oneself in, set the affection on, mind, regard, savor, think; used as part of a compound word in Romans 8:5; 11:20; 12:3, 16; 14:6] with one another, in accord ['down' from the Preposition Circle—the idea is that we get our example down from Christ] with Christ Jesus, 6 that together [unanimously, with one accord (mind)] you may with one voice [mouth, language, opening, front or edge, face] glorify [present active subjunctive (keep on glorifying); render glorious, glorify, honor, magnify; same word used in Romans 1:21; 8:30; 11:13] the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 7 Therefore welcome [present middle imperative; take to oneself, use (food), lead (aside), admit (to friendship or hospitality), receive, take unto; same word used in Romans 14:1, 3] one another as Christ has welcomed [second aorist middle indicative; take to oneself, use (food), lead (aside), admit (to friendship or hospitality), receive, take unto; same word used in Romans 14:1, 3; earlier in 15:7] you, for the glory [very apparent glory, dignity, glory, honor, praise, worship; same word used in Romans 1:23; 2:7, 10; 3:7, 23; 4:20; 5:2; 6:4; 8:18, 21; 9:4, 9:23 (twice); 11:36] of God.

Are there any repeated words?

Christ (4), you (4), with (4), written (3), God (3), one (3), please (3), endurance (2), Jesus (2), encouragement (2), welcome/welcomed (2)

Are there any repeated topics?

Weak/strong

What are some observations of the text?

1 We who are strong [Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: Paul identifies himself with this wing in the controversy] have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves [This is not the attitude of, ‘The weak should just get over that.’ This is the attitude of, ‘The strong should carry the weak.’ This is not about efficiency, it’s about love.]. 2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. 3 For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.” 4 For whatever was written in former days
was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. 5 May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another [Mounce: Does not mean that they should all come to the same conclusion], in accord with Christ Jesus, 6 that together you may with one voice [One body should have one voice, right?] glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 7 Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

Apply (What is the point?)
1. The strong owe the weak (help, not scorn)
2. Christians glorify God in unity (around Christ)
3. Christianity is a welcoming faith (checkup often)
4. Jesus (on the cross) is our example (for right now)

Personalize (What do we do with that?)
1. Carry (the weak) Amy Valovcin: The strong are . . . to come along and support the weak. Not to be boastful about being “strong” but with . . . a gracious and loving spirit.
2. Glorify (God)
3. Welcome (each other)
4. Follow (Christ’s example)

Note: Jessica Norris has a great set of lists she got from Kroll’s commentary this week. Check it out in the “Quotes & Observations” section of the teacher notes this week.

Next week: Christ the Hope of Jews and Gentiles (15:8-13)

Christ the Hope of Jews and Gentiles

8 For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God’s truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, 9 and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles, and sing to your name.”

10 And again it is said,

“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people.”

11 And again,
“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples extol him.”

12 And again Isaiah says, “The root of Jesse will come, even he who arises to rule the Gentiles; in him will the Gentiles hope.”

13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

Paul is calling for togetherness and is using Christ as the ultimate example. Paul is wanting us to focus on the needs of others more than our own wants. The strong are (Paul seemed like he was giving a rule more than a recommendation) to come along and support the weak. Not to be boastful about being “strong” but with the love of our Father, not in condemnation of the weak but with a gracious and loving spirit.

That together with one voice.

Not just the weak, not just the strong but together as one . . . “glorify God.”

Darla Skinner (Mounce)

Paul’s wish was that God would grant the church at Rome a spirit of unity. His desire that they “mind the same thing among one another” (literal translation) does not mean that they should all come to the same conclusion. That is obvious from his discussion of
the weak and the strong—and conscience of each is to guide the conduct of that person. It is unity of perspective that is desired. And that perspective is that of Christ Jesus, our model for Christian conduct. Think as he does. Take on his values and priorities.

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

Kroll likes charts and bullet statements, as do I. He made the following two charts that sums up 14 and part of 15 nicely:

Getting along with other believers

What to do:

• Accept the one who is weak. Romans 14:1
• Let each be convinced about what to eat. Romans 14:5
• Pursue what makes for peace. Romans 14:19
• Pursue what builds up one another. Romans 14:19
• Bear the weaknesses of those without strength. Romans 15:1
• Please the neighbor for his good. Romans 15:2
• Be of the same mind one with another. Romans 15:5
• Accept one another as Christ also accepted us. Romans 15:7

What not to do:

• Do not treat with contempt those who eat different foods. Romans 14:3
• Do not judge. Romans 14:4
• Do not place a stumbling block before your brother. Romans 14:13
• Do not destroy the weak brother with what you eat. Romans 14:15
• Do not let what is good for you be spoken of as evil. Romans 14:16
• Do not tear down the work of God by what you eat. Romans 14:20
• Do not do anything that makes your brother stumble. Romans 14:21
• Do not simply please yourself. Romans 15:1

Christ Our Example

• He died for others Romans 14:9
• He did not please Himself Romans 15:3
• He bore the reproaches of others Romans 15:3
• He accepted us Romans 15:7
• He became a servant Romans 15:8
Romans

Christ the Hope of Jews and Gentiles (Romans 15:8-13)

Introduction

My name is Josh Landers. My wife Katie and I have been members at Stuart Heights and Jim’s Sunday school class for about nine years. Katie and I are substitute teachers for Barry & Vikki Cole’s high school Sunday school class. From a nervousness or stress standpoint, that class is doable, since we are probably on about the same level Bible knowledge wise. With this class . . . not so much.

I taught this lesson to the high school and middle school class a few weeks ago as a practice run. They looked at me like I had two heads as I went through this lesson verbatim and welcomed everybody to Jim’s Sunday school class. I also had to retool some aspects of this lesson on the fly as we had some guests who would have been uncomfortable with a deep dive into this topic. No reason to create a stumbling block right?

So as we go through this together, please be patient with me and remember that in Luke 17:1-4 Jesus teaches forgiveness.

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).
Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

✓ Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17) (four weeks)
✓ Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20) (six weeks)
✓ Saving Righteousness (3:21-4:25) (three weeks)
✓ Righteous Freedom (5:1-8:39) (11 weeks)
✓ Righteousness → Jews (9:1-11:36) (eight weeks)
✓ Righteous Living (12:1-15:13) (September to October) (nine weeks)
7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 15:8-13) is the final part of this major section of Righteous Living.
Let’s read the text together starting in Romans 13:8.

Fulfilling the Law Through Love

8 Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. 9 For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” 10 Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

11 Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. 12 The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. 13 Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. 14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Do Not Pass Judgment on One Another

1 As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. 2 One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. 3 Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. 4 Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

5 One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. 6 The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. 7 For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. 8 For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then,
whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s. 9 For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

10 Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; 11 for it is written, “As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.”

12 So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

Do Not Cause Another to Stumble

13 Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother. 14 I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself, but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean. 15 For if your brother is grieved by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love. By what you eat, do not destroy the one for whom Christ died. 16 So do not let what you regard as good be spoken of as evil. 17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. 18 Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. 19 So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.

20 Do not, for the sake of food, destroy the work of God. Everything is indeed clean, but it is wrong for anyone to make another stumble by what he eats. 21 It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble. 22 The faith that you have, keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who has no reason to pass judgment on himself for what he approves. 23 But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.

The Example of Christ

1 We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. 3 For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.” 4 For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. 5 May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, 6 that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 7 Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.
Read: Christ the Hope of Jews and Gentiles (15:8-13)

8 For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, 9 and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles, and sing to your name.”

10 And again it is said,

“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people.”

11 And again,

“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples extol him.”

12 And again Isaiah says,

“The root of Jesse will come, even he who arises to rule the Gentiles; in him will the Gentiles hope.”

13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

Explain: Christ the Hope of Jews and Gentiles (15:8-13)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

The fact that God’s plan is for both the Jews and the Gentiles has been a major theme in Romans.

Paul hammers home a main point of the Romans and he does it by quoting passages of the Old Testament that back up his argument. Paul the lawyer presents his closing argument and shows tons of evidence.

Jim has been mentoring me for the past few months. He has taught me that a speech or lesson should be like flying a plane. It should have a take-off; it should then fly; and then finally land. So, to be totally transparent, this is the take-off.

The three passages quoted are interesting. The first (2 Samuel 22:50) says that Jews (point left) should praise God among Gentiles (point right). The second (Deuteronomy 32:43) says that Gentiles (point right) should praise God among Jews (point left). The third (Psalm 117:1) says that we should all praise God together. This totally backs up
Romans 15:6 "that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

What do the words mean?

8 For I tell [present active indicative; properly to lay forth] you that Christ [anointed] became a servant [diakonos; to run errands, attendant, waiter, deacon, deaconess, minister, servant; same word used in Romans 13:4] to the circumcised [the people; Judaism] to show God’s [theos] truthfulness [What’s that mean in the Greek, Gary? Translation = truth], in order to confirm [aorist active infinitive; to make firm, establish, make sure] the promises [an announcement, especially a divine assurance of good] given to the patriarchs [father; parent; in this case it would be the forefathers of the Jews: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob], 9 and in order that the Gentiles [ethnos; foreign one] might glorify [pronounced air-ist] aorist active infinitive (simple occurrence without regard for the amount of time taken to accomplish the action); to render glorious, full of glory, honor, magnify; More #GreekNerd stuff . . . the verb tenses are so rich that they could convey this sense of time. So, is there enough time to properly glorify God? No, which is why it doesn’t matter how long it takes.] God [theos] for his mercy [compassion]. As it is written, [2 Samuel 22:50]

“Therefore I will praise [future middle indicative (factual future action in his own interest)] you among the Gentiles [ethnos],

and sing [celebrate the divine worship with music and accompanying odes] to your name [onoma].”

10 And again it is said, [Deuteronomy 32:43]

“Rejoice, O Gentiles [ethnos], with his people [laos; Jewish people, My people, all those who are the same stock or language].”

11 And again, [Psalm 117:1]

“Praise [present active imperative] the Lord [kyrios; supreme in all authority, controller, God, Lord, master, sir], all you Gentiles [ethnos],

and let all the peoples [laos] extol [aorist active imperative; laud, commend, praise] him.”

12 And again Isaiah [Jehovah’s help] says, [Isaiah 11:10]

“The root [root] of Jesse [wealthy; father of King David; So, Sunday school answer: Who is the root of Jesse? JESUS!] will come,

even he who arises [to stand up] to rule the Gentiles [ethnos];
in him will the Gentiles [ethnos] hope [elpizo (pronounced el-pid-zo); future active indicative; trust, to expect or confide].”
13 May the God \[theos\] of hope [to anticipate usually with pleasure, expectation or confidence] fill [aorist active optative (possibility of a simple occurrence without regard to the amount of time taken to accomplish the task); literally to cram a net (remember that many of Jesus’ disciples were fisherman and that many people of this time would understand this terminology), level up a hollow, furnish, satisfy] you [irregular plural; together] with all joy [chara; calm delight] and peace [quietness, rest] in believing [present active infinitive; to have faith, credit, by implication to entrust, put in trust with; So, Sunday school answer again: In whom do we believe? JESUS!], so that by the power [dynamai; future active indicative; able, possible, be of power; same word used in Romans 8:7, 8, 39] of the Holy Spirit you [irregular plural; together] may abound [be in excess, superfluous (the high school and middle school kids loved this one, I told them that was free and they could take it home to impress their parents), enough and to spare] in hope \[elpis; similar to elpizo\].

Are there any repeated words?

God, order, His people, Gentiles, praise, hope, together

What are some observations of the text?

8 For I tell [Paul is presenting his evidence properly before the audience] you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God’s truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, 9 and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles, and sing to your name.” [Jews (point left) should praise God among the Gentiles (point right)]

10 And again it is said,

“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people.” [Gentiles (point right) should praise God among the Jews (point left).]

11 And again,

“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples extol him.” [We should all praise God together, ethnos and laos. When something is mentioned three times in the Bible we should probably pay attention to it. Being a father has taught me so much about God’s methods of teaching and shaping and patience. With our son, when I ask him to do something, I will make him repeat it back to me, then I will say it again just to make sure he got it. This is called three-way communication in the nuclear industry. It’s awesome that this method was figured out a long time ago.]
12 And again Isaiah says,

“The root [of the vine that we are grafted into. John 15:5a: I am the vine; you are the branches] of Jesse will come,
even he who arises to rule the Gentiles;
in him will the Gentiles hope.” [This verse in the ESV felt a little choppy to me, so I looked it up in some other translations. “The Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; in him the Gentiles will hope.”]

13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

[PLURAL!!! You here is plural! Which shows collectiveness or togetherness.

Like Darla said, my favorite part of these lessons is the application and personalization. There were two repeated words in these passages that really stood out to me.

The fist was the word Gentile (ethnos) which was repeated six times. I began to ponder the word ethnos which sounds a lot like the word ethnic. The definition for the word ethnic is “relating to a population subgroup (within a larger or dominant national or cultural group) with a common national or cultural tradition.” But, our culture’s prejudices have altered the connotation of this word. I am not ethnos! I am an American, born and bred. So, I began to ask myself who all really is a Gentile, if I feel that I am not ethnos?

The second word that stood out to me was together, which was only mentioned twice in word, but implied heavily through the quoted scriptures. Put all of this together and then ask the question “who are these other ethnos that I am supposed to be together with?”

Then it hit me (just like the spiritual 2 x 4 that Darrell is so fond of), that the way to land this lesson is with is with relevant and timely application. Let me show you a picture from the news recently.

Is this what hope, joy, peace, and praising God together looks like?
This happened earlier in the year Charlottesville, Virginia, when a Gentile who hated another group of Gentiles (ethnos, us, we, all, together) so much that he was willing to drive his car into a crowd of people. His hate killed another person, ruined his life, and hurt 19 others.

We have all had personal experiences, hopefully not to this extent, but think about those experiences as I share some of mine.

Here’s an article from my hometown about this very issue this week: t-q.com/story/2455017.html

Can you point out the Gentile in this picture?
What about this one?
So, to land this plane . . . how can we glorify God together with one voice (laos and ethnos) as a divided people?

Paul goes to great lengths to point out that we are all in this life together. The last few weeks have been about the weaker and stronger in faith living in harmony together. Before that, the Jews tried to leave the Gentiles out of God’s promises, but we are grafted in together. The Gentiles are actually a very large group of different people, but we are all meant to praise God together.]

Apply (What is the point?)

1. Christ is the Hope of Jews AND Gentiles
2. The term Gentiles is bigger than we think
3. The power of the Holy Spirit provides hope

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. Praise the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
2. Love the “other” Gentiles
3. Allow the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope

Next week: Paul the Minister to the Gentiles (15:14-21)

14 I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another. 15 But on some points I have written to you very boldly by way of reminder, because of the grace given me by God 16 to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. 17 In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to be proud of my work for God. 18 For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed, 19 by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ; 20 and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else's foundation, 21 but as it is written, “Those who have never been told of him will see, and those who have never heard will understand.”

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

While we fall short everyday how comforting that the God of hope fills us with joy and peace. Our hope is not just wishful thinking but is grounded in our faith. Through Him
we get to abound (not just live) in hope. There is such comfort knowing that we abound in hope!

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

The Christian tent is extremely big, and those who fellowship under it are extremely diverse.

Sean McGarvey (Ironside)

Properly speaking, the epistle as such—the treatise on the righteousness of God—is brought to a conclusion in verses 8-13. . . . What has really been demonstrated in this very full treatise? . . . He has shown throughout that our Lord came in full accord with the Old Testament’s promises. He entered into the sheepfold by the door . . . and was the divinely appointed minister to the Jews, come to confirm the covenanted promises. Though the nation rejected Him, this does not invalidate His ministry, but it opens the door of mercy to the Gentiles in a wider way than ever, though in full accord with the Jewish Scriptures. And so he cites passage after passage to clinch the truth already taught so clearly, that it was foreknown and predetermined that the Gentiles should hear the gospel and be given the same opportunity to be saved that the Jew enjoyed. . . . Setting before us man’s ruin by sin and his redemption through Christ Jesus.

Definitely the stuff of abounding in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit!
Romans

Paul the Minister to the Gentiles (Romans 15:14-21)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

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6. Righteous Living (12:1-15:13) (nine weeks)
7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 15:14-21) is the first part of this major section.
Read: Paul the Minister to the Gentiles (15:14-21)

14 I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another. 15 But on some points I have written to you very boldly by way of reminder, because of the grace given me by God 16 to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. 17 In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to be proud of my work for God. 18 For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed, 19 by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ; 20 and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else's foundation, 21 but as it is written, “Those who have never been told of him will see, and those who have never heard will understand.”

Explain: Paul the Minister to the Gentiles (15:14-21)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

As Paul begins to wrap up his letter, he gets personal again—you can hear his heartbeat and love for these people. He quotes from Isaiah 52:15 as he explains his desire to evangelize where no one else has.

It will be important to draw a distinction between illustrative (descriptive: describing what occurred and/or what the characters desired to occur) and instructive (prescriptive: an example/pattern/process for all believers everywhere to follow) texts here. Paul is illustrating/describing his own passions and interests. He is not commanding these Roman believers (or all believers in all time) to go and evangelize only in places where the gospel has never been preached.

As such, the larger Bible study principle is to know when a text is descriptive and when it is prescriptive. Mixing the two can have disastrously frustrating consequences for a Bible study student.

Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: The argument of the Epistle has been completed both in the main line (chapters 1-8) and the further applications (9:1-15:13). Here begins the Epilogue, the personal matters of importance.
What do the words mean?

14 I myself am satisfied [perfect middle indicative; convinced, assented, rely, agreed, assured, believed, have confidence in, contented, make friend, obeyed, persuaded, trusted, yielded; same word used in Romans 2:8, 19; 8:38; 14:14] about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are [present middle indicative] full [replete, full; same word used in Romans 1:29] of goodness [goodness, virtue, beneficence], filled [perfect middle participle; replete, crammed full, leveled off, furnished, satisfied, executed, finished, verified, accomplished, completed, ended, expired, filled up, fulfilled, perfected, supplied; same word used in Romans 1:29; 8:4; 13:8: 15:13] with all knowledge [knowing, knowledge, science; same word used in Romans 2:20; 11:33] and able [dynamai; present middle participle; able, possible, be of power; same word used in Romans 8:7, 8, 39] to instruct [present active infinitive; to put in mind, to caution or reprove gently, admonish, warn] one another. 15 But on some points [piece, part, portion, some; same word used in Romans 11:25] I have written [aorist active indicative] to you very boldly [more daringly, with greater confidence than otherwise, the more boldly] by way of reminder [present active participle; to remind of, put in mind], because [dia] of the grace [charis] given [aorist middle participle] me by God 16 to be [present middle infinitive; exist, be] a minister [leitourgos; public servant, functionary in the Temple or Gospel, worshipper of God or benefactor of man, minister; same word used in Romans 13:6] of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles [ethnos] in the priestly service [present active participle; temple worker [a compound word consisting of temple and worker], officiate as a priest, minister] of the gospel [gospel, good message; used in Romans 1:1, 9, 16; 2:16; 10:16; 11:28] of God, so that the offering [presentation, oblation (bloodless) or sacrifice, offering (up)] of the Gentiles [ethnos] may be [second aorist active subjunctive] acceptable [well received, accepted, acceptable], sanctified [hagiao; perfect passive (Robertson) participle; to make holy, purify, consecrate, venerate, hallow, be holy, sanctify] by the Holy [hagios] Spirit [pneuma]. 17 In Christ Jesus, then, I have [present active indicative] reason to be proud [boasting, whereof I may glory, glorifying, rejoicing; same word used in Romans 3:27] of my work for God. 18 For I will not venture [future active indicative; boldness, venture, act, courageous, bold, dare; same word used in Romans 5:7] to speak [present active infinitive] of anything except what Christ has accomplished [aorist active indicative; work fully, accomplish, finish, fashion, cause, do, perform, work out; same word used multiple times in Romans] through me to bring the Gentiles [ethnos] to obedience [attentive hearkening, compliance, submission, obedience; same word used in Romans 1:5; 5:19; 6:16]—by word [logos] and deed [works, toil, labor], 19 by the power [dynamis; force, miraculous power, ability, abundance, meaning, might, miracle, strength, violence, mighty work; same word used in Romans 1:4, 16, 20; 8:38; 9:17; 15:13] of signs
[indication, miracle, sign, token, wonder; same word used in Romans 4:11] and wonders [prodigy, omen, wonder], by the power [dynamis; force, miraculous power, ability, abundance, meaning, might, miracle, strength, violence, mighty work; same word used in Romans 1:4, 16, 20; 8:38; 9:17; 15:13, earlier in 15:19] of the Spirit [pneuma] of God—so that from Jerusalem [the capital of Palestine] and all the way around to Illyricum [a region of Europe—possibly the westernmost area Paul had evangelized up to that point] I have fulfilled [perfect active infinitive; replete, crammed full, leveled off, furnished, satisfied, executed, finished, verified, accomplished, completed, ended, expired, filled up, fulfilled, perfected, supplied; same word used in Romans 1:29; 8:4; 13:8; 15:13, 14] the ministry [note: the words, ‘the ministry’ are not present in the original—also why we won’t be using the ESV going forward after 2017] of the gospel [gospel, good message; used in Romans 1:1, 9, 16; 2:16; 10:16; 11:28; 15:16] of Christ; 20 and thus I make it my ambition [present middle participle; a compound word from the words friend and honor: to be fond of honor, eager or earnest to do something, labor, strive, study] to preach the gospel [euangelizo; present middle infinitive; to announce] good news, evangelize, declare, bring glad tidings, preach the gospel; same word used in Romans 1:15; 10:15], not where Christ has already been named [aorist middle indicative; uttered, mentioned, professed, called, named], lest I build [present active subjunctive; be a house builder, construct, confirm, build, edify, embolden] on someone else’s [another’s, not one’s own, foreign, not akin, hostile, alien, strange; same word used in Romans 14:4] foundation [something put down, substruction, foundation], 21 but as it is written [perfect middle indicative], [Isaiah 52:15]

“Those who have never been told [second aorist middle indicative; to announce (in detail), declare, rehearse, report, show, speak, tell] of him will see [future active indicative],

and those who have never heard [second perfect active indicative] will understand [future middle indicative; puts together, comprehends, acts piously, considers, understands, is wise; same word used in Romans 3:11].”

Are there any repeated words?

I, Christ, God, Gospel, Gentiles, written, Jesus, power, Spirit

Are there any repeated topics?

Construction (from prior weeks), sacrifices (from prior weeks)

What are some observations of the text?

14 I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another [Mounce: The
believers in Rome were expected to help one another toward spiritual maturity. They were to advise and instruct one another. None were so wise that they had nothing more to learn, and none were so inept that they had nothing of value to share. Spiritual insight is by no means the sole prerogative of those with high intelligence.]. 15 But on some points I have written to you very boldly [Obviously there were many spots in Romans where Paul spoke boldly and plainly to the Roman believers] by way of reminder, because of the grace given me by God 16 to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable [Paul viewed the Gentiles he witnessed to as his offering/sacrifice to God—similar to Old Testament offerings], sanctified by the Holy Spirit. 17 In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to be proud of my work for God [Only in Christ was Paul proud of his work]. 18 For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed, 19 by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ; 20 and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else's foundation [F. B. Meyer: The work which really told was not what Paul did for Christ, but what Christ did through Paul. Random odd commentary line of the week: Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: Paul was a pioneer preacher pushing on to new fields after the manner of Daniel Boone in Kentucky], 21 but as it is written,

“Those who have never been told of him will see, and those who have never heard will understand.”

Apply (What is the point?)

1. There is a time for encouraging talk
2. There is a time for bold talk
3. Both kinds of talk can be used to spread the gospel
4. Rejoicing in work done for God in Christ is good

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. Be encouraging
2. Be bold
3. Spread the gospel
4. Rejoice in what God has done
Next week: Paul’s Plan to Visit Rome (15:22-33)

22 This is the reason why I have so often been hindered from coming to you. 23 But now, since I no longer have any room for work in these regions, and since I have longed for many years to come to you, 24 I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain, and to be helped on my journey there by you, once I have enjoyed your company for a while. 25 At present, however, I am going to Jerusalem bringing aid to the saints. 26 For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem. 27 For they were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material blessings. 28 When therefore I have completed this and have delivered to them what has been collected, I will leave for Spain by way of you. 29 I know that when I come to you I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.

30 I appeal to you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf, 31 that I may be delivered from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, 32 so that by God’s will I may come to you with joy and be refreshed in your company. 33 May the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)
Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

If we are to have lives like Paul’s, our hearts must not only see our mission as entirely sacred, but we must give all glory to God. This is so fitting, so right; it’s the way we were designed to live.

No matter the outcome, or the part we played all glory is God’s. All things are from Him, all glory is due Him. This can He hard to swallow sometimes but it’s not about us.

Darla Skinner (Mounce)

The believers in Rome were expected to help one another toward spiritual maturity. They were to advise and instruct one another. None were so wise that they had nothing more to learn, and none were so inept that they had nothing of value to share. Spiritual insight is by no means the sole prerogative of those with high intelligence.
Romans

Paul’s Plan to Visit Rome (Romans 15:22-33)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

- Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17) (four weeks)
- Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20) (six weeks)
- Saving Righteousness (3:21-4:25) (three weeks)
- Righteous Freedom (5:1-8:39) (11 weeks)
- Righteousness → Jews (9:1-11:36) (eight weeks)
- Righteous Living (12:1-15:13) (nine weeks)
7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 15:22-33) is the second part of this major section. As we discussed last week, this section can be thought of as how the righteousness of the gospel is impacting Paul. You’ll see him ask for things from the Romans in this text.
Paul the Minister to the Gentiles

14 I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another. 15 But on some points I have written to you very boldly by way of reminder, because of the grace given me by God 16 to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. 17 In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to be proud of my work for God. 18 For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed, 19 by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ; 20 and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else’s foundation, 21 but as it is written, “Those who have never been told of him will see, and those who have never heard will understand.”

Read: Paul’s Plan to Visit Rome (15:22-33)

22 This is the reason why I have so often been hindered from coming to you. 23 But now, since I no longer have any room for work in these regions, and since I have longed for many years to come to you, 24 I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain, and to be helped on my journey there by you, once I have enjoyed your company for a while. 25 At present, however, I am going to Jerusalem bringing aid to the saints. 26 For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem. 27 For they were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material blessings. 28 When therefore I have completed this and have delivered to them what has been collected, I will leave for Spain by way of you. 29 I know that when I come to you I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.

30 I appeal to you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf, 31 that I may be delivered from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, 32 so that by God’s will I may come to you with joy and be refreshed in your company. 33 May the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

Explain: Paul’s Plan to Visit Rome (15:22-33)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.
Are there any literary/structural observations?

It’s easy to see this continuation of the personal touch from Paul again. His use of the word *I* is profoundly repetitive.

What does Paul ask for from the Romans?

Kroll: Paul makes 4 requests in this passage:

1) That he may be delivered from those who are disobedient in Judea.
2) That his service for Jerusalem may prove acceptable to the saints.
3) That he may come to the Romans in joy by the will of God.
4) That he may find refreshing rest in their company.

What do the words mean?

This section (and the following sections) will be significantly slimmed down as the focus lessens from the theological content to how Paul has been impacted by the righteousness that stems from gospel.

22 This is the reason why I have so often been hindered [imperfect (action continually or repeatedly happening in past time) middle indicative; cut into, impede, detain, hinder, be tedious unto] from coming to you. 23 But now, since I no longer have any room [topos; spot, space, location, condition, opportunity; same word used in Romans 9:26] for work in these regions [klima; a slope, a “clime” or tract of a country, part region], and since I have longed [intense longing, great desire] for many years to come to you, 24 I hope [expect, confide, hope, trust; same word used in Romans 8:24, 25; 15:12] to see you in passing as I go [present middle subjunctive] to Spain, and to be helped [send forward, escort, aid in travel, accompany, bring (forward) on journey (way, conduct forth)] on my journey there by you, once I have enjoyed [to fill in (up), to satisfy, fill] your company for a while. 25 At present, however, I am going to Jerusalem bringing aid [diakoneo; to be an attendant, to wait upon, act as a Christian deacon, minister, serve] to the saints. 26 For Macedonia [a region of Greece] and Achaia [Greece, a country of Europe] have been pleased [to think well of, approve, approbate, think good, please, be the good pleasure, be willing] to make some contribution [koinonia; partnership, participation, social intercourse, benefaction, to communicate, communion, contribution, distribution, fellowship] for the poor [beggar, pauper, distressed, poor] among the saints at Jerusalem. 27 For they were pleased [same word in Romans 15:26] to do it, and indeed they owe [owers, persons indebted, delinquents, transgressors, debtors, sinners; same word used in Romans 1:14; 8:12] it to them. For if the Gentiles [ethnos] have come to share [koinoneo; present active participle; share with others, communicate, distribute, be partaker] in their spiritual [non-carnal,
ethereal, supernatural, spiritual; same word used in Romans 1:11; 7:14] blessings, they ought [to owe, to be under obligation, morally to fail in duty, behove, be bound, be debtor, be due, be guilty (indebted), need, ought, owe, should] also to be of service [leitourgeo; be a public servant, to perform religious or charitable functions (worship, obey, relieve), minister] to them in material [pertaining to the flesh, bodily, temporal, animal, unregenerate, carnal, fleshly; same word used in Romans 7:14] blessings. 28 When therefore I have completed [fulfilled further (or completely), executed, terminated, undergone, accomplished, done, finished, made perfect, performed] this and have delivered [stamped (with a signet or private mark) for security or preservation, to keep secret, to attest, seal up, stop] to them what has been collected [literally, ‘this fruit’], I will leave [future active indicative: to go off, depart, aside, behind, follow, go, pass away] for Spain by way of you. 29 I know that when I come to you I will come in the fullness [which is put in to fill up, piece that filled up, fulfilling, full, fullness—puzzle piece missing; same word used in Romans 11:12, 25] of the blessing [eulogia; fine speaking, elegance of language, commendation (eulogy), adoration, religiously, benediction, consecration, benefit or largess, blessing, bounty, fair speech] of Christ.

30 I appeal [parakaleo; call near, invite, invoke, beseech, call for, comfort, desire, exhort, intreat, pray; same word used in Romans 12:1, 8] to you, brothers, by [dia] our Lord Jesus Christ and by [dia] the love [agape (a noun)] of the Spirit [pneuma], to strive together [to struggle in company with, to be a partner (assistant), strive together with] with me in your prayers [prayer, worship, oratory, pray earnestly; same word used in Romans 1:9; 12:12] to God on my behalf, 31 that I may be delivered [aorist middle subjunctive: rescue, deliver (through the idea of a current); same word used in Romans 7:24; 11:26] from the unbelievers [disbelieve (willfully and perversely), not believe, disobedient, obey not, unbelieving; same word used in Romans 2:8; 10:21; 11:30, 31] in Judea [a region of Palestine], and that my service [diaconia; ministering, ministration, ministry, office, relief, relief, service, servicing; same word used in Romans 11:13; 12:7] for Jerusalem may be acceptable [well received, accepted, acceptable; same word used in Romans 15:16] to the saints, 32 so that by God’s will [determination, choice, purpose, decree, volition, inclination, desire, pleasure, will; same word used in Romans 1:10; 2:18; 12:2] I may come to you with joy [cheerfulness, calm delight, gladness, greatly, exceedingly joy (-ful, -fully, -fulness, -ous); same word used in Romans 14:17; 15:13] and be refreshed [to recruit oneself in company with, refresh with] in your company. 33 May the God of peace [peace, prosperity, one, quietness, rest, to be set at one again; same word used in Romans 1:7; 2:10; 3:17; 5:1; 8:6; 14:17, 19; 15:13] be with you all. Amen [firm, trustworthy, surely, amen, verily].
Are there any repeated words?

I (again with the personalization—15 times), you (9x), Jerusalem, saint(s), God, company, service, Spain, deliver, go, pleased, blessing, Christ

Are there any repeated topics?

What are some observations of the text?

22 This is the reason why I have so often been hindered from coming to you. 23 But now, since I no longer have any room for work in these regions, and since I have longed for many years to come to you, 24 I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain [Dreaming, hoping, and planning to do good things for God is a good thing. Whether or not you’re able to accomplish it for God does not impact the goodness of the dream and/or hope. Hughes: God is not so much interested in whether we reach our destination as in how we try to get there. To us arrival is everything, but to God the journey is most important, for it is in the journey that we are perfected and it is in hardships that He is glorified as we trust Him.], and to be helped on my journey there by you, once I have enjoyed your company for a while. 25 At present, however, I am going to Jerusalem bringing aid to the saints. 26 For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem [This text is a direct affront to the prosperity gospel]. 27 For they were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material blessings. 28 When therefore I have completed this and have delivered to them what has been collected, I will leave for Spain by way of you. 29 I know that when I come to you I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.

30 I appeal to you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf [Mounce: Awareness of a fellow believer’s difficult situation will move the authentic Christian to join that person in prayer. Also, notice the personhood of the Trinity in this verse: Jesus walked among them, the Spirit has love (and only persons love) and the Father listens (and only persons listen)], 31 that I may be delivered from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, 32 so that by God’s will I may come to you with joy and be refreshed in your company. 33 May the God of peace be with you all. Amen.
Apply (What is the point?)
1. Material needs amongst Christians are **real**
2. Material blessings should **follow** spiritual blessings
3. Plans **change**

Personalize (What do we do with that?)
1. **Meet** the needs
2. **Support** those who labor for the gospel (shelter, money, encouragement, etc.)—this is why we pay our full-time pastors
3. Plan, but **submit** to God’s sovereignty (we don’t get to see how Paul reacted to (possibly) not being able to go to Spain, but we can ask him one day)

Next week: Personal Greetings (16:1-16) (1/2)

1 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchreae, 2 that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well.

3 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, 4 who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well. 5 Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia. 6 Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you. 7 Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me. 8 Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. 9 Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys. 10 Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus. 11 Greet my kinsman Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus. 12 Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord. 13 Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well. 14 Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers who are with them. 15 Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them. 16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.
Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

God is not so much interested in whether we reach our destination as in how we try to get there. To us arrival is everything, but to God the journey is most important, for it is in the journey that we are perfected and it is in hardships that He is glorified as we trust Him.

I have mixed feelings about this statement, mainly because it is a little hard to swallow. While Paul did not make it Rome in the manner that he had planned, he still arrived with joy. His journey glorified God. May we be able to glorify God in our journey.

Darla Skinner (Mounce)

Awareness of a fellow believer's difficult situation will move the authentic Christian to join that person in prayer.

It seems we have more and more opportunity for this these days. #NYC. #TEXAS

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

Paul makes 4 requests in this passage:
1) That he may be delivered from those who are disobedient in Judea.
2) That his service for Jerusalem may prove acceptable to the saints.
3) That he may come to the Romans in joy by the will of God.
4) That he may find refreshing rest in their company.
Romans

Personal Greetings (Romans 16:1-16)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

- Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17) (four weeks)
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- Righteous Living (12:1-15:13) (nine weeks)
- Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
- Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 16:1-16) is the third part of this major section. As we discussed last week, this section can be thought of as how the righteousness of the gospel is impacting Paul. In today’s text, it impacts who he is thankful for and why.
Paul the Minister to the Gentiles

14 I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another. 15 But on some points I have written to you very boldly by way of reminder, because of the grace given me by God 16 to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. 17 In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to be proud of my work for God. 18 For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed, 19 by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ; 20 and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else’s foundation, 21 but as it is written, “Those who have never been told of him will see, and those who have never heard will understand.”

Paul’s Plan to Visit Rome

22 This is the reason why I have so often been hindered from coming to you. 23 But now, since I no longer have any room for work in these regions, and since I have longed for many years to come to you, 24 I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain, and to be helped on my journey there by you, once I have enjoyed your company for a while. 25 At present, however, I am going to Jerusalem bringing aid to the saints. 26 For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem. 27 For they were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material blessings. 28 When therefore I have completed this and have delivered to them what has been collected, I will leave for Spain by way of you. 29 I know that when I come to you I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ. 30 I appeal to you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf, 31 that I may be delivered from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, 32 so that by God’s will I may come to you with joy and be refreshed in your company. 33 May the God of peace be with you all. Amen.
Read: Personal Greetings (16:1-16)

1 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchreae, 2 that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well.

3 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, 4 who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well. 5 Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia. 6 Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you. 7 Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me. 8 Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. 9 Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys. 10 Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus. 11 Greet my kinsman Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus. 12 Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord. 13 Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well. 14 Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers who are with them. 15 Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them. 16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

Explain: Personal Greetings (16:1-16)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

Names. Lots and lots of names. In week one of this text, we will look at the meaning of the names. In week two, we’ll look at what these brothers and sisters did.

What do the names mean?

The format for our names will be: meaning; gender; origin.

1 I commend to you our sister Phoebe [bright, radiant; female; unknown], a servant of the church at Cenchreae, 2 that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well.

3 Greet Prisca [ancient; female; wife of Aquila; Latin] and Aquila [an eagle; male; husband of Prisca; Jew], my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, 4 who risked their necks for
my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well. 5 Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus [praiseworthy; unknown], who was the first convert to Christ in Asia. 6 Greet Mary [their rebellion; female; Latin], who has worked hard for you. 7 Greet Andronicus [man of victory; male; Jew] and Junia [youthful; female; Latin], my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me. 8 Greet Ampliatus [large; male; Latin], my beloved in the Lord. 9 Greet Urbanus [of the city, polite; male; Latin], our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys [head of grain; male; Greek]. 10 Greet Apelles [called; male; Latin], who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus [the best counselor; male; unknown]. 11 Greet my kinsman Herodion [heroic; male; unknown]. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus [stupidity; male; Roman]. 12 Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena [luxurious; female; unknown] and Tryphosa [luxurianting; female; unknown]. Greet the beloved Persis [a Persian woman; female; Persian], who has worked hard in the Lord. 13 Greet Rufus [red; male; Latin], chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well. 14 Greet Asyncritus [incomparable; male; unknown], Phlegon [burning; male, unknown], Hermes [herald of the gods; male; Greek], Patrobas [paternal; male, male, unknown], Hermes [Mercury; male; unknown], and the brothers who are with them. 15 Greet Philologus [lover of the Word; male; unknown], Julia [soft haired; female; unknown], Nereus [lump; male; unknown] and his sister, and Olympas [heavenly; male; unknown], and all the saints who are with them. 16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

What do the words mean?

1 I commend [present active indicative; sets together, introduces, exhibits, stands near, constitutes, approves, commends, consists, makes, stands with; same word used in Romans 3:5; 5:8] to you our sister [sister (natural or ecclesiastical)] Phoebe, [the verb “is” is omitted in the ESV; present middle participle] a servant [diakonos; to run errands, attendant, waiter, deacon, deaconess, minister, servant; same word used in Romans 13:4; 15:8] of the church [ekklesia; a calling out, a popular meeting; religious congregation (Jewish synagogue or Christian community), assembly, church] at Cenchreae [a port of Corinth], 2 that you may welcome [aorist active subjunctive; admit, await, accept, allow, look (wait) for, take] her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help [second aorist active subjunctive; stand beside, exhibit, proffer, recommend, substantiate, be at hand, aid; same word used in Romans 6:13 (twice), 16, 19 (twice); 12:1; 14:10] her in whatever [pragma; deed, affair, object, business, matter, thing, work] she may need [make (have) necessity, be in want of, have, need] from you, for she has been [aorist middle indicative] a patron [patroness, assistant, succourer] of many and of myself as well.
3 Greet [aspazomai; aorist active imperative; enfold in the arms, salute, welcome, embrace, greet, take leave; occurs 17 times in today’s text] Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers [co-laborer, coadjutor, companion in labor, fellow helper, fellow laborer, fellow worker, laborer together with, workfellow] in Christ Jesus, 4 who risked [aorist active indicative; to place underneath, to hazard, to suggest, lay down, put in remembrance] their necks [trachelos; throat, neck, life] for my life, to whom not only I give thanks [eucharisteo; present active indicative; to be grateful, to express gratitude (towards), to say grace at a meal, give thanks; same word used in Romans 1:8, 21; 7:25; 14:6 (twice)] but all the churches [ekklesia; a calling out, a popular meeting; religious congregation (Jewish synagogue or Christian community), assembly, church; same word used in Romans 16:1] of the Gentiles [ethnos] give thanks ['give thanks' is not present in the Greek] as well. 5 Greet [aspazomai; aorist active imperative] also the church [ekklesia; a calling out, a popular meeting; religious congregation (Jewish synagogue or Christian community), assembly, church; same word used in Romans 16:1, 4] in their house [dwelling, family, home, house, temple]. Greet my beloved [agapetos; beloved, dear; same word used in Romans 1:7; 11:28; 12:19] Epaphroditus, who was [present middle indicative] the first convert [beginning of sacrifice, first fruits; same word used in Romans 8:23; 11:16] to Christ in Asia. 6 Greet [aspazomai; aorist active imperative] Mary, who has worked hard [aorist active indicative; felt fatigue, worked hard, bestowed labor, toil, be wearied] for you. 7 Greet [aspazomai; aorist active imperative] Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen [synegenes; relative, countryman, cousin, kinfolk, kinsman; same word used in Romans 9:3] and my fellow prisoners [co-captives, fellow prisoners]. They are [present middle indicative] well known [remarkable, eminent, notable, of note] to the apostles, and they were [second perfect active indicative] in Christ before me. 8 Greet [aspazomai; aorist active imperative] Ampliatus, my beloved [agapetos; beloved, dear; same word used in Romans 1:7; 11:28; 12:19; 16:5] in the Lord. 9 Greet [aspazomai; aorist active imperative] Urbanus, our fellow worker [co-laborer, coadjutor, companion in labor, fellow helper, fellow laborer, fellow worker, laborer together with, workfellow; same word used in Romans 16:3] in Christ, and my beloved [agapetos; beloved, dear; same word used in Romans 1:7; 11:28; 12:19; 16:5, 8] Stachys. 10 Greet [aspazomai; aorist active imperative] Apelles, who is approved [properly acceptable, approved, tried; same word used in Romans 14:8] in Christ. Greet [aspazomai; aorist active imperative] those who belong to the family of Aristobulus. 11 Greet [aspazomai; aorist active imperative] my kinsman [synegenes; relative, countryman, cousin, kinfolk, kinsman; same word used in Romans 9:3; 16:7] Herodion. Greet [aspazomai; aorist active imperative] those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus. 12 Greet [aspazomai; aorist active imperative] those workers [felt fatigue, worked hard, bestowed labor, toil, be wearied; same word used in Romans 16:6] in the Lord, Tryphena and Tryphosa. Greet [aspazomai; aorist active
imperative] the beloved [agapetos; beloved, dear; same word used in Romans 1:7; 11:28; 12:19; 16:5, 8, 9] Persis, who has worked hard [felt fatigue, worked hard, bestowed labor, toil, be wearied; same word used in Romans 16:6, earlier in Romans 16:12; Mounce: The mention of exhausting work is restricted to women] in the Lord. 13 Greet [aspazomai; aorist active imperative] Rufus, chosen [select, favorite, chosen, elect; same word used in Romans 8:33] in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well. 14 Greet [aspazomai; aorist active imperative] Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers [adelphos] who are with them. 15 Greet [aspazomai; aorist active imperative] Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister [sister (natural or ecclesiastical)]; same word used in Romans 16:1], and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them. 16 Greet [aspazomai; aorist active imperative] one another with a holy kiss. All the churches [ekklesia; a calling out, a popular meeting; religious congregation (Jewish synagogue or Christian community), assembly, church; same word used in Romans 16:1, 4, 5] of Christ greet [aspazomai; present middle indicative] you.

Are there any repeated words?
Greet, beloved, saints, Christ, Lord, sister,

Are there any repeated topics?
Family, love,

What are some observations of the text?
1 I commend [Jay Arnold: Paul was letting go of the care or protection of her to someone/some others. This has underlying impressions of confidence in the person being commended. . . . a sense of hope for embrace of her by others he trusted.] to you our sister Phoebe, a servant [Paul first identifies himself as a servant in Romans 1:1, so this is a big compliment] of the church at Cenchreae [Was Phoebe a deacon? Maybe, but remember four things: (1) no one else in Romans who this word is used of was serving in the office of a deacon (public servants and Jesus), (2) Paul wrote Romans before 1 Timothy (where the qualifications for deacons are listed—this timing is the one reason why this is not an error in the Bible), (3) Phoebe would not meet the current biblical requirements to be a deacon, and (4) Phoebe may have been serving in the function of a deacon without the official office title], 2 that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well. [Most commentators believe Phoebe was the person who carried Romans to the Romans. She was a servant in Corinth (where Paul wrote Romans) and Paul tells them to welcome her.]
3 Greet Prisca and Aquila [Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: They were driven from Rome by Claudius, came to Corinth, then to Ephesus, then back to Rome, and again to Ephesus. They were good travelling Christians.], my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, 4 who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well. 5 Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia. 6 Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you. 7 Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me. 8 Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. 9 Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys. 10 Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus. 11 Greet my kinsman Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus. 12 Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord. 13 Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well [Hughes: What a difference authentic Christian affection can make in a cold indifferent world]. 14 Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brothers who are with them. 15 Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them [About as close as Paul comes to saying, “the others.” Pay attention to this phrase—this is where we’d likely show up if Paul were writing to SHBC]. 16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

Valovcin: Crazy how much you can gain from reading a list of names. We truly take for granted how easy staying in touch with one another is today.

Apply (What is the point?)

1. God provides helpers
2. God’s children are family (brothers and sisters)
3. Christians greet each other

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. Be thankful for His helpers (to Him and to them)
2. Live as family
3. Greet as family

Next week: Final Instructions and Greetings (16:17-23)

17 I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. 18 For such
persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive. 19 For your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil. 20 The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

21 Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you; so do Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen.

22 I Tertius, who wrote this letter, greet you in the Lord.

23 Gaius, who is host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer, and our brother Quartus, greet you.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

The first characteristic of Paul’s heart described in this chapter is that it overflowed with personal love.

What a difference authentic Christian affection can make in a cold indifferent world.

The absence of agape love in the typical church should burden our hearts. We must reach out in love to those around us.

Crazy how much you can gain from reading a list of names. We truly take for granted how easy staying in touch with one another is today.
Darla Skinner (Mounce)

Obviously the growth of the church is not dependent upon buildings erected for the specific purpose of worship.

Among the many to whom Paul sent his greetings was Epanetus, the earliest convert to Christ in Asia (v. 5b). Mary is identified as the one who “worked very hard for you.” This emphasis on strenuous labor is reflected in Paul’s greetings to three other women as well: Tryphena, Tryphosa, and Persis (v. 12). Although Priscilla and Aquila along with Urbanus are called “fellow workers” (vv. 3, 9), it is interesting too that the mention of exhausting work is restricted to women.

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

- Phoebe: means radiant; thought to be a business woman; probably a widow
- Priscilla and Aquila: husband and wife tentmakers; Christian heroes that are also mentioned in two other epistles
- Epaenetus: means praiseworthy; with Epaenetus, the floodgates opened of Asia Minor and praise was given to Go for the conversion of multitudes of Gentiles
- Mary: she worked hard for the Romans; what she did exactly is unknown to us but God knows
- Andronicus and Junia: fellow prisoners with Paul but unsure of where exactly they were imprisoned together at
- Ampliatus: a common slave name
- Urbanus: native to Rome and means elegant, polite
- Apelles: Greek and Jewish name (if you Google Apelles a business pops up out of Columbus, OH, that is a debt collection service—that’s a squirrel moment on my part)
- Aristobulus: possibly the grandson of Herod the Great and brother of Herod Agrippa I
- Herodion: a man of Herod’s household
- Narcissus: possibly Tiberius Claudius; Narcissus was a wealthy free man of the Emperor Tiberius; executed by the order of Agrippina; his slaves would have become the property of the imperial empire and known as Narcissiani or household of Narcissus; Paul is only greeting the slaves who are in the Lord. (Of course his name reminded me of narcissist and so I had to google that too. Luke is talking about Greek mythology in school right now so this will be an exciting one to share with him.)
- Tryphaena and Tryphosa: probably sisters and maybe twins
- Persis: means Persian woman
• Rufus: may be the same man that Mark mentions as the son of Simon of Cyrene in Mark 15:21 who helped to carry the cross for Jesus
• The mother may be Simon’s mother who cared for Paul after he was brought from Tarsus to become a missionary colleague of Barnabas
• Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas and brethren: a community of men. Hermes was the name of the god of good luck and a common slave name. Patrobas is an abbreviation from Patrobius. Hermes is an abbreviation of names like Hermogenes or Hermodorus which was a very common name.
• Philogus and Julia may have been husband and wife; Nereus and Olympas; associated to a tradition that goes back to the 4th century and is associated with Flavia Domitilla, a Christian woman who was banished to the island of Pandateria by her uncle Emperor Domitian in AD 95. She was released after his death the following year. These are a community of faith.
• Holy kiss: This was a common feature in Christian greeting and is still done in the Eastern Church but not the Western Church (thank goodness!)

Sean McGarvey (Ironside)

It would seem that for the next two weeks, "[Greet] is the word." (Picture here a choreographed piece starring John Travolta.)

Another direction I could see this going is with Paul, stripes shaved in his eyebrow and dressed as Robert Matthew Van Winkle—a.k.a. Vanilla Ice ("Yo, VIP, let’s kick it!")

rapping his saintly salutations and rabid respect to his Roman-regional posse.

H. A. spends a few paragraphs on this passage, noting that there are subtle nuances in the way Paul prefices/puts forth the ones he chooses to name . . . or NOT name (v. 13 "Yo Rufus, word to your mother . . . and mine"), though he quickly moves on and turns an Ironside to them with “we cannot linger over the record here.”

Definitely cool to know that someday we will have the opportunity to kick it with Paul’s homies, so we’re getting a little pre-introduction. Gives us a little backstory on the VIPeeps who will be at the after party.

Biblical figure lives matter.

Tim & Mila Archer (MacLaren)

Phoebe

Phoebe was one of many good women who helped Paul, as their sisters has helped Paul’s Master and who thereby have won, little as either Paul or she thought, an eternal commemoration. She was a servant or as the margin preferably reads, a “deaconess of the church which is at Cenchrea.” Phoebe was a Greek and the Roman readers of the
epistle, all fused together by the power of the divine love that melted their hearts and the common faith that unified their lives.

For those of us who have to serve unnoticed and unknown, here is an instance and a prophecy which may stimulate and encourage. Surely I will never forget any of their works is a gracious promise which the most obscure, and humble of us may take to heart, and sustained but which, we may patiently pursue a way on which here are “none to praise and very few to love.”

Priscilla and Aquila

They were a mixed marriage that was not uncommon in those days. They had a church in their house. Aquila and Priscilla took their Lord and Master with them, and while working at their camel’s hair tents, they were serving God. Paul implies that this couple was ready to lay down their lives for him.

Two households – Aristobulus and Narcissus

I. The penetration power of Christian truth. Christ’s truth is given, and then it spreads.

II. These two household teach us very touchingly and beautifully the uniting power of Christianity.

Tryphena and Tryphosa

These two were probably sisters. They had a common faith. “Labour in the Lord” may suggest to us the most formidable foe of Christian earnestness. Their names, as we have already noticed, point to the state of society in which the parents’ ideal for their daughters was dainty luxuriousness and a withdrawal from the rough and tumble of common life; but these two women, magnetized by the love of Jesus, had turned their backs on the parental ideal, and had cast themselves earnestly into a life of toil.

Persis

Persis helps us understand, by living example, that wonderful, new, uniting process that was carried on by means of Christianity. She is an unexpected immortality of true Christian service.
Romans

Final Instructions and Greetings (Romans 16:17-23)

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

✓ Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17) (four weeks)
✓ Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20) (six weeks)
✓ Saving Righteousness (3:21-4:25) (three weeks)
✓ Righteous Freedom (5:1-8:39) (11 weeks)
✓ Righteousness → Jews (9:1-11:36) (eight weeks)
✓ Righteous Living (12:1-15:13) (nine weeks)
7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (November to early December) (five weeks)
8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text (Romans 16:17-23) is the fourth part of this major section. This section can be thought of as how the righteousness of the gospel is impacting Paul. In today’s text, it continues to impact who he is thankful for and why.
Paul the Minister to the Gentiles

14 I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another. 15 But on some points I have written to you very boldly by way of reminder, because of the grace given me by God 16 to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. 17 In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to be proud of my work for God. 18 For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed, 19 by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ; 20 and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else's foundation, 21 but as it is written, “Those who have never been told of him will see, and those who have never heard will understand.”

Paul’s Plan to Visit Rome

22 This is the reason why I have so often been hindered from coming to you. 23 But now, since I no longer have any room for work in these regions, and since I have longed for many years to come to you, 24 I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain, and to be helped on my journey there by you, once I have enjoyed your company for a while. 25 At present, however, I am going to Jerusalem bringing aid to the saints. 26 For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem. 27 For they were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material blessings. 28 When therefore I have completed this and have delivered to them what has been collected, I will leave for Spain by way of you. 29 I know that when I come to you I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.

30 I appeal to you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf, 31 that I may be delivered from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, 32 so that by God's will I may come to you with joy and be refreshed in your company. 33 May the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

Personal Greetings

1 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchreae, 2 that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in
whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well.

3 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, 4 who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well. 5 Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia. 6 Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you. 7 Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me. 8 Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. 9 Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys. 10 Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus. 11 Greet my kinsman Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus. 12 Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord. 13 Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well. 14 Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brothers who are with them. 15 Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them. 16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

Read: Final Instructions and Greetings (16:17-23)

17 I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. 18 For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive. 19 For your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil. 20 The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

21 Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you; so do Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen.

22 I Tertius, who wrote this letter, greet you in the Lord.

23 Gaius, who is host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer, and our brother Quartus, greet you.

Explain: Personal Greetings (16:1-16)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.
Are there any literary/structural observations?

Paul takes one last opportunity (after greeting those to whom he is writing) to warn the recipients and to send the greetings along of those with him.

What do the words mean?

The format for our names will continue to be: meaning; gender; origin.

17 I appeal [parakaleo; present active indicative; call near, invite, invoke, beseech, call for, comfort, desire, exhort, intreat, pray; same word used in Romans 12:1, 8; 15:30] to you, brothers [adelphos], to watch out [skopeo; present active infinitive; take aim at] regard, consider, take heed, look at (on), mark] for those who cause [present active participle; make, do] divisions [dichostasia; disunion, dissension, division, sedition] and create obstacles [skandalon; snare, occasion to fall, offence, thing that offends, stumbling-block; same word used in Romans 9:33; 11:9; 14:13] contrary to the doctrine [instruction, doctrine] that you have been taught [second aorist active indicative; to learn, understand]; avoid [present active imperative; deviated, shunned, declined from piety, avoided, eschewed, gone out of the way; same word used in Romans 3:12] them. 18 For such persons do not serve [douleuo; present active indicative; be a slave, be in bondage, do service; same word used in Romans 6:6; 7:6, 25; 12:11; 14:18] our Lord Christ, but their own appetites [hollow, cavity, abdomen, matrix, heart, belly, womb], and by [dia] smooth talk [fair speech, plausibility, good words] and flattery [eulogia; fine speaking, elegance of language, commendation (eulogy), adoration, religiously, benediction, consecration, benefit or largess, blessing, bounty, fair speech; same word used in Romans 15:29] they deceive [present active indicative; seduced wholly, beguiled, deceived; same word used in Romans 7:11] the hearts [kardia] of the naive [not bad, innocent, unsuspecting, harmless, simple]. 19 For your obedience [attentive hearkening, compliance, submission, obedience; same word used in Romans 1:5; 5:19; 6:16; 15:18] is known [second aorist middle (Robertson) indicative; to go (spread) forth, come abroad] to all, so that I rejoice [present active indicative; be full of cheer, calmly happy or well off, be well, farewelly, be glad, God speed, greeting, hail, joyfully, rejoice; same word used in Romans 12:12, 15] over you, but I want [present active indicative; determine, choose, prefer, wish, inclined, be about, delight in, desire, intend, list, love, mean, please, will; same word used in Romans 1:13; 7:15, 16, 18, 19 (twice), 20, 21; 9:16, 18 (twice), 22; 11:25; 13:3] you to be wise as to what is [present middle infinitive] good [good, beneficial] and innocent [unmixed, innocent, harmless, simple] as to what is evil [worthless, depraved, bad, evil, harm, ill, noisome, wicked; same word used in Romans 1:30; 2:9; 3:8; 7:19, 21; 12:17 (twice), 21 (twice); 13:3, 4 (twice), 10]; 14:20]. 20 The God of peace [peace, prosperity, one, quietness, rest, to be set at one again; same word used in Romans 1:7; 2:10; 3:17;
5:1; 8:6; 14:17, 19; 15:13, 33| will soon [tachos; a brief space (of time), in haste, quickly, shortly, speedily] crush [future active indicative; crush completely, shatter, break (in pieces), broken to shivers, bruise] Satan [the accuser, the devil, Satan] under your feet. The grace [charis; graciousness, acceptable, benefit, favor, gift, gracious, grace, joy, liberality, pleasure, thanks, thankworthy; same word used over two dozen times in Romans] of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

21 Timothy [honoring God; male; father Greek, mother Jew], my fellow worker [co-laborer, coadjutor, companion in labor, fellow helper, fellow laborer, fellow worker, laborer together with, workfellow; same word used in Romans 16:3, 9], greets [aspazomai; present middle indicative; enfold in the arms, salute, welcome, embrace, greet, take leave; used over a dozen times in Romans 16] you; so do Lucius [light, bright, white; male; Latin] and Jason [one who will heal; male; unknown] and Sosipater [savior of his father; male; unknown], my kinsmen [syngenes; relative, countryman, cousin, kinfolk, kinsman; same word used in Romans 9:3; 16:7, 11].

22 I Tertius [third; male; Latin], who wrote [grapho; aorist active participle] this letter [written message, epistle, letter], greet [aspazomai; present middle indicative] you in the Lord.

23 Gaius [lord; male; Latin], who is host [xenos; foreign, alien, novel, guest, entertainer, host, strange, stranger] to me and to the whole church [ekklesia; a calling out, a popular meeting; religious congregation (Jewish synagogue or Christian community), assembly, church; same word used in Romans 16:1, 4, 5, 16], greets [aspazomai; present middle indicative] you. Erastus [beloved; male; unknown], the city [polis; town, city] treasurer [house distributor, manager, overseer, fiscal agent (treasurer), preacher, chamberlain, governor, steward], and our brother [adelphos] Quartus [fourth; male; Latin], greet [aspazomai; present middle indicative] you.

Are there any repeated words?

Greet (again!)

What are some observations of the text?

17 I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. 18 For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive. 19 For your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil. 20 The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. [Hughes: We need to love in such a way that we
really put it on the line for others and speak the truth in love. Valovcin: We all need that friend who, in love, helps correct our path.]

21 Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you; so do Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen. [Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: Romans 16:21-23 form a sort of postscript with greetings from Paul’s companions in Corinth. Timothy was with Paul in Macedonia (2 Corinthians 1:1) before he came to Corinth. Lucius may be the one mentioned in Acts 13:1. Jason was once Paul’s host (Acts 17:5-9) in Thessalonica, Sosipater may be the longer form of Sopater of Acts 20:4. They are all Paul’s fellow-countrymen.]

22 I Tertius, who wrote this letter [Paul’s amanuensis—the person who was actually putting pen to parchment and writing Romans (Paul would have orally communicated it to Tertius)], greet you in the Lord.

23 Gaius, who is host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer, and our brother Quartus, greet you.

Footnote: Some manuscripts insert verse 24: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen

So . . . is Romans 16:24 supposed to be in the Bible or not? Maybe . . . but good translations will give you a footnote to tell you it’s disputed (there are a few other texts like this one). Poorer ones will leave you in the dark. Also, check your assumptions: did you assume it should be in because of the numbering or because of the study you’ve done on the history of that passage. (Hint: don’t place too much faith in the man-made systems—dig in, find out why it’s either in or out of your translation, and be informed.) See this article from Wikipedia for a dispassionate view: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Bible-verses_not_included_in_modern-translations

And see this article from Westminster Reformed Church that lays out helpful definitions (especially in point #1): westministerreformedchurch.org/Sermons/10-14-2001.htm

1) Autographs . . . the original text that was given by divine inspiration.

2) Inspiration . . . the written product of the creative breath of God given through human authors. . . .

For . . . Romans . . . the author may be different from the writer because Tertius wrote the letter to the Romans (16:22). . . . Paul is the author of Romans but Tertius put the words down in writing in the form that the Romans actually read. . . . The autographed letter to Romans is the original work that was authored by Paul, written down by Tertius, inspired by the Holy Spirit.
3) Extant . . means "still existing" versus being lost or destroyed. . . We do not have the autographs; they have been lost over time; they are not extant. What we do have are numerous copies of the originals. We have about 5,000 copies of the NT in Greek. From fragments to copies of whole books—or even groups of books.

4) Variants . . places where the copies differ

5) Textual criticism is the science that identifies and seeks to resolve variants. The goal is to determine the original by comparison of the copies (and by studying copying tendencies and pitfalls).

6) Textual witnesses . . the copies themselves, quotations of the text in the church fathers, and translations into other languages. These all witness to the autographs.

7) Textual families . . manuscripts or copies however complete or incomplete that are so similar when matched that they can be grouped together. They are like limbs on the transmission tree: picture some marked differences while the branches and leaves intertwine and cohere. We should point out at this juncture that though there are family differences, there is still a single family.

Conclusion: we can trust God’s word—and that we have God’s word

Apply (What is the point?)

1. Bad and divisive doctrine will be taught
2. It took a community to care for Paul

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. Avoid those who teach bad and divisive doctrine
2. Be the community

Next week: Doxology (16:25-27)

25 Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages 26 but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— 27 to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.
Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: Romans (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (Romans)
- Talk (about Romans—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

This section is more forceful and lacks the careful restraint that has this far marked Paul’s approach with the Romans.

We need to love in such a way that we really put it on the line for others and speak the truth in love.

We all need that friend who, in love, helps correct our path.

Sean McGarvey (Ironside)

In regard to the false teachers of 17-18: "The evildoers here referred to are not Christian teachers, even though in error. They are ungodly men who, as Jude tells us, have crept in from the outside. They are not servants of Christ but tools of the Devil, brought in from the world to corrupt and divide the people of God. It is a fearfully wicked thing to apply such words to real Christians who, however mistaken they may be, love the Lord and yearn over His people, desiring their blessing."

He references Philippians 3:18-19 for more detail on these "who serve their own belly."

Let us be exceedingly careful how we charge true servants of Christ with being of this unholy number, even though we may feel that truth compels us to take issue with them as to some things they do or teach.

So the Jim Bakkers, Oral Robertses, Joel Osteens . . . or brothers/sisters in error who need to be admonished and restored . . . hmmmm. Processing . . . WHAT we do and the WAY we do it.
Alas, how soon did this very church open its doors to just such false teachers as he warned them against, and so by the seventh century you have the Papacy itself enthroned in Rome!

We see also the likely slave names of Tertius (an amanuensis!) and Quartus, and we learn that Sosipater means "who defends the father." Let's face it, I kind of wanted to play with that name a little, but that's a pretty solid role. Now the shout-out to Rufus and his mother, on the other hand.

Not every sip or gulp from this particular fire hydrant that is Romans has fizzy effervescence, refreshing fruity notes, or a smooth finish, but it remains nourishing and sustaining for the soul.
Romans

Doxology *(Romans 16:25-27)*

**Introduction**

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.

Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here’s our outline of the book of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

- Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17) (four weeks)
- Righteous Wrath *(1:18-3:20)* (six weeks)
- Saving Righteousness *(3:21-4:25)* (three weeks)
- Righteous Freedom *(5:1-8:39)* (11 weeks)
- Righteousness → Jews *(9:1-11:36)* (eight weeks)
- Righteous Living *(12:1-15:13)* (nine weeks)
- Paul’s Closing *(15:14-16:23)* (five weeks)
- 8. Righteousness Summarized *(16:25-27)* (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today’s text *(Romans 16:25-27)* is the final part of the final section. It is Paul’s closing prayer after pouring out his theological and personal heart to the Romans.

It is widely considered to be some of the most beautiful language in all of the Bible.
Read: Doxology (16:25-27)

25 Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages 26 but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— 27 to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

Explain: Doxology (16:25-27)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

This is Paul’s closing prayer—commonly called a ‘doxology.’ Paul had another doxology in Romans—back in 11:33-36. It has a very similar emotional flavor to it.

What do the words mean?

25 Now to him who is able [dynamai; present middle participle; able, possible, be of power; same word used in Romans 8:7, 8, 39; 15:14] to strengthen [aorist active infinitive; set, fast, turn resolutely in a certain direction, to confirm, fix, establish, steadfastly set, strengthen; same word used in Romans 1:11] you according to my gospel [gospel, good message; used in Romans 1:1, 9, 16; 2:16; 10:16; 11:28; 15:16, 19] and the preaching [proclamation (especially of the gospel), preaching] of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation [apokalypsis; disclosed, appeared, coming, lightened, manifested, revealed, revelation; same word used in Romans 2:5; 8:19] of the mystery that was kept secret [perfect passive (Robertson) participle; to keep silent, keep close (secret, silence), hold peace] for long [perpetual, eternal, for ever, everlasting; same word as used in Romans 2:7; 5:21; 6:22, 23] ages [chronos; fixed or special occasion, interval, opportunity, delay; same word used in Romans 7:1] 26 but has now been disclosed [aorist passive (Robertson) participle; rendered apparent, appeared, manifestly declared, manifested, shewed; same word used in Romans 1:19; 3:21] and through [dia] the prophetic [pertaining to a foreteller, prophecy, of the prophets] writings [graphe] has been made known [aorist passive (Robertson) participle; certified, declared, made known, made to understand; same word used in Romans 9:22, 23] to all nations [ethnos], according to the command [injunction, decree, authoritativensness, authority, commandment] of the eternal [perpetual, eternal, for ever, everlasting; same word as used in Romans 2:7; 5:21; 6:22. 23; 16:25] God, to bring about the obedience [attentive hearkening, compliance, submission, obedience; same word used in Romans 1:5; 5:19; 6:16; 15:18; 16:19] of faith [pistis; persuasion, moral
conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, the system of religious truth, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity; same word used ~40 times in Romans—27 to the only [monos; remaining, sole, single, mere, alone, only, by themselves] wise God be glory [very apparent glory, dignity, glory, honor, praise, worship; same word used in Romans 1:23; 2:7, 10; 3:7, 23; 4:20; 5:2; 6:4; 8:18, 21; 9:4, 9:23 (twice); 11:36; 15:7] forevermore [aion] through [dia] Jesus Christ! Amen [amen; firm, trustworthy, surely, amen, verily; same word used in Romans 1:25; 9:5; 11:36; 15:33; 16:20].

Are there any repeated words?
God, Christ, Jesus, according, now, through

What are some observations of the text?
25 Now to him who is able to strengthen you [Hughes: God can make us strong and steadfast in any circumstance] according to my [Paul owned his message. We have a tendency sometimes to apologize/make excuses for parts of the Bible we don’t think are palatable. Own it. Proclaim it. Don’t apologize for it.] gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages 26 but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings [How many times did we go back and see how the Old Testament was used to back up Paul’s argument in Romans?] has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith [Ironside: God made known what had been in His heart from eternity—that from all nations, Jews and Gentiles, He would redeem and take out an elect company who would, by the Spirit's baptism, be formed into one body to be associated with Christ in the most intimate relationship (likened in Eph. 5 to that of husband and wife, or head and body), not only now but through all the ages to come.]—27 to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

Apply (What is the point?)
1. Good doctrine → good works → glory to God (orthopathy → orthodoxy → orthopraxy)
2. Salvation has been made known to us
3. Faith brings about obedience

Personalize (What do we do with that?)
1. Praise God for Romans
2. Make salvation known to others
3. Trust and obey
Next week: Review

Homework
Andrew Wilson’s “Reading” of Romans: bit.ly/WilsonReadingRomans
Read Romans and send feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wednesday

Quotes & Observations
Amy Valovcin (Hughes)
God can make us strong and steadfast in any circumstance.
Whatever God is He is infinitely.
Praise is to be our constant occupation and preoccupation.
For all this there can only be doxology—to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ. Amen. Soli Deo Gloria!
I have really enjoyed the deep dive into Romans. It’s been an amazing yet hard self-reflecting journey.

Sean McGarvey (Ironside)
'The mystery' was not something of difficult, mysterious character, but a sacred secret never known to mankind until in due time opened up by the Holy Spirit.
God made known what had been in His heart from eternity—that from all nations, Jews and Gentiles, He would redeem and take out an elect company who would, by the Spirit's baptism, be formed into one body to be associated with Christ in the most intimate relationship (likened in Eph. 5 to that of husband and wife, or head and body), not only now but through all the ages to come.
And with this we conclude our present somewhat cursory study, trusting that our review of the epistle has not been in vain but will be for increased profit and blessing as we wait for God's son from heaven.
Romans

Review

Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this in 2017? Did we spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else in this study? I pray this is a practice we continue.

Here was our (now completed) outline of Romans (summarized from the ESV’s outline):

- Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17) (four weeks)
- Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20) (six weeks)
- Saving Righteousness (3:21-4:25) (three weeks)
- Righteous Freedom (5:1-8:39) (11 weeks)
- Righteousness → Jews (9:1-11:36) (eight weeks)
- Righteous Living (12:1-15:13) (nine weeks)
- Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23) (five weeks)
- Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27) (two weeks)

This last week, we will review what we have learned, talk about your feedback from this week on Romans, and finish the series.

Another helpful resource is Luther’s commentary on Romans: biblestudytools.com/commentaries/luther/romans/1.html
Read

Did you read all of Romans in one sitting? If not, I'd encourage you to do so—it is the Holy Spirit’s gift to your theological training and personal edification. Did you watch Andrew Wilson’s ‘reading’ of Romans? Hand out gifts for completing homework.

Here are some of the key verses for each section of Romans:

1. Paul’s Introduction & Righteousness Introduced (1:1-17)
   Romans 1:16-17: For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”

2. Righteous Wrath (1:18-3:20)
   Romans 3:9-10: What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, as it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one”

   Romans 3:21-22a: But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe.

   Romans 5:1: Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 8:1: There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Romans 8:26-30: Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. Romans 8:37-39: No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.
5. Righteousness → Jews (9:1-11:36)
Romans 10:8-13: But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. For the Scripture says, “Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.” For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

Romans 12:1-2: I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:9: Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Romans 13:8: Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. Romans 14:1: As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. Romans 15:8-9a: For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy.

7. Paul’s Closing (15:14-16:23)
Romans 15:18-19: For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ Romans 15:24: I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain, and to be helped on my journey there by you, once I have enjoyed your company for a while.

8. Righteousness Summarized (16:25-27)
Romans 16:25-27: Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.
Explain

Are there any literary/structural observations?

What did you observe about Paul’s writing style?

Formal, long arguments, intellectual, filled with Old Testament,

Are there any repeated words in Romans?

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Show the Wordle word cloud:
What do the words mean?

Rules: no electronic or human assistance. Directions: find each Greek word’s English equivalent and write the letter of each English equivalent next to the Greek word in the blanks provided.

1. adelphos: ____  A. brothers
2. agape: ____  B. counted
3. charis: ____  C. faith
4. dia: ____  D. Gentile
5. doxa: ____  E. glory
6. ethnos: ____  F. God
7. euaggelion: ____  G. gospel
8. grapho: ____  H. grace
9. hagios: ____  I. holy
10. krima: ____  J. judgment
11. kyrios: ____  K. law
12. logos: ____  L. Lord
13. nomos: ____  M. love
14. piste: ____  N. Spirit
15. pneuma: ____  O. through
16. theos: ____  P. written

Answer key:

1. A  9. I
3. H  11. L
5. E  13. K
7. G  15. N
8. P  16. F

Prizes for each person who took the final exam and for anyone who scored 100%.
What were your observations of Romans and Andrew Wilson’s ‘reading’?

Several of you mentioned Romans was (or now is) your favorite book of the bible.

Skip Miller brought out this gem from Andrew Wilson’s video: A changed life is not a condition for salvation, but it should be the natural outcome of saving faith.

Many of you commented on Andrew’s illustration of the big toe.

Chris Arnold: I picture people standing, clustered together in streets, hanging out of windows and leaning in doorways. I picture the reader of the leader standing in front, Dust on his feet, reaching out with heart and hand as he reads Paul’s letter. I hear in my mind the love and passion that Paul puts into his letter.

And I also hear the grumblings and the audience feedback as people’s toes are stepped on bother spiritually and maybe even in the corporeal sense.

I feel like I’m in class, seated in front of a professor, taking notes and trying to pay attention. I hear the urgency of the letter. I feel it directed not only at me, but at a people long past. It continues through, living and becoming more personal with each reading.

I listened to Andrew Wilson.

It isn’t Paul’s letter to the Romans. It is Paul, and company, sitting back and sharing a cup of coffee with several of his closest friends and talking Jesus. It’s Sunday school. It’s immediate, and alive and spoken directly to the listener. It is Paul’s case, presented not in the formal halls of court, but in the living, breathing walls of where I am. . . . It is a grassroots level sharing of the greatest love story of all time. . . .

We forget that Paul was not only making a case, but he was dealing with PEOPLE. Paul’s heart was for people. I hope this is how the Romans heard it. Not from the translated scholarly interpretation and formal phrasing, but as a conversation; a personal message from God, delivered through Paul, to . . . me.

This was awesome. My words are inadequate.

Apply (What is the point?)

1. God’s wrath is real
2. Jesus saves
3. Jesus frees
4. Gentiles are in
5. The Reformation is not over
Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. **Share** the gospel
2. **Proclaim** Jesus
3. **Live** in freedom
4. **Celebrate**
5. **Keep** reforming

**Homework**

Live Romans and be back on January 7, 2018 at 9:07 am

**One more thing . . . thank you**

To Darla Skinner for your faithfulness in handling our prayer requests each week.

To Jessica Miller, Jessica Norris, Trish McGarvey, and Shannon Miller for their faithfulness in feeding us each week. Also, we need more help in this space for 2018—see Jessica Miller if you can assist.

To David Barber for his faithfulness in ensuring our room audio and podcast recording were done with excellence. All of our lessons in Romans are available on the podcast.

To Justin & Karrie Harness for their faithfulness in setting up our room each week before anyone else arrives. To Anna Grace for her faithfulness in passing out all of the papers each week.

To Noel, Ethan, Amanda, Zac, and the dozens of others who are not members of this class, but listen to the podcast and encourage me with their feedback.

To Amy Valovcin (39), Jessica Norris (37), Darla Skinner (30), and Sean McGarvey (26) for your faithfulness in providing feedback for more than half of the weeks of this series.

To George Jackson, Doug Skinner, Amy Valovcin, Tim Archer, Sean McGarvey, David Barber, Mitch Johnson, Darla Skinner, and Josh Landers—who were my fellow-laborers in teaching Romans this year.

To my wife, Julie, who sacrificed hundreds and hundreds of hours this year so I could prepare and help others prepare each week to teach you this beautiful book.

To our heavenly Father—who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen. (Romans 16:25-27)
Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin

I've completed my homework. 😊

Andrew Wilson was amazing to listen to! Waiting for the delivery of what God already secured.

Truly wonderful!

Darla Skinner

Reading and listening to the entire book of Romans has reminded me of several things:

1. Romans is still my favorite book of the Bible. It has all the stuff I love: God's wrath/judgement/justice (I love it because that means I don't have to exact it as I would like to), God’s comfort (chapters five and eight), God’s sovereignty (he chooses whom he chooses), God's righteousness, God's faithfulness (demonstrated through the Jews), etc.

2. I dislike man conceived outlines of large books of the Bible. I feel they are akin to alliterated sermon outlines. They leash my mind. I worry with the outlines more than the text. I seriously doubt with a book this large, that we can say Paul had a single agenda when writing it. There are so many topics he addresses. Certainly, there are overarching themes and repeated topics. I do understand why we use them, however, I think he could be shaking his head over our efforts to categorize everything.

Therefore, there is now NO condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus because dia Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering.

Merry Christmas to me!

Tim & Mila Archer

First; we listened to the video while taking an evening walk at the South Chickamauga Greenway on Monday evening. The trail we take is perfect for doing this because it doesn't have lights on the trail. We both listened intently and found it tough not to share our thoughts as we listened to him convey the scripture in a marvelous format. As we finished and returned to the truck Mila said, "If preachers would simply speak the scriptures like this, then we wouldn't need the old three points and a joke routine".

The book of Romans has quickly become one of my "Favorites" brother! There are so many thoughts for me when I look back on the study that we've just finished. There
were so many times that "although I have read and studied this book, I felt I was going through it for the first time. Many times, I literally had tears in my eyes as I was reminded of just how blessed I am to have this word from God and ashamed when realizing that many brothers and sisters of the faith truly have very little access to scripture at all.

The following set of verses should bring all believers encouragement in Chapter 8:

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Praise God for this which is found in Chapter 11:

11 So I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? By no means! Rather, through their trespass usalvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous.

Mila also added the following points/personal reminders:

- Jews and Gentiles equal (2-3) / genetic Jews (11)
- faith justified through Jesus (3-4)
- 7-8: Conflict with new/old man
- 10:9-17: security
- 12: New Testament commandments/fruits
- 14: Follow and make peace/Put the bat down
- 16: Give thankfulness to those who serve

Yes, we completed the homework and both realize that we fall way short of where we should be in our walks with Christ.

Thank you for steadfast service and teaching the word little brother.

David Bandy

Read Romans but it's taken me all week. Did in addition to daily Bible study/reading. Wanted to encourage you and thank you for your diligent effort to teach God's word. God bless you and Merry Christmas.

Sherry Johnson

I read Romans. One thing I observed is that we need to learn more and trust the Holy Spirit more. Last night, we also watched the video! As you know when the Lord 'touches' my heart I cry. Well, during the video, I wept much!!!! When Andrew got into the row boat and was STRIVING to row to be/do the 'Christian life' I could relate!!!! All my life I have tried to be 'good enough' to please mom, school, the church, college. I
never will be 'good enough' in myself! But Jesus is!!!!!! I have often thought and sometimes said, "It is easier to please Jesus than it is to please The Church"! (This really make my mom angry! But it is TRUTH!!!! Then as I heard and watched Andrew on the video last night 'put up the sails so the wind/ Holy Spirit could take over'! Wow!!!!!! Oh, tears even now! Two verses really spoke to my heart: Romans 13:14 and 15:13 in this reading!!!!!!

Skip Miller

I watched the video last night and read Romans today. **A changed life is not a condition for salvation, but it should be the natural outcome of saving faith.**

Sean McGarvey

What a journey this has been through Romans, aka: Paul’s Notes in Spasing. Interesting to realize that he got to Croatia before Croatia got there (#Illyricum!).

Right off the bat, it is a letter from Paul to "you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ." (1:6) Might as well have been straight to us, as there are so many parallels and practicalities for our day. And it's not our day, as it is God's, and in His time, He will unveil the rest of the mystery.

Because of the Spirit, Romans is fresh and new every time He wants to show us more. When others present Romans, I also see aspects highlighted that didn't catch my attention before . . . or maybe not in that way. I am encouraged to go back to the text to make sure that was God. . . . I appreciated Andrew Wilson’s "Reading." I wonder if Andrew and Paul would be on the same page about everything presented there, though I truly believe they hold common ground. "Christ is the destination of the Torah." "The law is not the problem. The problem is sin!" I enjoyed the way Andrew illustrated life in Christ through reviving the body and, hence, the big toe. Also, it was a new take for me in the chapter 8 childbirth analogy to have the Spirit standing by our/nature’s side in the delivery suite. Andrew has/had three biological children. I have three and one adopted. Paul perhaps had none (but what was his relationship with his nephew?). That would have been a different take for sure.

But that's not really important, is it? What really matters is that Christ, God's son, died once for all Jews and Greeks/Gentiles alike, and through faith in Him we have life! The message remains the same, but the way it intersects and impacts each recipient is as unique as a fingerprint. (#BlowingMyOwnMind)

We were ALL under sin, public and private, but all seen by God (2:16, 3:9), BUT . . .

**But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law . . . the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no**
distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by His blood, to be received by faith. (3:21-25)

We also find in chapter 4 that God has the foresight to use the foreskin. What shall we say, then? . . . It is not an issue of the tissue, but rather the art of the heart, and the Spirit will hear it!

Bask in the glow of what he says in 4:17 about God, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

** no words, but impressive silence broken by impassioned nonverbal utterances (perhaps like those of the Spirit in 8:26?) **

We learn that "one who has died has been set free from sin. . . . So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus" (6:7,11), because we're gonna have to serve Somebody. This is one of Trisha's new favorite songs since the Jesus Freak Cruise on which Kevin Max sang it. Here is your link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-TwalGqkQLU

Interesting side notes: It is a remake of Bob Dylan's (from whom the ill lyrics come ... Huh? What? Oh, yes I did!) Gotta Serve Somebody, and Kevin's backup female vocalist's first name is Fleming. You are welcome.

So much good stuff in Romans, and it's all just a little snippet of the greatness of God!

May my life and yours be examples of being saturated in the Word of God.

Josh Landers

So if I had Twitter, this would be my live Twitter feed while watching. Mostly stream of consciousness so probably missed some stuff.

The big toe analogy, when the body dies the toe dies, but when the person is brought back to life the toe was not the reason, but gets to be alive too.

Sin and death and burial under the water. Slave to death and sin. Alive and free out of the water raised to a new life, now a slave to God.

Comparing rowing against the wind as the flesh and sailing with the wind as the Spirit.

Oh my, creation groaning like a woman in labor against sin and darkness, then the pain is forgotten with the new life.

The Spirit standing with us in the delivery suite.

It is neat to hear the emotion rise and fall.
The Torah has an end and it will be a word and will be simple to understand, if you believe in your heart and confess with your mouth.

The gentiles are living in the Jews’ tree.

Oh no I found my attention drifting but coming back . . . just like the original hearers probably did! We talked about this in Sunday school.

Don’t try to get vengeance yourself because vengeance is God’s. Don’t repay evil with evil because that is the way of the world. The way of the master is to overcome evil with good.

You should not fall apart over things that are not central to the gospel.

I am willing to renounce my freedoms for the love of my brother.

His Greek names are good too!

I want you to be wise and innocent.

Oh, and then he just walks off the stage. Well done.

**Mitch Johnson**

It is great to be a big toe living in the wind.

You are living in their tree, so don’t get too big for your boots.

**Chris Arnold**

When reading Romans, there is, in my mind, a certain sense of formality. I mean, It’s a letter, from a scholar and a lawyer.

From Paul.

THE Paul.

So, when I read it I imply tense, emphasis and tone (because text has the blessing and curse of being sterile). Maybe that is an illustration of how the living text of the Bible feels when you read scripture in a moment. But the overarching sense of formality remains. I picture people standing, clustered together in streets, hanging out of windows and leaning in doorways. I picture the reader of the leader standing in front, Dust on his feet, reaching out with heart and hand as he reads Paul’s letter. I hear in my mind the love and passion that Paul puts into his letter.

And I also hear the grumblings and the audience feedback as people’s toes are stepped on bother spiritually and maybe even in the corporeal sense.

I feel like I’m in class, seated in front of a professor, taking notes and trying to pay attention. I hear the urgency of the letter. I feel it directed not only at me, but at a
people long past. It continues through, living and becoming more personal with each reading.

I listened to Andrew Wilson.

It isn’t Paul’s letter to the Romans. It is Paul, and company, sitting back and sharing a cup of coffee with several of his closest friends and talking Jesus. It’s Sunday school. It’s immediate, and alive and spoken directly to the listener. It is Paul’s case, presented not in the formal halls of court, but in the living, breathing walls of where I am. In the truck, listening to a discussion. It is a grassroots level sharing of the greatest love story of all time.

What does it say about us when we hear the same message over and over, but get the most visceral enjoyment out of it when we hear it presented in “our language?”

It makes me think that we place such emphasis on the formality of the written text that we forget that Paul was not only making a case, but he was dealing with PEOPLE. Paul’s heart was for people. I hope this is how the Romans heard it. Not from the translated scholarly interpretation and formal phrasing, but as a conversation; a personal message from God, delivered through Paul, to . . . me.

This was awesome. My words are inadequate.
Appendix 1

Josh Landers’ notes about getting him ready to teach:

- You contacted me on December 15, 2016, by email asking if I would teach a class in 2017
- You asked me to look through the class website to understand the resources, Greek interlinear, etc. in February
- You assigned me Romans 15:8-13 in mid-May
- I did the Greek research by Mid-June
- We met for lunch at the Boat house July 10, when you asked me to memorize the verses
- We met at Southern Star on August 12 and simply talked
- We met at Southern Star on August 29 and I took notes
  - Go through outline
  - Read chapter 15 through this text outline to be comfortable
  - Look at introductions conclusions and transitions
  - Section heading is a point of application
  - Can read other translation after using this text
  - What are Gentiles? Who do they look like?
  - Tee up conclusions with intro
  - Teachers notes one month out
  - Teach the lesson before you do it
  - Take off, fly, then land
  - Teaching adults and children are the same
  - 2 weeks meet again
  - Analogy about hearing racist words growing up but tactfully
  - Show a picture of mixed race people and ask which one is the Gentile
  - Peace and Joy – Proverbs, the soul cannot live without joy
  - Show how the verses quoted are about Jews near gentiles, Gentiles near Jews, then everyone together
- We met on Sept 12 at East Coast Subs and went through my prepared outline and I took notes
  - Put together a timeline
  - Consider a physical activity such as pushing tables together to show togetherness
  - Look at how to set up the next week’s lesson (Romans 15:14-21)

Josh taught on October 29.