

The More It Is Handled... The Better It Tastes
THE LETTER TO THE ROMANS, Dr. Paul E. Engle
48 video lessons

SESSION #1 INTRODUCTION TO ROMANS

I. ROMANS HAS PLAYED A UNIQUE LIFE-CHANGING ROLE IN THE CHURCH

- A. Subject of many commentaries and sermons
 - Martyn Lloyd-Jones - 366 sermons in 14 volumes
 - Donald Grey Barnhouse - 140 Sundays
 - Martin Luther: "The most important part of the New Testament and the very purest Gospel. It can never be read or meditated on too much or too well, and the more it is handled the more delightful it becomes, and the better it tastes."
 - John Chrysostom - had read aloud to him once a week.
 - Gordon Fee: "This letter is arguably the most influential book in Christian history, perhaps in the history of Western civilization."
 - John MacArthur: "Most, if not all, of the great revivals and reformations in the history of the church have been directly related to the Book of Romans."
- B. Influence in the conversion and lives of many notable Christians
 - Saint Augustine - cf. Confessions
 - Martin Luther
 - John Wesley - "I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, in Christ alone for salvation."

II. WHO WAS THE AUTHOR OF ROMANS?

- A. Internal evidence: points to Paul
 - *cf. 1:1
 - *Multiple personal references (cf. 15:14-16:27)
 - *His amanuensis is Tertius (16:22)
 - *Extends greets to 27 people from Rome (16:3-16)
- B. External evidence: what the church has believed from post apostolic period to present
- C. Similarity to other letters of Paul: Rom. 3:20-22 with Gal. 2:16; Rom. 12 with 1 Cor. 12; Rom. 15:25-28 with 2 Cor. 8-9
- D. Diatribe style used by Paul - arguing with invisible opponents

III. WHEN AND FROM WHERE WAS IT WRITTEN?

- A. Consensus: Paul from Corinth during third missionary journey c.57AD
 - * Gaius the Corinthian hosting him at time (16:23, 1 Cor. 1:14)
 - * Erastus city treasurer (16:23) Cf. archaeological inscription in Corinth
 - * Commendation of Phoebe (16:1-2) from Cenchrea close to Corinth. Hand-delivered letter.
- B. Paul wanted to visit Rome on his way to Spain - How were plans interrupted? (Acts 21-28)

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. Why do you think this book of Romans has been so influential in the Reformation and in other times of revival?
2. Why is it important before looking at a New Testament letter to consider background questions such as who wrote it, and when and where was it written? Is that a waste of time?

SESSION #2 BACKGROUND QUESTIONS ON ROMANS

I. WHAT WAS THE CONTEXT OF PAUL WRITING ROMANS?

- A. Came as turning point in Paul's missionary career. After 3 journeys over 15-20 year period covered more than 20,000 miles. Now focused eyes on yet unreached territory further west. cf. 15:19-20
- B. Review context of Paul's missionary trips
- C. Several historical circumstances providentially made this a good time for expansion of the church.
 - 1. Pax Romana
 - 2. Network of Roman roads

II. WHO WERE THE FIRST RECIPIENTS OF THE LETTER?

- A. Text in 1:7 "*all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints.*" Why not called the church at Rome? Population over a million - c.50,000 Jews
- B. Claim of some that Peter and Paul founded the church - cf. Clement of Rome and Terfullian. Why doesn't this claim bear up under closer examination?
 - * Seutonius reference to Emperor Claudius ordering Jews to leave - Instigation of "Chrestus" probably a misspelling of Latin term for Christ.
 - * Peter still in Jerusalem at time of Jerusalem council c.49 AD so not in Rome planting church.
 - * Paul doesn't refer in Romans to planting church there and sends no greetings to Peter there.
 - * Ambroasiaster in 4th century says Roman church not established by an apostle.
- C. Then what is the more likely origin of the churches in Rome? Converts from Pentecost who had been visiting Jerusalem who returned home - cf. Acts 2:10-11 "visitors from Rome."
- D. Were the Christians there Jewish or Gentile?
 - * Some claim Jewish because of teaching on Jewish nation in ch. 9-11, reference to life of Abraham, and extensive quotations from Hebrew Old Testament.
 - * Yet church seems to be primarily Gentiles (cf. 1:5-6; 1:13; 11:13; 15:15-16)
- E. Background on expelling under edict of Claudius - died in AD54 so Jews could return.

III. WHY DID PAUL WRITE IT?

- 1. Paul wanted to tell the Romans about his imminent visit in which he would preach the gospel.
- 2. He wanted to prepare the Roman Christians as a base of support for his future ministry in Spain (cf. 15:24, 28)
- 3. He wanted to address problems in the church including the need to reconcile Jewish and Gentile believers to live in unity (cf. ch. 14-15)
- 4. Some suggest it was written to give a summary defense of Paul's Gospel message. Could be an opportunity for Paul to rehearse what he would say in Jerusalem when he delivered the collection for the needy believers.

IV. WHAT ARE THE KEY WORDS IN ROMANS?

Law - 76X; Sin/Sinful/Sinned - 72X; Christ - 66X; Faith - 40X; Spirit - 34X; Righteousness 31X

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

- 1. How would you describe the original recipients of this letter in the city of Rome?
- 2. Try skimming the entire letter and understand or list what you think are the key repeated words. As you look over your list, what conclusions can you draw?

SESSION #3 MORE BACKGROUND QUESTIONS ON ROMANS

I. WHAT'S THE MAIN THEME OF ROMANS?

The Gospel of God's righteousness imputed by faith in Christ.

- A. Note emphasis on Gospel in opening and closing of letter: 1:1, 2:9, 15; 15:16, 19
- B. Theme is introduced clearly in 1:16-17

II. HOW DOES PAUL DEVELOP HIS ARGUMENT IN THE LETTER?

I. OPENING PERSONAL GOSPEL CONSIDERATIONS

- 1. Personal salutation (1:1-7)
- 2. Expression of thanks and prayer (1:8-15)

II. MAIN GOSPEL THESIS OF THE LETTER Gospel is power of God for salvation through righteousness of God received through faith. (1:16-17)

III. MAIN BODY OF LETTER CENTERING AROUND THE GOSPEL

Part One: Our sinfulness and God's righteousness through Christ (1:18-5:11)

Part Two: The results of receiving Christ's righteousness (5:12-8:39)

Part Three: God's faithfulness in spite of Jewish unfaithfulness (9-11)

Part Four: Practical out-workings of God's righteousness (12-15:13)

IV CLOSING PERSONAL GOSPEL CONSIDERATIONS

- 1. Paul's role in bringing the gospel to the Gentiles (15:14-33)
- 2. Personal greetings and concluding matters (16:1-27)

III. WHAT IS THE NEW PERSPECTIVE ON PAUL?

- A. Background: change in Pauline studies in last c.30 years. See Paul as increasingly Jewish.
E.P. Sanders - Covenant Nomism; J. D. G. Dunn; N.T. Wright
- B. Summary from Doug Moo, *Encountering the Book of Romans* (Baker)
 - 1. New perspective with focus on people groups and a covenantal onomastic view of Judaism. They argue that our individualistic reading of Romans came in the modern era because of the influence of Luther who couldn't find rest for his introspective conscience.
 - 2. Reformation approach - focuses on individual salvation and assumption of Jewish legalism. This is the classical view still held by many. They disagree that the "People" issue is central to the letter, rather it's the Gospel! The horizontal dimension (Jew vs. Gentile) is subordinate to the vertical dimension (humans vs. God). It's secondary not primary.

IV. WHAT ARE SOME CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES COVERED IN ROMANS?

- * What's the fate of the "pagan" who has not heard of Christ?
- * What does God think of the practice of homosexuality?
- * What does it mean all Israel will be saved?
- * Is Adam a real historical person?
- * Does the internal struggle Paul describe in ch. 7 refer to believers or non-believers?
- * How do we explain the doctrine of predestination and election?
- * What should we think about offending others with "meat offered to idols"?

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

- 1. Do you have any concerns about the New Perspective on Paul?
- 2. Describe what you think is the main theme that summarizes this book.

SESSION #4 ROMANS 1:1-17 OPENING PERSONAL GOSPEL CONSIDERATIONS AND MAIN GOSPEL THESIS OF LETTER

I. PAUL'S PERSONAL SALUTATION (1:1-7)

- A. What were Paul's credentials to write this letter under the inspiration of the HS?
1. Servant
 2. Apostle
- B. What does Paul want us to know about the gospel?
1. The gospel is divine - v.1 "Gospel of God"
 2. The gospel is predicted
 3. The gospel is Christo-centric
- * human nature - descendant of David
 - * divine nature - declared to be God's Son by his resurrection
- C. Who were the original recipients of the letter? Believers who lived in capital city of Holy Roman Empire - both Jews and Gentiles

II. PAUL'S EXPRESSION OF THANKS AND PRAYER (1:8-15)

- A. Prayers (1:8-10)
- B. Plans (1:11-15)
1. Because he wanted to bring the young Roman Christians spiritual gifts
 2. Because he wanted the mutual encouragement of face to face fellowship
 3. Because he wanted to be able to reap a harvest of fruit
 4. Because he sensed an obligation to preach the gospel to all groups of people

III. PAUL'S STATEMENT OF THE MAIN GOSPEL THESIS OF THE LETTER (1:16-17)

- A. Paul sets the stage for the theme of the letter by stating his readiness to preach the Gospel in Rome. "Not ashamed" is figure of speech called meiosis, intentionally understating something or implying that it is lesser in significance or size than it really is.
- B. Paul continues by stating why he is not ashamed of the Gospel. Out of six words for "power" he uses *dunamis*.
- C. Paul continues by stating why the Gospel is the power of God.
1. Because it works for everyone who believes - first Jews then Gentiles.
 2. Because in the Gospel God has revealed his righteousness. The gospel message is how sinful humans can be made righteous, that is, how we can enter into right standing before a holy God. Faith is not the reason for imputing righteousness to us but the means of imputing righteousness. (cf. Hab. 2:4; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38)

* Now that Paul has finished his foundational prologue in v.1-17, he's ready to launch into his main argument in v.18. The main body of the letter centers around the Gospel, and it develops this theme that's been introduced in the hinge verses 16-17.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. Is Paul qualified to write this letter? What are his credentials that encourage readers to take this letter seriously?
2. One of the key words in Romans is "Gospel." What have we learned so far about the Gospel in these opening verses of the letter?

SESSION #5 ROMANS 1:18-32 THE REALITY OF GENTILE NEED

Context: To talk about “salvation” and the “Gospel” can be using meaningless terms unless we first understand the severity of human need. To understand good news we first need to look at some bad news.

I. THE HUMAN RACE IS UNDER THE HOLY WRATH OF GOD (1:18-20)

A. Why do you think we don't hear much today about the wrath of God?

B. What does the wrath of God mean? Doug Moo, *Encountering the Book of Romans* (Baker, 2002; p.56) “We will never understand God or the work he accomplished for us in his Son until we appreciate the reality of God's wrath. As presented in Scripture, God's wrath is no capricious emotion but the necessary response of a perfect and holy God to violations of his will.”

C. A lack of understanding God's wrath is the reason why some people don't find the Gospel very good news. Apart from understanding God's wrath why do people need salvation?

D. Why has God revealed his wrath? v. 18 explains it's because humans have suppressed the truth that God has given to all of them.

E. God has given a certain amount of truth to every human being: General revelation

1. What is general revelation? It's truth that originates with God the Creator to all humans without exception, is non-verbal, is conveyed through the natural world of creation, reveals God invisible qualities, leaves all humans without excuse, and in itself is not sufficient for salvation.

2. people chose to suppress this truth - v.20 “so that men are without excuse”

a. result clause? suppressing general revelation results in humans without excuse

b. purpose clause? suppressing general revelation is for purpose that humans are without excuse

II. THE HUMAN RACE FACES TWO SERIOUS DILEMMAS BECAUSE OF SUPPRESSING THE TRUTH OF GOD.

* What's the “exchange”? Exchanging the truth of God and putting in its place their own perverted notions and activities. Therefore God “gave them over” 3X (v.23-24; v. 25-26a; v. 26b-28). Suppressing the truth led to two dilemmas:

A. We face a religious dilemma (ungodliness) 1:23-25

1. Because we have failed to glorify God. (cf. WSC “Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.”)

2. Because we have failed to thank God.

3. When we don't glorify God and thank him, living autonomous lives, it leads to a whole chain of symptoms enumerated in v.21-25. Can you spot them?

B. Next session we'll look at the second dilemma...

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. Why do you think we don't hear much today about the wrath of God? Are there any dangers that come from neglecting this biblical theme?

2. Can you come up with some examples you have seen of people suppressing the truth?

SESSION #6 ROMANS 1:26-32 OUR MORAL DILEMMA

Context: Paul doing some pre-evangelism showing us that the human race is under the wrath of God since people have suppressed the truth, leaving them “without excuse.” So we face two serious dilemmas. Last session we saw the religious dilemma of ungodliness. What’s a second parallel dilemma?

B. We face a moral dilemma (unrighteousness) 1:26-32

1. Linkage between religious and moral. If one failed to establish a correct religious relationship with God (idolatry) it effects one’s moral relationship with others. Pagan religious produce pagan morality.

2. What are the specific results of secular humanity’s moral dilemma? v 26 God gave them over to shameful lusts, including unnatural sexual relations by women and men. Note location of Corinth where Paul is writing. Note first-century context

3. How does the text characterize this practice?

- * Immoral practice - “sexual impurity)
- * “Shameful”
- * “Exchange of natural relations for unnatural ones.”
- * “Indecent acts”
- * Lead to “due penalty” and “error”

4. How can some condone this?

5. Qualifications to bear in mind:

- a. Scripture doesn’t call homosexual acts unforgivable sins.
- b. Scripture doesn’t put it at the top of the list as the worst sin possible.
- c. Scripture gives hope by calling it sin, because Christ came to deal with sin (cf. 1 Cor. 6:11)
- d. Calling homosexual acts sin does not mean one is homophobic or that one hates homosexuals.

6. What are results of suppressing the truth? Not only did God give them up to shameful lusts. But God also gave them over to depraved minds to do what shouldn’t be done. Cf. v.28-32 gives catalog of 21 specific sins which happen in individuals and societies which suppress the truth of God and come under his wrath.

7. The real tragedy is the attitude people have while committing these sins against God (v.32)

8. So humans don’t sin out of ignorance. They continue in sin knowing they are doing wrong. And beyond this, they evil approve of others doing the same thing.

9. This is why modern humans need the power of the Gospel. We’re under the wrath of a holy and just God. The only escape is found in God’s provision through Christ.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. If you were talking to someone who was trying to justify the practice of homosexuality, what are some ways you could help them see God’s perspective?

2. Paul gives an ugly catalog of sins that flow from suppression of God’s wrath. Can you give any examples of how this is still true today? How does this prepare people to hear the good news of the Gospel?

SESSION #7 ROMANS 2:1-16 STEP INTO THE COURTROOM

In ch.2 we are taken into an imaginary courtroom. Paul has talked about God’s judgment over humans who have suppressed the truth and exchanged God’s truth for a lie. He talked about Gentile accountability. Now in ch. 2 he shifts to talk about Jewish accountability.

PRINCIPLES OF DIVINE JUDGING (2:1-16)

A. Notice the human way of judging: It’s the way of inconsistency.

B. Notice the contrasting way in which God operates: God’s way of judging is marked by impartiality.

1. God will judge according to truth (v.2-3)
2. God will judge in proportion to wrath stored up (v.4-5)
3. God will judge according to deeds (v.8-11) cf. Calvin: “It is faith alone which justifies but the faith which justifies can never be alone.”
4. God will judge on the basis of how much knowledge we have been given (v12, 13, 16)
 - Paul pictures two groups of people:
 - a. people who do not have the law - God’s written law of OT - special revelation
 - b. people who have the special revelation of Scripture - including Jews

C. Raises question of what about the “innocent pagan” who has never heard the Gospel revealed in the Bible? (cf. v.14-15) What’s the point of Paul’s argument? Even people who have never seen the written law of the Bible are guilty before God because God has planted in them a nonverbal moral law.

1. Barnhouse approach: Approach A with non-Christians:

* If (10x) when we get to heaven we find the pagan there, I would only marvel at the grace of God that has found a way to include him.

* But if (10x) we should not find the pagan in heaven, I will be forced to exclaim, What shall we say? That God is unjust in bringing his wrath on us?... Certainly not! If that were so, how could God judge the world? (Rom. 3:5-6)

Approach B with Christians:

SPECIAL REVELATION

- * written Word
- * living Word

GENERAL REVELATION

- * external world
- * internal nature

-
- * verbal
 - * limited number of people
 - * sufficient for salvation
 - * basis for judging

- * non-verbal
- * all humans
- * insufficient for salvation
- * basis for judging

3. Our response to this truth:

a. Should motivate us to face our responsibility to share the light we have received with those who are still in darkness. This is a prime motive behind missions.

b. Should motivate us to thank and worship God for the special revelation he has chosen to give us. How privileged we are.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. How would you summarize God’s way of judging as compared to the human way of judging?
2. Suppose someone asked you, What about the Buddhist or animist who has never heard the good news of the Gospel. How can God justly judge them? Explain how you would answer that common problem.

SESSION #8 ROMANS 2:17-3:8 ANSWERS TO OBJECTIONS

I. APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLES OF DIVINE JUDGING (2:17-29)

A. Protasis (if) (v.17-20) He lists some unique advantages possessed by Paul's Jewish brothers and sisters - people privileged to have special revelation.

B. Apodosis (then) (v.21-24) Shows gap between their profession and their practice. If they have these advantages, then why don't they consistently practice them?

C. He then shows the danger of dependence on circumcision for acceptance before God the Judge (v.25-29)

1. What was circumcision? An ordinance commanded by God as a sign and seal of the covenant of grace. Outward sign of a person's inner saving faith. But some began to misuse this sign. So Paul shows that salvation is independent of the human work of circumcision.

2. What's the NT parallel?

III. ANSWERS TO IMAGINARY OBJECTIONS (3:1-8)

Picture Paul sitting at table across from four panelists who each raise an objection in an effort to find an escape from God's judgment:

A. Objection one v.1-2 - If even Jews are condemned along with Gentiles, what advantage is there in being a circumcised Jew?

Answer: There are many advantages.

B. Objection two v.3-4 What about faith? If we are not right with God, what about his promises? Won't the covenants then be broken since we failed?

Answer: God is still faithful.

C. Objection three v.5-6 if my faithlessness and unrighteousness shows off God's righteousness in bold contrast, then why should God punish me?

Answer: God judges because he's the moral ruler of the universe.

D. Objection four v.7-8 If my sin makes God's truth shine more brightly by contrast, if my sin results in greater glory to God, then why should God condemn me?

Answer: Their condemnation is deserved. They stand self-condemned to use that reasoning. Thus each objection has been silenced:

Illustration from Francis Schaeffer from Switzerland
Westminster Larger Catechism Q/A 152-153

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. Have you come to experience the escape from wrath that Christ has lovingly provided? Do you know anyone who is still under the wrath of God?

2. Paul gave some teaching on circumcision. Some suggest that baptism is the NT parallel to OT circumcision. Do you agree or disagree? What might be some similarities and differences between circumcision and baptism?

SESSION #9 ROMANS 3:9-20 UNIVERSAL HUMAN NEED

Paul has been painting a dark picture of human spiritual need - for both Gentiles and Jews. Now beginning in v.9 he sums up human need as extending universally.

I. THE REALITY OF UNIVERSAL HUMAN NEED (3:9-20)

A. Paul begins with a question and answer in v.9

B. Paul continues by giving OT support for the universality of human need in v.10-18.

1. String of 6 OT quotations: all but 2 are from the Psalms giving an unflattering portrait!
2. Parts of anatomy: throat, tongue, lips, mouth, feet, and eyes.

3. Explanation of the issue of total depravity: How then do we account for some “good” we may see in non-believers. Theologians call this “common grace.” cf. Mt. 5:45. Every person is not as corrupt as he could be, thanks to God’s common grace. Total depravity does not mean we’ve all gone to the ultimate extreme of corruption. Rather it means that the corruption has spread to the core of our being. It refers to the “extent” of the damage rather than the “degree” of damage. It has impacted all humans without exception and has impacted us at the core of our nature. Also cf. Gen. 6:5, Eph. 2:1.

4. Does this doctrine of total, radical depravity have implications for how we do evangelism?

5. Timothy Keller lists 7 effects of sin on us (*Romans 1-7 for You* p. 67-68)

Sin effects our legal standing - v. 10 guilty and condemned

Our minds - v. 11 no one who understands

Our motives - v.11b no one seeks God

Our wills - v.12 all have turned away

Our tongues - v.13-14 their throats are open graves

Our relationships - v.15-16 are swift to shed blood, don’t know way of peace

Our relationship with God - v. 18 no fear of God

C. This leads Paul to three conclusions in v.19-20

1. Conclusion one: The whole world is held accountable before Almighty God.

2. Conclusion two: This law can not justify us before God. Justification is a legal term referring to God’s declaration that we are righteous. It’s the opposite of condemnation.

3. Conclusion three: The law makes us conscious of sin. Without the law there would have been no standard to show us our sin. cf. J.B Phillips v. 20 *“It is the straight edge of the Law that shows us how crooked we are.”*

* Pivotal “but” comes in v.21. Paul now turns from the black cloth of human sin to hold up the glittering diamond of the Gospel.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. What are the implications for evangelism of the doctrine of total depravity?
2. Why do you think some modern people resist this doctrine?

SESSION #10 ROMANS 3:21-31 GOD'S GRACIOUS PROVISION

II. THE SOLUTION IS GOD'S GRACIOUS PROVISION TO REMEDY HUMAN NEED.

(3:21-31) Three characteristics of God's provision for our need.

1. God provision is given apart from the law (v.21)

* What does "law" mean here? No human law-keeping was required to supplement God's provision.

2. God's provision is given through Jesus Christ (v.22-26)

* The Acropolis of the Christian Faith - this is a high point of doctrine.

* Four key terms to note and remember:

a. FAITH: is the medium through which God justifies the sinner. It's a gift of God. Scripture never says we are justified because of faith. Rather it says we are justified by or through faith.

b. JUSTIFIED - note that the verb "justified" in v.24 and the noun "righteousness" in v.21-22 come from the same Greek root. To justify means to declare righteous. Note adverb "freely."

c. REDEMPTION: v. 24 implies liberation from previous bondage or slavery by means of the payment of a price. The price was the costly blood of Christ. Term occurs 10X in NT.

d. PROPITIATION: v. 25 "sacrifice of atonement." cf. Heb. 9:5 referring to mercy seat cover on the ark of the covenant. In the OT common concept used in connection with altar sacrifices. Term kipper means "to cover." Yet NT term also carries the idea of appeasing the wrath of God.

Is "expiation" an acceptable alternative? It only means to cover and put away sin. This is only half the truth. We also need to remove God's holy wrath.

1. Propitiation is a work of God himself, not man since we have fallen short. Note in v. 25 "God presented."

2. Propitiation required a blood sacrifice. cf. v. 25 "through faith in his blood."

3. Propitiation demonstrated God's justice. v. 26 "he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just."

4. Propitiation is applied through the medium of faith in Christ crucified - v. 26 "those who have faith in Jesus."

3. God's provision is totally just (v.27-31) How?

a. It allows no grounds for human boasting - v. 27, cf. Eph. 2:8-9

b. It is open to all races. cf. v.29

RESPONSE TO THIS TRUTH

1. If you've never personally responded to this truth and turned to Christ, you are invited to do so now. Flee from the coming wrath. Call out to God asking for the forgiveness Christ provides the means to cover over your sin and remove God's just wrath.

2. If you've already come to Christ, ask for his help to share the good news of Christ's provision. Who could you pray for or share with? John 3:36 "Whoever puts his faith in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see that life for God's wrath remains on him."

SESSION #11 ROMANS 4:1-17 JUSTIFICATION ILLUSTRATED IN THE LIFE OF ABRAHAM

- * Prologue (1:1-15)
 - * Statement of theme (1:16-17)
 - * The urgency of human need for justification (1:18-3:20)
 - * God's provision of justification to meet the universal human need
 1. Justification described (3:21-31)
 2. Justification illustrated in the life of Abraham (4)
- Review main events of Abraham's life....

I. WHAT ARE ABRAHAM'S DISCOVERIES ABOUT JUSTIFICATION? (4:1-17)

The opening 17 verses of this chapter answer the question which the chapter begins with.

A. Abraham discovered that justification comes not because of works but through the instrumentality of faith - v.1-8

MP: If a person is justified by works he has cause for boasting

mp: Abraham was justified by works

Conclusion: Therefore Abraham has ground for boasting.

Do you agree with this syllogism? Are any parts false? Minor premise (mp).

1. Argument is supported with an appeal to Genesis 15:6

* Note term "impute/imputation." *logidomai* v.3, 4, 5, 5, 9,10,11, 22, 23, 24

* Charles Hodge, *Romans* (1886 p. 101) "It is laying anything to one's charge and treating him accordingly. It produces no change in the individual to whom the imputation is made, it simply alters his relation to the law."

* Same Greek term for imputation used for runaway slave Philemon - v18

* It's not an infusion of righteousness into our character, but an imputation of righteousness to our account. It comes through the instrumentality of faith not works.

2. The argument is illustrated by a wage- earner analogy.

3. The argument is supported by an appeal to David's words in Psalm 32

cf. WSC "*Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone.*"

B. Abraham discovered justification comes not because of circumcision but through faith - v.9-12

1. Argument built on chronology of Abraham's life: he was circumcised at least 14 years after he had been justified.

2. What did Abraham's circumcision mean? Not a secular rite of Jewish culture or mark of racial identity but a spiritual right connected with faith.

* It was a sign pointing back to the justifying faith he had already possessed.

* It was a seal which authenticated the reality of his relation to God.

C. Abraham discovered justification comes not because of law-keeping but through faith. v13-17

1. The law produced wrath - cf. Gal. 3:10

2. The law produced transgression - brought awareness of sin.

3. But faith in God's promises did result in justification.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. Can you explain the word "impute" that's used by Paul 11 times in this chapter? How would you explain it?
2. What do you think Paul teaches about circumcision in this chapter?

SESSION #12 ROMANS 4:18-25 JUSTIFICATION

Martin Luther: “This doctrine (justification by faith) is the head and cornerstone. It alone begets, nourishes, builds, preserves, and defends the church of God; and without it the church of God cannot exist for one hour.”

I. WHAT ARE ABRAHAM’S APPLICATIONS OF JUSTIFICATION? (4:18-25)

A. Justification applied in a difficult family situation (v.18-22)

* Why was it difficult for Abraham to believe God’s promise? Human factors made it appear a biological impossibility cf. Gen. 15:5

* Yet faith was still exercised by Abraham who didn’t give up hope. It’s the object of faith and not just its intensity that’s crucial. V. 21 “fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.”

B. Justification applied to us today (v.23-25) Imputation is still happening today. People are justified through faith as they were in Abraham’s day. In the OT it’s faith in a promise yet future, and in the NT faith in a promise now accomplished.

C. The issue of the Roman Catholic view of justification

* Background on “Evangelicals and Catholics Together”

* Response from “Resolutions for Roman Catholic and Evangelical Dialogue”.

* Summary of the Roman Catholic view of justification

1. Protestants often think the Roman Catholic Church teaches that justification is by works. In 1547 The Council of Trent and subsequent councils of the Roman church have denied salvation by works. Then why did the 16th century reformers so strongly argue for solo fide justification and risk their lives for a correct understanding of justification?

a. The Council of Trent followed Augustine in how it defined justification. He interpreted the Latin word “justificare” as “to make righteous.” Calvin and other reformers realized from study of Hebrew and Greek that word “justify” doesn’t mean to “make righteous.” Rather it’s a forensic term which means “to declare or pronounce to be righteous.”

b. This misunderstanding of the term led to a further misunderstanding. The Roman church used justification to refer to both the event which marks the beginning of one’s Christian life as well as the process by which the believer is regenerated. They understand by justification what Protestants understand by justification plus sanctification taken together.

2. Another difference is that Luther and Reformed theologians insisted that justifying righteousness was extrinsic to believers. We are accepted not on basis of a righteousness inside us, but a perfect righteousness of Christ outside us that is imputed. By contrast the Council of Trent insisted that the single formal cause of justification was an inherent righteousness within the believer as part of his or her person. With no assurance of being accepted they adopted the idea of indulgences.

3. The Roman church has not rescinded and clarified these teachings, even in new Catechism. cf. Westminster Confession 11.1

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. What are some practical ways we might use the truth of justification from Romans in our communities?

2. How can we reach the more than 2,700 million people yet to be evangelized - more than 2/3 of the human race? Lausanne Covenant:

“We are ashamed that so many have been neglected; it is a standing rebuke to us and to the whole church... We enter into a solemn covenant with God and with each other, to pray, to plan and to work together for the evangelization of the whole world. We call upon others to join us.”

SESSION 13 ROMANS 5:1-11 EXPECTED FRUITS OF JUSTIFICATION

What should be some of the results of a person becoming a Christian? (How does becoming a Christian change one's life?)

I. IF WE ARE JUSTIFIED WE CAN EXPECT DEFINITE FRUIT IN OUR LIFE (5:1-9)

- A. We should experience a state of peace with God (v.1)
- B. We should experience access to a secure state of grace (v.2a) cf. Eph. 3:2
- C. We should experience a state of joyful hope of glory (v.2b) "Glory of God" refers to heaven.
- D. Yet in spite of these fruits of being justified it doesn't mean we have a absence of problems. Suffering still comes to those who are justified, but we can discover purpose in it.
 - 1. What should our response be to tribulation? "We rejoice."
 - 2. What are the stages of God's working in our sufferings?
 - Stage One: Suffering produces endurance.
 - Stage Two: Endurance produces character. cf. Job 23:10
 - Stage Three: Character produces hope.
- E. Our assurance is grounded in the love of God - v.5
 - How do we know God loves us? Inner experience. Note change in verb tenses v.5
 - cf. Charles Hodge, *Commentary on Romans*, 1974. "If we are the genuine children of God, we have peace of conscience, a sense of God's favor, and freedom of access to his throne. We endure afflictions with patience. Instead of making us distrustful of our heavenly Father, they afford us new proofs of his love, and strengthen our hope of his mercy. And we shall have, also, more or less of the assurance of God's love, by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit."

II. IF WE ARE JUSTIFIED WE SHOULD HAVE APPRECIATION FOR THE DEATH OF CHRIST (5:6-11)

- A. Remember that Christ's death came at just the right time v.6
 - 1. The right time in human history - cf. Gal. 4:4 (Pax Romana, Roman roads, koine Greek, philosophical vacuum.)
 - 2. The right time when we were powerless:
 - * We were powerless to understand spiritual truth cf. 1 Cor. 2:14
 - * We were powerless to please and obey God - cf. 3:12; 3:20
- B. Remember that Christ's death came as a supreme demonstration of God's love. v.7-8 Martyn Lloyd-Jones remarked that there's no greater statement of the love of God in the entire Bible!
 - 1. It's rare of anyone to love enough to be willing to die for another person.
 - * Example of man in Potomac River
 - 2. Yet Christ gave his life for us when we were totally unlovable
 - * How tragic it would be to reject this infinite love of God. If God's love for us were small, it would be a small sin to ignore it. If his love for us were great, it would be a great sin to ignore it. But God's love is infinite. So to ignore God's love is a sin of infinite proportions. It's because God's love is so infinite that he must eternally punish those who deliberately reject him.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

- 1. Have you seen God in a new light working through Romans? What has impressed you from the text? What is your fresh vision of God?
- 2. How can you show him your love?

SESSION #14 ROMANS 5:12-14 FROM CONDEMNATION TO JUSTIFICATION**I. WHAT WAS HUMAN LIFE BEFORE THE COMING OF CHRIST? The Man Adam (5:12-14)**

A. Can sum up human history in three phases:

Phase one: sin entered the human race through one man.

Phase two: death entered the world through this one sinner.

Phase three: death spread to all man as all men then sinned.

B. Period between Adam (the fall) and Moses (giving of the law) people sinned, but sin was not counted against them because “sin is not counted where there is no law.” (v.13) Yet these people still died. Why? Not because they deliberately transgressed like Adam, but because they and the whole of humanity were included in Adam who was head of the human race.

C. Adam as the prototype of Christ (v.14 typos)

D. What does federal headship mean? Federal from Latin *foedus* or “covenant” Through a covenant relationship represents or stands in for someone else.

E. Excursus on the doctrine of original sin:

1. Through history this doctrine has been under attack. 5th century British monk named Pelagius wrote “Expositions on the Letters of St. Paul.” Emphasized free will and moral responsibility and denied original sin as absurd and unjust. Adam’s sins affected only himself. View was rejected by ecumenical Council at Ephesus in 431 AD.

2. Some avoid doctrine by denying historicity of Genesis account. Problems:

a. It fails to provide an adequate explanation for the universal presence of sin. If everyone is born with a clean slate why don’t we find numbers of people who don’t fall into sin?

b. It fails to account for the clear teaching of Scripture. (cf. Gen. 2:10-14; Lk. 3:38; 1 Tim. 2:13-14; Rom. 5:12-19)

F. What was the cause of the fall into sin?

1. The fall was caused by the cunning temptation of Satan (Gen. 3:13; 2 Cor. 11:3; Rev. 20:2)

2. The fall was caused by the willing disobedience of both Adam and Eve in choosing to eat the forbidden fruit - cf. Gen. 3:6

3. The fall was caused by the sovereign plan of God - cf. Westminster Confession ch.6

G. What were the results for Adam and Eve of their fall into sin?

1. Resulted in Adam and Eve falling from their original righteousness and fellowship with God cf. Gen. 3:7-8

2. Resulted in Adam and Eve being cursed by the pain of childbirth and by their work becoming difficult. cf. Gen. 3:16-19

3. Resulted in Adam and Eve facing the reality of human physical death cf. Gen. 3:19

4. Resulted in Adam and Eve being banished from the perfect garden and prohibited from eating of the tree of life (Gen. 3:22-24, Rev. 22:2)

H. What were the results of the fall for us?

1. The imputation of original sin impacts every part of our being - total depravity

2. The fall into sin results in a fallen nature which still has influence on us even after we have been regenerated into Christ and possess a new nature. cf. WCF 6.5

3. The imputation of Adam’s sin to us causes problems for some people. How can God hold us accountable for the act of a man even before we were born?

* THE REALIST VIEW * THE FEDERALIST VIEW - CF. WCF 6.3; WSC #16

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

1. How would you explain the cause of the human fall into sin? What role did God have?

2. How would you answer someone who asked you, Why is it fair that we suffer the consequences of one man’s sin who lived far before we were born?

SESSION # 15 ROMANS 5:15-21 THE SECOND ADAM**I. WHAT IS THE COMPARISON BETWEEN THE FIRST AND SECOND ADAMS? (5:15-21)**cf. NIV *Quickview Bible* (Zondervan, 2012, p.976)

ADAM (of Eden and the Fall)	CHRIST (Adam of heaven and the cross)
He brought sin into the world	He gives people victory over sin
Many die because of his sin	Many live because of his grace
His sin results in condemnation	His death results in justification
His disobedience brings sin to many	His obedience brings righteousness to many
His sin reigns in death	His grace reigns to bring eternal life

A. We see a similarity between Christ and Adam in the pattern of events - many people impacted by one

B. We also see important differences between Christ and Adam.

1. Difference in motives - v.15a Adam's is self-assertion; Christ's is self-sacrifice.
2. Difference in effect or results - v.15b-17 Sin = death; grace = justification
3. We see differing results - v.18-19 disobedience vs. obedience

Summary Chart by Tim Keller from *Romans 1-7 for You*, p. 136 (2013)

LEGALISM	GOSPEL	LIBERALISM
God is holy	God is holy and love	God is love
Earn your own righteousness	Receive God's perfect righteousness	You don't need perfect righteousness
Matter is bad and we are fallen— be suspicious of or reject physical pleasure (asceticism)	Matter is good yet we are fallen — physical enjoyment is good, but live wisely	Matter is good and we aren't fallen— satisfy your physical appetites
Sin only affects individuals — just do evangelism	Sin affects both individuals and social systems — do both evangelism and social action	Naive about depth of human sin— just do social action
People can't change / change is easy	People can change, but there are no quick fixes	People don't need to change
Go into guilt— work it off	Go through guilt — rest in Christ	Go away from guilt— convince yourself you're OK
Repent of sins	Repent of sins and self-righteousness	Repent of neither

II. Arguments for orthodox position that Adam was an actual historical person:

1. The biblical genealogies present Adam as a real historical person just like other individuals - Gen. 5:3ff; 1 Chron 1:1ff; Lk. 3:38
2. The explicit statement by Paul in Acts 17:26
3. The comparison of Adam to Christ has major implications for the doctrines of original sin and justification.
4. The teaching on Adam and the resurrection - 1 Cor. 15:20-22; 44-49
5. Paul's teaching on women supports Adam as an historical person - 1 Cor. 11:8, 1 Tim. 2:13-14
6. The testimony of Christ supports belief in Adam - Matt. 19:4-6

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. Can you summarize the similarities and differences between Adam and Christ?
2. Can you explain to someone questioning the historicity of Adam, some reasons why he is an actual historical person?

SESSION #16 ROMANS 6:1-5 THE PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF BEING UNITED WITH CHRIST

Moving from justification to sanctification. Definitions: cf. WSC #33, 35

JUSTIFICATION	SANCTIFICATION
A person is declared righteous: JUDICIAL ARENA	A person is made righteous: MORAL ARENA
Instant decision	Lifelong growth process
IMPUTED: believers' standing before God	IMPARTED: believers' walk before God
Indicative mood: You are justified	Imperative mood: act like it
Union with Christ in his past death/resurrection	Communion with Christ in the present

I. LISTEN TO SOME OBJECTIONS BEING RAISED (6:1-2)

A. Paul begins the chapter by raising two pointed questions:

- * What shall we say then?
- * Shall we go on sinning so grace can increase?

B. Paul answers with outraged indignation - By no means!

- * His critics misunderstood grace.
- * Tense of verb "died" in v. 2: aorist past one-time event

What question are we left with at the end of v2? What does it mean we have died to sin?

II. LISTEN TO PAUL'S COUNTER ARGUMENTS TO THE OBJECTIONS (6:3-14)

A. Christian baptism is a baptism into Christ (v.3)

B. Baptism into Christ is baptism into his death and resurrection (v.3-5) cf. John Stott, *Men Made New*, p. 36 "Our baptism was a sort of funeral. A funeral; yes, and a resurrection from the grave as well."

1. How might the Romans have viewed these references to baptism?

- * Judaic rabbinic baptism.
- * Essene community
- * John the Baptist
- * Early mystery religions

2. What are some possible views of what baptism refers to in these verses? (cf Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Exposition of Romans 6*)

- a. The sacramental view
- b. The baptismal vow view
- c. The view of coming under Christ's influence
- d. The view of baptism as a sign of our belief in Christ whose death was for our sins.
- e. The view of baptism as a symbolic representation or picture of our union with Christ in his death and resurrection.
- f. The view that it's not water baptism but Holy Spirit baptism.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. What does sanctification mean as you reflect back on the verses in this chapter?
2. What do you personally think Paul means in these verses when he talks about baptism?

SESSION #17 ROMANS 6:6-14**SOME PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF BEING UNITED WITH CHRIST**

CONTEXT: (last session we covered A and B)

A. Christian baptism is a baptism into Christ.

B. Baptism into Christ is baptism into his death and resurrection

C. Christ's death was a death to sin and his resurrection was a resurrection to life.v.6-10

1. What death to sin does NOT mean:

popular view is that this means we become unresponsive to sin. What are problems with this view? Expression "died to sin" repeated 3X. In v.2 & 11 refers to Christians. In v.10 refers to Christ. Therefore must mean the same for us and Christ. It can't mean Christ is unresponsive to sin now because it would imply he once was responsive to sin. Also rest of Scripture teaches that the old nature is still alive. V.12-13 don't make sense if we are unresponsive to sin.

2. Then what does being dead to sin mean? Note it says we died to sin (singular) not sins (plural). Ch.5-8 uses "sin" 22X - all singular. So focus is not on individual sins we commit but the underlying principle or power of sin. By our union with Christ we have died to sin. In Christ have borne its penalty so our old life has finished and a new life has begun. We share the benefits of Christ's death.

Our death to sin has three stages:

a. Crucifixion of the old man - refers to our pre-conversion life, our unregenerate self.

b. Destruction of the body of sin - *Katargeithe* means not to be extinct or annihilated but to be defeated and deprived of power.

c. No longer enslaved to sin. We are set free from sin's mastery or lordship.

D. Since we have died to sin and live to God, we must count it so. (v.11 "in the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God.")

* What does counting mean? Not pretending something that's not true. Rather it's realizing that our old pre-conversion self did die, paying the penalty for our sins. Once we realize this end to our old life, that the debt has been paid, we should want to have nothing more to do with it. We need to keep reminding ourselves of this.

* So the text is not saying sin is impossible for us who have been justified. Rather sin is utterly incongruous. Since we have died to sin, to go on living in sin, is logically irreconcilable. cf. Stott, *Men Made New* p. 51 "A born-again Christian should no more think of going back to the old life than an adult to his childhood, a married man to his bachelorhood, or a discharged prisoner to his prison cell."

E. As those who are alive from the dead we must not let sin reign in us but yield ourselves to God (v.12-14)

1. On the negative side: Don't let sin reign. Don't let sin be your king.

2. On the positive side: Yield or offer yourselves to God. Word for yield or present is a compound and literally means to stand before someone so you can carry out that person's orders.

3. What's the ground or basis for yielding ourselves to God? The fact that we are alive from the dead, having died to sin and being raised to God. The indicative of what God has done for us does not render unnecessary the imperative of what we are to do.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. Chapter six has shifted from justification to sanctification. What does sanctification mean?

2. If someone came to you for pastoral counsel, struggling with a persistent sin and doubting his salvation, what points would you share with him? How would Romans 6 help him?

SESSION #18 ROMANS 6:15-23 SLAVERY DEATH OR RIGHTEOUSNESS

Context: Background on slavery in Rome.

v.1-14 negative - no longer slaves of sin but have died to sin

v.15 ff positive - slaves of righteousness and God

I. PAUL RAISES REPEATED PROBING QUESTIONS (6:15-16)

* Similarity to what already asked, but then follows up with new question implying that everyone is a slave to something/someone...

* What does Paul want us to know?

1. In v.1-14 that through faith and baptism we are united to Christ. Thus we are dead to sin and alive to God.
2. In v.15-23 that through yielding self-surrender we are slaves of God who are committed to obedience.

II. PAUL CONTRASTS TWO KINDS OF SLAVERY (6:17-23)

A. What's the beginning of slavery? (v.17-18) It began at our birth or new birth.

* Verb tense: "You used to be slaves of sin" - imperfect tense suggest this is what we are by nature and have always been.

* Now a change has come — note verb tense for "became obedient" is aorist. In connection with our conversion a change took place.

B. How has our slavery developed? v.19 The result of our slavery to sin develops into the process of moral deterioration. But our slavery to God results in the process of moral sanctification. Slavery doesn't stand still— we either move toward getting worse or getting better. Uses imperative mood to challenge us. (Example of Gollum in Lord of the Rings)

C. How does slavery end? In death or sanctification.v.20-23. Note how Paul comes to a chapter climax in v.23 - a familiar verse. Sin pays the wage we deserve whereas God provides a gift we do not deserve - eternal life.

Life of the old self	Life of the new self
Broad road leads to destruction	Narrow road leads to life
By birth slaves to sin	By grace and faith slaves of God
Leads to moral deterioration and death	Leads to sanctification and eternal life
Status of slavery	Status of obedience.

RESPONSE

* Chapter six provides us with the pointed question: Are we to continue to sin? How should we respond? With Paul's word, "By no means!"

* What do we need to keep reminding ourselves of?

1. We will not continue in sin because we are united with Christ (v.1-14)
2. We will not continue in sin because we have surrendered as slaves to God (v.15-23)

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean to you to have died to sin? What are the options for explaining this?
2. How would you contrast the two main kinds of slavery: the life of the old self and the life of the new self?

SESSION #19 ROMANS 7:1-12 BOUND TO THE LAW OR CHRIST

Views of the law	Description
Legalist [fears the law]	Relationship with God depends on obeying the law - in bondage to the law
Antimoniam (libertine) [hates the law]	Rejection of the law as the cause of most human problems
Law-abiding Christian [loves the law]	Balanced view recognizing weakness of the law but seeks by power of Spirit to obey it as an expression of God's will

What does Paul mean by "law"? Mainly referring to the OT Torah. Negative things about law:

- a. It brings knowledge of sin (3:20)
- b. It is unable to justify (3:28)
- c. It stirs up wrath (4:15)
- d. It increases the trespass (5:20)
- e. It is contrary to grace (6:14-15)

I. THE LAW: YOU CAN EITHER BE MARRIED TO THE LAW OR TO CHRIST (7:1-6)

A. The marriage illustration v.1-3

B. Application to our marriage to Christ v.4-6 We too have to experience death to be free from the law and joined to Christ. Just as death terminates a marriage so death has terminated our bondage to the law. What death? Through our union with Christ there's a sense in which we have died. * forbidden fruit syndrome

II. THE LAW: NOT NECESSARILY A BAD THING (7:7-12)

A. Question: Is the law a bad thing causing evil? v.7a

B. Answer: No, because sin within me made the law ineffective. v.7b-12

1. The law can expose sin and reveal what it is v.7b.
2. Sin is aroused by exposure to the law - v.8 The law can provoke us to sin.
 - * Example of Augustine, Confessions, Book II, chapter 4 stealing pears as young boy.
 - * Who is the "I" who is repeatedly referred to in these verses? Three main interpretations
 1. I is Paul describing his own experience.
 2. I is Adam as our he-man representative.
 3. I is Israel his people.
3. The law convicts of sin v9
4. The law brings aggravation of sin and overwhelming conviction of guilt v.10-11
 - * Conclusion: the law is good but I am sinful (v.12)

SUMMARY OF ROMANS TEACHING ABOUT THE LAW

(Cf. *NIV Quickview Bible*, Zondervan, 2012, p. 979)

WHAT THE LAW CAN DO	WHAT THE LAW CANNOT DO
Judge those who follow it (2:12-13)	Declare people righteous who follow it (3:20)
Reveal sin to people (3:20; 4:15; 7:8)	Set people free from sin (8:3)
Increase trespass (5:20)	Provide grace (6:14)
Culminate in Christ (10:4)	Justify people (3:28)

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. What does it mean to be married to Christ?
2. What might be some positive benefits of the law?

SESSION #20 ROMANS 7:13-25 OUR EXPERIENCE WITH SIN

- * Context: (We've come to one of the most controversial portions of Paul's writings)
 - the hardness of the law
 - the weakness of the law
 - the righteousness of the law
- * Note some shifts beginning in this section:
 1. The verb tenses change: from past (aorist) in v7-13, now present tense in 14ff.
 2. The situation changes - Previous section on how sin sprang to life and killed him. Now describes continuing conflict with sin in which he refuses to admit defeat.
- * Many commentators disagree about who is being talked about in this description of the inner conflict with sin:
 - a. Some say this refers to what non-Christians experience - Paul's pre-conversion life
 - b. Others say this refers to the Christian experience of all believers.
- * Arguments for saying this is describing non-Christians:
 - a. Paul claims to be unspiritual - v.14, 18, 24
 - b. Paul claims to be a prisoner of the law of sin (v.23) contradicts 8:1.
 - c. Contrast between ch7 and 8 makes it difficult to see this describing a believer
 - d. Problem of the value of experiencing conversion if this is the resulting misery
- * Arguments for saying this is describing Christians:
 - a. Paul uses present tense in these verses
 - b. Paul presents a humble view of himself -v.18, 24 Who but Christian talks this way?
 - c. Paul holds a high view of God law -v.14, 16, 22 Sounds like a believer.
 - d. Paul concludes the passage after expressing thanks for deliverance -v.25
 - e. This paragraph located in section where Paul is dealing with sanctification.

* What's the mediating view?

I. PROBING QUESTION: IS THE LAW A KILLER? (7:13a)**II. PROMPT ANSWER: NO, THE KILLER IS SIN (7:13b)****III. PERSONAL STRUGGLE WITH SIN DESCRIBED (7:14-25) Note pattern:**

- #1 Each section begins with a truthful acknowledgement of our conduction ("know"): I'm carnal and no good dwells in my flesh
- #2 Each section then gives a clear description of our internal conflict
- #3 Each section then concludes what is the cause of our continual moral inability apart from the Holy Spirit: I want but I can't!

- A. Our weakness is that we have a sinful nature prone to evil v. 14, 18
- B. Our inner conflict is that in which sin leads us to do what we hate v. 15, 16-19
- C. Our identity is that when sinning, it is sin in us and not our true self that does it. v.17, 20
- D. Our dilemma is that the more we seek to do and be good, the more evil presses on us v.21
- E. Our Christian heart experiences two forces: Love of God's law plus sin that hates the law of God v.22-23
- F. Our heart cries v.24-25 Discouragement: a cry of despair; Hope: a cry of triumph

CONCLUDING APPLICATIONS

1. This should motivate us to be understanding with people in our church who are struggling with sin. We need to point them to the indwelling Spirit of Christ.
2. We need to avoid misuse of this text as an excuse for getting bogged down in sin and stopping to make progress in the Christian life.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. Can you summarize the major views on the struggle in Romans7? Which is your view?
2. What's the real culprit in our struggle: the law, or sin? Why?

SESSION #21 IDOLATRY IN ROMANS

I. WHAT DO WE MEAN BY IDOLATRY AND WHERE DOES IT APPEAR?

- A. Idolatry had been a problem from ancient times.
- B. So it's not surprising that we encounter idolatry early in the Old Testament (Josh 24:2)
- C. No wonder God prohibits idolatry in the second commandment (Ex. 20:5; Josh 1:2, 9:1 Ezek 16:23)
- D. When we move into the New Testament we find that idolatry is not mentioned as frequently.
Eidololatria = what is seen plus *latría* (worship)

II. WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING ON IDOLATRY

Acts 17:23; Acts 19:23-27; Gal. 5:20; Eph. 5:5; Col. 3:5; 1 Thess. 1:9; Phil. 3:19; 1 Cor. 12:2; 1 Cor. 8; 1 Cor. 10:14; 1 Jn. 5:21 "keep yourselves from idols."

III. WHAT DOES PAUL TEACH ABOUT IDOLATRY IN THE BOOK OF ROMANS?

- A. He rejects the theory that idolatry is a "primitive" religion which in time naturally develops into "higher" forms of religion. Instead he condemns and views idolatry coming from those who reject knowledge of God and suppress the truth. He links it with sin and immorality.
- B. Romans surrounded by pantheon of gods. Temple Pantheon built during Augustus's reign to honor "all gods."
- C. Paul's argument (cf. Tim Keller, *Romans 1-7 for You*, pp.189-190)
 1. Root human problem is unwillingness to glory God - 1:21
 2. Therefore humans chose created things to be our gods - 1:25
 3. Thus our lives are distorted by a lie. At base of personality is a false belief system centered in an idol — the belief that something besides God can give us that life and joy only God can give: 1:25 "exchanged the truth about God for a lie."
 4. Each life is in bondage. We serve whatever we have decided to live for - 1:25; 6:16
 5. Even Christians — after conversion our old self and false belief systems can distort our lives unless the Holy Spirit continually renews our minds and hearts - 7:14-25
 6. So the bottom line: What is the key to our freedom from the idolatry of sin's control? It's applying the gospel of grace - 6:14 "under grace."

IV. WE NEED TO IDENTIFY OUR IDOLS. WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES? cf. list by Keller pp. 191-193

V. HOW DO WE DISMANTLE OUR IDOLS ONCE WE HAVE IDENTIFIED THEM?

1. The moralizing approach - focuses on behavior. (not deep enough)
2. The psychologizing approach - focuses on feelings (not deep enough)
3. The Gospel application approach. Looking to something besides Christ to be your happiness. What's the real sin behind the surface sins and bad feelings? Repentance for rejecting Christ's free grace and acceptance is a sorrowful yet joyful act. cf. 6:14

VI. PRACTICAL STEPS TO APPLY THE GOSPEL APPLICATION APPROACH TO ROOTING OUR IDOLATRY (CF Tim Keller, pp. 195-196)

1. Unmask the idols
2. Repent of this sin beneath all other sins: Two stages - hating the sin itself; rejoicing in the grace and work of Christ.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. How would you summarize what Paul teaches about idolatry?
2. Can you identify any examples of idolatry that have impacted your life? If so, what are you willing to do about it?

SESSION #22 ROMANS 8:1-11 LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

I. UNDERSTAND THE LAW OF THE SPIRIT OF LIFE (8:1-11) Uses word “Spirit” 21X in this chapter, all but 2X refer to the Holy Spirit.

A. God’s Spirit has blessed us in significant ways that change us (v.1-4)

1. We are blessed with no more condemnation - theme of assurance. v.1
2. We are blessed with freedom from the law of sin and death v.2-4 (cf. Jerm 31:31-34; Ezek 36:24-32)

B. God’s Spirit helps us please him (v.5-8)

Understanding the contrast between Spirit and flesh

a. anthropological dualism? Paul calling us to live according to our immaterial spirit rather than according to our physical material body?

b. Would be to misread the text. Why?

- * Because while some dualism can be seen in the NT, the early Christians adopted the Jewish view that human are essentially a single unit. Body and soul can’t be separated forever.
- * Because the Gk. word *sarx* isn’t a part of our human nature, but simply a perspective from which our whole human being can be viewed.
- * Because “spirit” in this text refers to the HS, not the human spirit.

c. Thus Paul is contrasting what? God’s Holy Spirit that he sends into our lives with our human propensity to sin and do evil. Setting our minds on the flesh leads to death and hostility vs. setting our minds on the Spirit leads to life.

C. God’s Spirit raises us to a new realm (v.9-11) To be in the flesh is to belong to the sphere or realm of sinful humanity. Because of Adam’s sin we are all trapped in this realm headed to spiritual death. But by grace God steps in and removes us from that realm and places us in another realm — life in the Spirit.

1. A new age has dawned as Christ has come. But the old age has not disappeared until the return of Christ in glory.
2. We are given a wonderful promise of resurrection - v.11
3. All three persons of Trinity operative here: God the Father raised Christ the Son from the dead. The Holy Spirit who is with them then applies the work of Christ in our lives.

Summary of what has been taught as Paul helps us understand the law of the Spirit of life:

- * God’s Spirit has blessed us in significant ways that change us.
- * God’s Spirit also helps us to please him.
- * God’s Spirit raises us to a new realm.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. How would you use these verses in counseling people? Give some examples.
2. How would you use these verses in preaching or teaching about the Holy Spirit? Jot down some ideas.

SESSION#23 ROMANS 8:12-17 THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND ADOPTION

I. UNDERSTAND WHAT THE NT TEACHES IS THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN BELIEVERS

- A. The Holy Spirit regenerates us - Jn. 3:5, 8
- B. The Holy Spirit seals us - Eph. 1:13; 4:30
- C. The Holy Spirit baptizes us - 1 Cor. 12:13
- D. The Holy Spirit indwells us - 1 Cor. 6:19; 2 Tim. 1:14; Rom. 8:9
- E. The Holy Spirit assures us - Rom. 8:16; 1 Jn. 4:13
- F. The Holy Spirit sanctifies us

- 1. Positional sanctification is instantaneous - Heb. 10:10
- 2. Experiential sanctification is progressive - Heb. 10:14

II. UNDERSTAND THE NEW STATUS GOD'S SPIRIT HAS GIVEN US (8:12-17)

A. We are expected to live by the Spirit v.12-13

1. Dilemma

*Arminians have no problem since they stress that our salvation is not secure but depends on our will to remain in God's grace.

*Calvinists - works as effective cause vs. instrumental cause

Faith is the instrumental means by which we appropriate God's salvation and works naturally follow as the fruit of our faith.

- 2. John Stott uses two theological terms to describe our Christian life here:
Mortification (putting to death by the power of the Spirit the deeds of the body)
Aspiration (setting our mind on the things of the Spirit)

B. We are sons of God led by him (v.14)

C. We have the status of being adopted by him (v.15-17)

- 1. We are now considered God's adopted children v.16 Word "spirit" in this verse refers to the human spirit.

2. But then we are also considered heirs (v.17). When we are adopted into God's family we do not yet experience all the blessings of that relationship. Only on Christ's return will that final transformation be completed. We have experienced justification, are continuing to experience sanctification, and one day will experience glorification. We were saved, are being saved, and will be saved!

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

- 1. What does it mean to you to be adopted?
- 2. How would you use these verses in preaching or teaching about the Holy Spirit?

SESSION #24 ROMANS 8:18-25 GLORY IN THE MIDST OF SUFFERING

Theme: We can confidently expect glory in the new age even as we undergo groaning in this present age of overlap. The theme is glory in the midst of suffering.

I. WE CAN BE CONFIDENT THAT GOD'S ULTIMATE GOAL FOR OUR FUTURE IS GLORY (8:18-25)

A. Note structure of text: v.17-18 parallel v. 28-30, both dealing with glory/suffering. They form an inclusion around v. 19-27

* The expression "*worth comparing*" is the Greek word *axis* which was used of scales to bring to equilibrium, and thus equivalent or comparable. Picture a scale that's not balanced! This makes it easier to keep bearing up under suffering!

B. Two major realms of contrast, both of which will experienced this promised glory:

Creation and the church (the old creation and the new creation.)

1. Creation which is now groaning will share in Christ's glory (v.19-22)

a. What does creation mean? Some say it refers to persons (either angels, spirits or humans). Why? Because Paul attributes human-like activities to it: v.19 "*waits*", v. 20 *subjected to futility*, v.22 *groaning*. Can inanimate nature do this? Yes. The explanation is that Paul is using literary personification - cf. Psa. 65:12-13

b. The groaning is both negative and positive:

* Negative: because creation suffers with the curse of Adam's sin. Temporary groans in form of earthquakes, tsunamis, typhoons, floods, etc..

* Positive: nature groans in longing for the new creation and is assured because of the first coming of Christ, but waits for his return.

c. Analogy of childbirth

d. Theology of the environment: What do we learn from this text about the Christian's attitude toward nature?

* Paul affirms that nature is significant in that God has promised one day to free it and give it glory. So don't abuse it.

* Paul shows that nature is still below humans who are uniquely created in his image. Nature will share with us freedom in glory. Yet it doesn't take precedence over humans.

f. Paul seems to be in-between two current extremes:

* One extreme is people who make nature equal in importance to human beings.

* Another extreme is those who dismiss or ignore concern for nature and believe that God's charge to "subdue" the earth (Gen. 1:28) gives license to use nature any way we want.

2. The church which is now groaning will also share in Christ's glory (v.23-25)

a. What is the inward groans? Likely not persecution but the fact that we are not totally saved yet. Our souls have been totally redeemed but we still are in human bodies which haven't experienced full redemption - cf. 2 Cor. 5:2 We also groan because of our fallen human nature.

b. Paul's description of the glory we can expect to replace the groaning:

* We can expect the redemption of our bodies.

* We can expect our adoption as sons.

c. How do we know we will actually receive the glory? Because we have been given first fruits of Spirit (v.23)

d. So what do we do in the present while waiting for the glory to come? (v.24-25)

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. What does Paul teach about suffering that is encouraging?

2. How would you summarize what Paul teaches about the environment?

SESSION #25 ROMANS 8:26-29 GOD’S PROVISIONS FOR US

WE CAN BE CONFIDENT THAT GOD WILL PROVIDE THE MEANS FOR US TO OBTAIN GLORY (8:26-29)

A. God provides us prayer (v.26-27) How?

1. We are given the ministry of the Holy Spirit - What does he do? “Helps us in our weakness.”
2. What is the burden we’re bearing? We don’t know what to pray for v.26
3. So how does the Spirit help us when we’re left wordless? He intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.
4. What are the Spirit’s groanings?

B. God provides us providential workings (v.28)

- * What are the “all things”? Includes the sufferings of this age mentioned in previous verses.
- * What is the “good” promised to work out in our lives? Primarily the good that God now and in the future enables us to share with Christ. Spiritual blessings of the age to come, some of which we experience now in his providential workings in our life.

* Who can claim to experience these truths? Those who love God and are called by God.

C. God provides us with predestination (v.29)

* What does it mean he predestined those whom he foreknew? Compare Arminian and Calvinist views.

CALVINISM (TULIP)	ARMINIAN (DOGOD)
Total Depravity - Sin has effected human beings in their moral and mental faculties. They are not necessarily as bad as they can be, but their free will is enslaved to sin and thus no one is free to choose to believe in God.	Deprived Ability: Human beings are impacted by sin but God’s prevenient grace enables them to believe in him if they so choose. Humans are in a depraved state, but not a powerless state in sin.
Unconditional Election: God elects people to salvation not because of any quality that makes them worthy, nor because God knows in advance who will choose him. God elects out of his own free decision to give salvation to some who do not deserve it.	Open Election: Election is determined by faith for it is faith that incorporates one into the church, the elect people of God. Election is, then, indeterminate or open, and realized by the act of faith.
Limited Atonement: Jesus’ death was only for the elect. Jesus did not die for the whole world, only for those predestined to salvation.	General Atonement: Jesus died for the sins of the whole world and not just for the elect.
Irresistible Grace: Those whom God elects will come to salvation in the end because God’s grace is efficient and effective. It is not that those who are elect cannot resist God’s grace, but in the end the elect will always succumb to grace.	Opposable Grace: People can and do resist God’s grace when they fail to appropriate prevenient grace and disbelieve the message of the gospel.
Perseverance of the Saints: Those whom God has elected will assuredly continue in their faith and live with God forever. It is not the case that the elect cannot backslide or fall into sin, but ultimately they will persevere in their faith due to divine enabling.	Danger of Apostasy: It is possible for believers to fall from their state of grace into apostasy, a position from which there is no possibility of restoration.

cf. Michael Bird, Evangelical Theology, Zondervan, 2013, p. 528

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. How would you describe the role of the Holy Spirit in our prayer life? Can you relate any examples of experiencing this yourself?
2. Which system do you think is closer to what scripture teaches: Calvinism or Arminianism? Why?

SESSION #26 ROMANS 8:30 THE ORDO SALUTIS**WE ARE GIVEN A CHAIN OF FIVE UNDENIABLE AFFIRMATIONS: FOREKNOWLEDGE, PREDESTINATION, CALLING, JUSTIFICATION, AND GLORIFICATION**

A. Isn't there a missing link in the chain? Yes, sanctification. Why? Probably because sanctification is already in the context of this section of Romans and is assumed.

B. Theologians call this the ordo salutis (Latin for Order of Salvation.) It's a way of describing the logical order of applying God's work in his people from eternity past to eternity future. It's not necessarily a chronological order but a logical order.

C. What's the practical value in looking at the ordo salutis? cf. Michael Bird, *Evangelical Theology* (Zondervan 2013) p. 514 "Christians can take comfort from this, for in the mire of a world gone horribly wrong, God's purposes work for their good, and nothing at all can thwart the certainty of God's salvation. In other words, what God has started in them he will most definitely finish."

D. Links in the chain:

1. Election - definition

Acts 13:48, Rom. 9:11-13, Eph. 1:4-6, 1 Thess 1:4, Rev. 13:8

What impact should knowing of election have on us?

- a. It's a source of comfort (Rom. 8:28)
- b. It's a reason to praise our Savior (Eph. 1:6, 12)
- c. It's an encouragement to engage in evangelism (2 Tim. 2:10)

2. Calling

- a. External call
- b. Internal call - cf. Acts 16:14

3. Regeneration

4. Conversion - Acts 20:21

- a. Repentance - involves whole person turning
 - b. Faith - involves whole person trusting in Christ (intellect, emotions, will)
- Conversion follows regeneration. Because we have been regenerated by God we are then able outwardly to turn in conversion.

5. Justification

6. Adoption

7. Sanctification cf. WCF 13

8. Perseverance

- a. Our security is rooted in God's unchangeable decrees of election flowing from his love (Jerm. 31:3)
- b. Our security is rooted in the effectiveness of the merit and intercession of Christ for us (Jn. 6:39)

9. Glorification

- a. In one sense transformation into glory has already begun (2 Cor. 3:18; 1 Pet. 4:14)
- b. Yet there's a future glory yet coming at Christ's return (Phil. 3:21, Rom. 8:17, Col. 3:4)

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. Summarize what you believe concerning the doctrine of election. Why is this a central doctrine for Christianity?
2. What is the relation between regeneration and conversion? What's the logical order in which they occur in one's life?

SESSION #27 ROMANS 8:31-39 UNANSWERABLE QUESTIONS SHOWING GOD'S LOVE**CONTEXT:**

v.18-25 We can be confident that God's ultimate goal for our future is glory.

v.26-30 We can be confident that God will provide the means for us to obtain glory: prayer, providential working, predestination.

WE CAN BE CONFIDENT OF GLORY BECAUSE OF FIVE UNANSWERABLE QUESTIONS SHOWING GOD'S LOVE (8:31-39)

A. Question One: If God is for us who can be against us? (v.31)

Chrysostom in his homilies on Romans: "*Yet those that be against us, so far are they from thwarting us at all, that even without their will they become to us the causes of crowns, and procurers of countless blessings so that God's wisdom turns their plots unto our salvation and glory. See how really no one is against us!*"

B. Question Two: He who did not spare his own Son, how will he not also graciously give us all things? (v.32) Using major to minor argument.

C. Question Three: Who shall luring any charge against God's elect? (v.33)

No charge that Satan brings can prevail. His arrows glance off us like they are hitting a steel shield!

cf. Marvin Pate Teach the Text Romans p. 131-132 "*The accused (the sinner) is on the witness stand and is being grilled with questions by the prosecuting attorney, Satan (the accuser), who throws the book at the accused. The prosecutor brings up every sin that the accused has ever committed —in thought, word and deed. The accused deserves justice not mercy, hell not heaven. When the prosecution has finished its testimony, the defendant apparently has no chance But then the defense lawyer, Jesus Christ, provides his evidence as to why the defendant should be acquitted. He shows his nail-pierced hands and feet, his thorn-cut brow, and his spear-punctuated side.... God, the judge, then pronounces, 'Case dismissed!'*"

D. Question Four: Who is to condemn? (v.34)

cf. John Stott, *Men Made New*, p. 105 "We can call out even to the demons in hell, Which of you is going to condemn me? And there will be no answer."

E. Question Five: Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

* Paul summons all the possible adversaries.... (cf. 2 Cor. 11:24-27; 12:10).

* Instead of these adversaries separating us from Christ's love we are promised thatr "We are more than conquerors" (v.37) Five English words for our Greek word: *hypernikomen*

* Paul reaches the top of the mountain in a soaring climax in v.38-39.

* Example of Corrie TenBoom

* Example of George Matheson

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. Do you know anyone who needs to hear the encouraging message of these verses? How can you share these truths? I'd encourage you to bow in prayer and discuss this with the Lord and thank him for the promise of glory in the midst of suffering.

2. Out of all the assurances we have seen in Romans chapter 5 through 8, what were some of the high points for you? Could you come up with a list of what you think are the truths you personally are most thankful for from Romans 5-8?

SESSION #28 ROMANS 9 APPLICATION TO PREDESTINATION

Chapters 9-11 form bridge between the theological and practical parts of the letter. What's the main theme of chapter 9? The integrity of God.

UNDERSTAND THE APPLICATION OF ROMANS 9 TO THE DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION

A. How do people try to avoid dealing with the doctrine of predestination in ch. 9?

1. Some attempt to avoid the issue by staying away from Rom. 9 and focusing on other texts.
2. Some say Romans 9 isn't dealing with God's sovereign election of individuals, but his election of nations to a destiny. (This corporate view was popularized by Karl Barth)
 - * Yet the text does name individuals - Jacob and Esau
 - * The objections and arguments make sense if it's individuals chosen, but not nations.
 - * This view doesn't match the preceding context in 8:29-30 which refers to predestination in an individual spiritual context, not a national physical context.
 - * This objection also still faces the force of other texts that deal with individuals, not nations (Jn. 15:16; Eph. 1:4-5)
3. The Arminians get around the issue by teaching that predestination (election) is based on God's foreknowledge, choosing those who say 'yes' to Christ and rejecting those he knows in advance will reject him.
 - * This view misunderstands the force of the word "foreknowledge" which appears to refer more to choosing human individuals not just to know in advance facts about a person.
 - * This view seems to base election on the conditional responses of humans rather than the sovereign unconditional choice of God in his mercy and grace. cf. v.11, 16

B. Overview of the doctrine of predestination.

1. Definition - WCF 3.5
2. Grounds for election: Negative: Not human merit or God's foreknowledge of choice
Positive: because of God's loving good pleasure and will (cf. Rom. 9:11; Eph. 1:4-5)

C. Does predestination remove all human responsibility?

1. The Bible teaches both God's sovereign initiative as well as our human responsibility to respond. cf. Acts 2:23
2. The Bible appears to make no attempt to reconcile both sides. Some call it an "antinomy."

D. Does Scripture teach "double predestination"? Two views:

1. The symmetrical view of hyper-Calvinism
2. The positive-negative distinction view. God positively intervenes in the lives of the elect to rescue him and change his heart of stone to a heart alive to God. But in the case of the reprobate God works negatively in passing them over, leaving them to their own devices., but not intruding in their lives to create fresh evil. Cf. WCF 3.7

D. How election relates to evangelism

1. God's sovereign act of election must not overshadow one's belief in the biblical teaching on man's responsibility and freedom.
2. Election includes not only the ends but the means as well.
3. Election is a secret decree of God's will so the identity of the elect are unknown to us.
4. Election stimulates evangelism by guaranteeing it will result in some genuine conversions.
5. Election should not hinder out of fear that some who come will be rejected - Jn. 6:37
6. Election can free us from over-introspection about human failure and methods

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

1. How would you explain the dilemma of "double predestination?"
2. What are some reasons that belief in the doctrine of election can actually stimulate rather than hinder participation in evangelism?

SESSION #29 ROMANS 9:1-29 MY PEOPLE

Chapters 9-11 form bridge between the theological and practical parts of the letter.

What's the main theme of chapter 9? The integrity of God. (Why aren't more Jews believing?)

I. UNDERSTAND THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE PROMISES OF GOD AND WHAT ISRAEL IS NOW FACING (9:1-5)

A. What's the **current** plight of Israel as Paul views it? v.1-3 Paul's sorrow and anguish.

B. What are the **past** promises that were made to Israel? v.4-5

GOD'S PRIVILEGES GIVEN TO ISRAELITES	Description:
Adoption	Israel is God's adopted son
Glory	Supernatural presence of God
Covenants	Covenants with Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David
Giving of the law	Through Moses received tables of law
Temple worship	Ceremonies of the temple
Promises	Prophets gave multiple promises from God
Patriarchs	Abraham, Isaac, Jacob foundational
Christ	Messiah ancestry through seed of Abraham

II UNDERSTAND THE NATURE OF THE PROMISE THAT GOD MADE TO ISRAEL (9:6-29)

A. The first theological objection and answer (v.6-13)

* The objection is: God's covenantal promises to Israel have failed.

* The basic answer is: God's promises were given to national not spiritual Israel

Text	National Israel not chosen	Spiritual Israel chosen
9:7-9	Physical descendants of Abraham - natural children of flesh; <u>Ishmael</u>	True children of Abraham - children of the promise; <u>Isaac</u>
9:10-13	Esau	Jacob

B. Second theological objection and answer v.14-29

* The theological objection: God's ways are unfair as he arbitrarily chooses.

Text in Romans	National Israel not chosen	Spiritual Israel chosen
9:14-18	Pharaoh/Egyptians	Moses/Israel
9:19-23	Vessels of wrath	Vessels of mercy
9:24-26	Jews	Gentiles (and believing Jews)
9:27-29	National Israel	Remnant

* God in the past sovereignly chose to show mercy on Israel but wrath on Gentiles v.15-18 What example does he use?

* God in the present sovereignly shows mercy (covenant blessings) on Gentiles, but wrath (covenant curses on Israel) v.19-29 What do these verse show? What example does he use?

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. What were the special privileges that came to physical Israel?
2. How would you explain the text about hating Esau and loving Jacob?

SESSION #30 ROMANS 9:30-10:31 REVERSING THE BLESSINGS AND CURSES

In 9:1-29 stresses divine sovereignty. Now balances in 9:30-10:21 by focus human response.

I. EXPLANATION FOR ISRAEL'S UNBELIEF (9:30-10:4)

A. Here's the dilemma: Gentiles without trying have received faith righteousness (v.30)

Jews with the law failed to reach righteousness (v.31)

B. Here's the explanation: Can't blame God. Responsibility back in hands of Jews. Pursued but failed to reach goal of righteousness because:

* they were trying to achieve their goal through works rather than faith.

* they stumbled over the stumbling block Christ.

Faith righteousness	Law righteousness
v.30 righteousness that is by faith	v.31 law leading to righteousness (Mosaic law)
10:3 God's righteousness	10:3 own righteousness
10:6 righteousness by faith	10:5 righteousness by the law

C. What does it mean that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes."? (v.4) Two options:

1. View One: Christ puts an end to the law (1 Cor 15:34) Telos = end or termination

2. View Two: Christ is the goal in view in the law (Gal. 3:24) Telos = goal

II. EXPLANATION OF THE CONTRAST BETWEEN LAW RIGHTEOUSNESS AND FAITH RIGHTEOUSNESS (10:5-21)

A. What is the righteousness based on the law? v.5

1. Positive view: Doing the Torah is essential for life & compatible with faith.

2. Negative view: Doing the Torah would require obeying it perfectly or suffer curses for disobedience. But no one is capable of this. (Lev. 18:5)

B. What is the righteousness that is by faith? v.6-8 Two passages from Deuteronomy.

C. What are the steps to salvation? v.9-10

1. Confession with the mouth that Jesus is Lord.

2. Belief in the heart that God has raised Christ from the dead.

D. What is the scope of salvation? v.11-13 All who believe, both Jews and Gentiles

E. What are the steps of salvation? v.14-15 chain of evangelism as motive for missions

F. What has been happening in the early church? v.16-21 Israel hasn't believed. Gentiles have believed.

G. Chapter ends on a note of both judgment and grace as he holds out open hands to them -v. 21

III. APPLICATION ISSUE: Do the lost have to actually hear the gospel and respond to it in order to be saved and part of the kingdom?

A. The exclusivist or particularist position - answers yes (Romans 10:14-21 supports this view)

B. The inclusivist position - answers no

C. The universalist position - clearly no

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. What do you think it means that Christ is the end of the law?

2. How would you summarize the exclusivist, inclusivist, and universalist positions? Which do you think fits better with the teaching of Scripture?

SESSION #31 ROMANS 11:1-36 THE PLACE OF ISRAEL IN THE FUTURE

I. GOD IS PRESERVING A FAITHFUL REMNANT AMONG HIS PEOPLE (11:1-10)

- A. Two examples of God’s persistence with his people Israel: Paul & remnant in Elijah’s day
- B. What is the remnant? true believers who are preserved by the Lord even in the middle of an apostate and unfaithful nation.
- C. In Paul’s day still remnant chosen by grace. Not all Jews had rejected Christ. V.5-6
- D. But national Israel was not part of the believing remnant. Why? v.7-10
 - 1. Because their heart was hardened. Verb *poroo*
 - 2. Because their eyes and ears were blocked - Deut. 29:5

II. GOD HAS PLANNED A FUTURE TURNING TO HIM IN ISRAEL (11:11-32)

- A. Israel’s rejection of Christ has resulted in the conversion of Gentiles - v.11a, 12a, 15a
- B. Israel’s rejection of Christ will eventually result in the conversion of Israel v.11b, 12b-16
- C. Warning to Gentiles that they not look down on Jews. v.17-24 Why?
 - 1. Because Gentile believers are dependent on the spiritual heritage of the OT people of God v.17-18; Parts of olive tree? root = patriarchs; natural branches = Jewish people; wild olive shoots = Gentile believers.
 - 2. Because Israel was broken off from the olive tree because of unbelief, not because Gentiles are superior v.19-21
 - 3. Because of the kindness and sternness of God V.22-24
- D. Paul goes on in v.25-27 to tell us this: Be aware of the mystery of God’s plan for Israel and the Gentiles. Use of mystery.
- E. What does he mean that “all Israel will be saved”?

DISPENSATIONALISM	COVENANTALISM
Israel does NOT equal the church	Israel does mean the church
Literal fulfillment of OT prophecy (generally pre-mil) Tribulation will bring ethnic Israel to faith.	Symbolic fulfillment of OT prophecy (often a-mil but can be post-mil and historic pre-mil)
7 dispensations: Innocence, conscience, civil government, mosaic, church, tribulation, millennium	Covenant of works and grace

* What steps will occur in conversion of Jews? Hardening; Fullness; Restoration

View	Description
Bicovenantalism	Two covenants & ways of salvation: Christ covenant for Gentiles and Torah covenant for Jews. V.26 refers to all Israelites over the course of history.
Traditional Reformed view	National Israel has been replaced by the church which is all of God’s elect
Elect-Jews view	Refers to elect Jews from all periods of church history
Future turning at Christ’s return	Refers to ethnic Jews in connection with Christ’s return

* How many will be saved? Pleroma (fullness) in v.12- and 25 means what?

F. God will dispense his mercy v.28-32 How does Paul end this section?

III RESPONSE TO GOD’S GLORIOUS PLAN TO UNITE JEWS AND GENTILES THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST (V.33-36) Theology should lead to doxology !

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

- 1. What does it mean that “all Israel will be saved” ?
- 2. How would you explain the idea of “remnant”? Can you give any examples?

SESSION #32 AN OVERVIEW OF THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION

I. DEFINITION OF JUSTIFICATION

A. Infusion view - Roman Catholic; cf. WCF 11:1 “*Those whom God effectually calleth, he also freely justifieth: not by infusing righteousness into them.*” Rom. 4:1-6

B. Forensic view of imputation - Lk. 7:29; 10:29; Rom. 8:33-34; 5:16; Jn 3:18. WSC #33

“*What is justification? Justification is the act of God’s free grace by which He pardons all our sins and accepts us as righteous in His sight. He does so only because He counts the righteousness of Christ as ours. Justification is received by faith alone.*”

ROMAN VIEW	REFORMATION VIEW
Justification makes us righteous	Justification declares us righteous
Righteousness is infused	Righteousness is imputed
Justification by God’s work of grace in humans (subjective)	Justification by God’s work of grace in Christ (objective)
Works increased to justification	Works are fruits of justification
Justification progressive (includes sanctification)	Justification instantaneous (followed by sanctification)

II. WHAT ARE THE GROUNDS FOR GOD JUSTIFYING US?

A. The grounds can never be our human works - Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5

B. The grounds are not even faith - WCF 11.2 Faith is instrument.

C. The ground is the perfect righteousness of Christ: active and passive obedience

III. WHAT IS THE TIMING OF GOD JUSTIFYING US?

A. God determined to justify us in eternity past - Gal. 3:8; 1 Pet. 1:19-20

B. God made justification possible through the timely first-century death and resurrection of Christ. Gal. 4:4-5; 1 Tim. 2:6; Rom. 4:25

C. Yet our actual justification occurs when we believe and the Holy Spirit applies the work of Christ to us. Gal. 2:16; WCF 11.4 *God did from all eternity, decree to justify all the elect, and Christ did, in the fullness of time, died for their sins, and rise again for their justification; nevertheless they are not justified, until the Holy Spirit doth, in due time, actually apply Christ unto them.*

Remember the *ordo salutis* which gives the logical (not chronological) order of God’s work: election, calling, regeneration, conversion, justification, adoption, sanctification, perseverance, glorification.

IV. WHAT ABOUT THE OT SAINTS? ARE THEY JUSTIFIED?

A. Dispensationalists and covenantal Reformed people would answer this question differently.

B. Westminster Confession 11.6; cf. Gal. 3:8-8, 13, 14; Rom 4:3.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. How do the saints in the Old Testament experience justification?

2. What’s the difference between faith as a ground for justification and the means of justification? What is the true grounds for salvation?

SESSION #33 A BIG PICTURE OVERVIEW OF ROMANS 1-11

I. HOW DID CHAPTER AND VERSE DIVISIONS COME TO BE INCLUDED IN THE BIBLE?

- A. They don't appear until 1228 AD. Bishop Stephen Lanagton, Archbishop of Canterbury added chapter divisions.
- B. Jewish rabbi Nathan in 1448AD added OT Hebrew verses. In 1551 Robert Estienne created numbering system in his edition of the Greek New Testament.
- C. First English language to use verse divisions was a 1557 translation by William Whittingham. First complete Bible in English with both chapter and verse divisions — Geneva Bible of 1560.

II. ANOTHER APPROACH IS THE SYNTHETIC BOOK/CHAPTER OVERVIEW METHOD.

- A. Instead of using microscope pull out a telescope. It's the bird's eye view as contrasted with the worm's eye view.
- B. How do you go about studying a book of the Bible with the skyscraper synthetic view?

OVERALL BOOK THEME:			
	chapter 1	chapter 2	chapter 3
Chapter title			
Key verse			
Paragraph divisions			
Key words			
Main Lessons:			
Difficulties/Challenges			

III. OVERVIEW OF ROMANS 1:11 The Gospel of God's righteousness imputed by faith in Christ

CHAPTER ONE	
Chapter title	Opening personal considerations and launch into our need for the Gospel
Key verse	1:16-17 summarizes his theme for the letter
Paragraph divisions	v1-7 Personal salutation v.8-15 Thanks and prayer v.16-17 Main theme of letter v.18-32 God's just wrath revealed on Gentiles
Key words	Jesus Christ, righteousness, faith, gave them up, exchanged
Main lessons:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Paul is qualified to write this letter * Paul models how to pray for others * Paul shows pastoral concern in longing to go to Rome to preach the gospel * In the Gospel God's righteousness is revealed by faith * God reveals his wrath on those who suppress the truth of general revelation. * Turning away from God leads to a whole chain of sins
Difficulties/challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Are all humans accountable to God because of general revelation? * What does Scripture teach about homosexuality?

Fill in chart for other chapters...

SESSION #34 ROMANS 12:1-8 AN URGENT LOVING APPEAL

ROMANS 1-11	ROMANS 12-16
Doctrine	Ethics
Teaching	Practical implications
Indicative	Imperative
Believing	Behaving

I. A GENERAL EXHORTATION FOR COMMITMENT TO ALL CHRISTIANS (12:1-3)

- A. We are exhorted to make an initial commitment to God
 - 1. What does he mean by “body”? Entire person.
 - 2. This commitment is based on the doctrines of the Gospel.
 - 3. This commitment is based on the mercies of God to us.
 - 4. This commitment is based on the background of the OT sacrificial system.
Background on Roman Parthenon
- B. We are exhorted to maintain our commitment to the Lord. How?
 - 1. By refusing to be confirmed to the pattern of this world.
 - 2. By being transformed in mind: Metamorphosis - cf. 2 Cor. 3:18
 What are some ways to encourage ongoing transformation of our thinking?
 What happens if we continue to be transformed in mind?
 - a. It will result in our ability to discern God’s will.
 - b. It will result in our ability to delight in God’s will.

Reference in Romans	What will of God means (flows from 12:1-2)
12:3-8	Serving with humility in the body of Christ
12:9-21	Being a witness in society even if persecuted
13:1-7	Obedying the government
13:8-14	Living in the light of Christ’s return
14:1-15:13	Accepting other believers
15:14-33	Being supportive of missions and evangelism

II. SPECIFIC EXHORTATION TO SERVE WITH HUMILITY IN THE BODY OF CHRIST (12:3-8)

- C. S. Lewis: Mere Christianity, chapter 8 of book 3
- A. We can avoid distorted pride by thinking of ourself with sober judgment.
- B. We can avoid distorted pride by thinking of ourself in proportion to God’s sovereign distribution of spiritual gifts in the church.
 - 1. God distributes gifts in the context of one body v.4-5
 - 2. God also intends that we use our gifts actively v.6
 - 3. Paul then gives a listing of 7 representative spiritual gifts:

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

- 1. Do you know your spiritual gift(s)? Are you using it in the best possible way?
- 2. Are there ways you are conforming too much to the world, being squeezed into its mold?

SESSION #35 ROMANS 12:9-21 TRANSFORMED INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS

- * What are some examples of people not getting along with one another?
- * Dr. Solomon Adria from the Cote de'Ivoire in Africa has a commentary on Romans in which he tells this story: "A young man once sent his fiancée the following letter: 'I love you with all my heart. You are my star, my treasure... One minute away from you is like a thousand years. I will come and visit you tomorrow if it does not rain.'" (Romans: African Bible Commentaries 2012, p. 228.) Is that love.

I. HOW TO EXERCISE SINCERE LOVE TOWARD OTHERS (12:9-13, 15-16)

- A. Love one another by knowing how to hate (v.9)
- B. Love one another by practicing brotherly devotion (v.10)
cf. Expositor's Bible Commentary, Everett Harrison 1976, p.129 "*To honor is to accord recognition and show appreciation. Presumably, this is based not on some personal attractiveness that is perceived or usefulness that is known, but rather on the fact that every Christian has Christ in his heart and is able to express him through his own individuality.*"
- C. Love one another by cultivating devotion to the Lord (v.11-12)
cf. John Murray, Romans NIC, vol 2 p. 114 "*The measure of perseverance in the midst of tribulation is the measure of our diligence in prayer. Prayer is the means ordained of God for the supply of grace sufficient for every exigency and particularly against the faintheartedness to which affliction tempts us.*"
- D. Love one another by helping those with needs, temporal and physical (v.13, 15)
- E. Love one another by avoiding pride (v.16)

II. HOW TO EXERCISE LOVE EVEN TOWARD ENEMIES (12:14, 17-21)

- A. Love your enemy by blessing him v.14
 1. Direct reference to persecution
 2. What does this injunction mean?
 3. What's one of the best examples of this? Jesus in Lk. 23:45; 1 Pet. 2:23
 4. What's a practical way to do this? Pray for them.
- B. Love your enemy by depriving him of reasons for hating you. v.17b
- C. Love your enemy by working at peacemaking. v.18
- D. Love your enemy by avoiding revenge and leaving it with God. v. 19
- E. Love your enemy by practicing acts of kindness v.20

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. Out of all the ways of showing love in this chapter, which one do you think is most needed in your life? What might be a way you could begin doing this? Who is the person to which you will exercise this love?
- 2 Do you have any enemies? How could you show love toward them this week?

SESSION #36 ROMANS 13:1-7 INTERACTING WITH THE GOVERNMENT

I. CHRISTIANS SHOULD SUBMIT TO GOVERNING AUTHORITIES (13:1-2)

A. What does it mean to submit to authorities? Authorities refers to civil officers who lead a government.

* Term “submit”: “under” plus “to arrange” - military term

B. Why did Paul need to write about this?

1. Perhaps Paul was concerned that the Romans would take his injunction “Do not be conformed to the world” to extreme, thinking world referred to government authority.
2. Perhaps Paul was concerned because of the latent resentment of government that might exist among the Roman Christians due to the edit of the Emperor Claudius.
3. Perhaps Paul was thinking of the increase in the activity and popularity of the Jewish Zealots in the decade of the 50’s. Insurrection against Rome in AD 66-70. Culminated in the defeat of the last Zealots at Masada in AD 73.
4. Perhaps Paul was aware that Tacitus mentions resistance against payment of indirect taxes in the 50’s, leading to a tax revolt against the government in AD58.

C. What are the reasons for obeying the government?

1. Submit because it is ordained of God. v.1-2 In context Paul was writing this during the reign of the Roman Emperor Nero who ruled from AD 54-68. The first five years of his reign were good years. The later years resulted in atrocities and persecution for Christians.
2. Submit because to the government because it is God’s minister to punish evil and reward good. v.3-4
3. Submit because of conscience’s sake v.5 cf. 1 Pet. 2:13-14

II. CHRISTIANS SHOULD KNOW THE IMPLICATIONS OF OBEYING THE GOVERNMENT 13:6-7

A. We should willingly pay our taxes v.6-7a In context taxes were the main source of income for the Roman Empire during the first century. These taxes were imposed not only on the city of Rome but on all the provinces that their armies had conquered. They had an annual fixed rate property tax known as the *tributum soli*. They also had an annual *tributum capitis*, or head tax, levied on residents within a certain age range. In addition they had sales taxes, inheritance taxes, road, bridge, and harbor tolls, and customs fees on exports and imports. Paying taxes may have been singled out because this is the most obvious symbol of a government’s role and authority over us. (cf. Mk. 12:17)

B. We should show respect v.7b

III. SHOULD CHRISTIANS ALWAYS OBEY WITHOUT EXCEPTION?

A. Discussion

B. Are there examples in Scripture?

* Acts 5:39

* Daniel 3:17-18

* Daniel 6:13

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. What do you think are some reasons why it is important for Christians to submit to the government?
2. Are there any exceptions to this teaching on submission?

SESSION #37 ROMANS 13:8-14 LOVE FULFILLS THE LAW

Context: Paul had just talked about our position toward the government in v.1-7. Now beginning in v.8 he challenges us to a deep commitment, giving us two incentives to stand out distinctively as a Christian.

I. BE MOTIVATED TO COMMITMENT BY THE COMMAND TO EXERCISE MUTUAL LOVE (13:8-10)

A. Love means we don't ignore outstanding debts v.8

1. What is being prohibited? Not borrowing or using credit.

cf. Ex. 22:35; Psa 37:26; Matt. 5:42

2. Then what does v.8 mean? Forbidding taking advantage of other by becoming delinquent on our debts. A Christian should never borrow anything with the intention of never repaying it.

B. Love means we should take the Ten Commandments seriously.

Four examples from the second table of the decalogue.

1. It's out of love for the family that Christians refrain from adultery.

2. It's out of love for the sanctity of human life that Christians refrain from murder.

3. It's out of love for our neighbor's ownership of possessions that even Christians refrain from stealing.

4. It's out of love for other people's right to what they own that Christians refrain from coveting.

* What does it mean that love fulfills the law?

VIEWS ON FULFILLMENT OF LAW	DESCRIPTION
1. Lutheran View	The law is fulfilled in Christ so we are not obligated to follow it. Refers to civil and ceremonial law and perhaps even the moral law. The love of Christ flows through us to fulfill what the law intended.
2. Calvinist View	While the civil and ceremonial law are now fulfilled, the moral law of the Ten Commandments continues to function as a gauge of our behavior (third use of the law)
3. New Perspective on Paul View (James Dunn)	Curse of the law lifted in Christ so we can now fulfill the law in the power of the Spirit guided by love.

C. Love means that we treat others as we treat ourself v9b-10

II. BE MOTIVATED TO COMMITMENT BY THE LATENESS OF THE HOUR ON GOD'S TIMETABLE FOR HUMAN HISTORY (13:11-14) Eschatology impacts ethical!

A. The lateness of the hour means that the night is almost over and the daytime is almost here.

B. The lateness of the our means our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.

* We have been saved in the past from the penalty of sin

* We are being saved in the present from the power of sin

* We will be saved in the future from the presence of sin. cf. Heb. 9:28

C. The implications of the lateness of the hour:

1. Negative: Because the hour is late we need to put off sleepiness.

2. Negative: Because the hour is late we need to put off deeds of darkness.

3. Positive: Because the hour is late we should put on decent behavior. v.13a

4. Positive: Because the hour is late we should put on the Lord Jesus Christ v.14

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. What do you believe Paul means in saying that love fulfills the law?

2. How does Paul use the put toff/put on imagery? What does he mean?

SESSION #38 ROMANS 14 WEAK AND STRONG LIVING IN HARMONY

What might be some issues/questions about debatable topics which bother Christians in your country? (adiaphora)

I. LEARN TO ACCEPT PEOPLE WHO ARE WEAK (14:1-12)

A. Who are the weak?

1. May have been Jewish converts who were still scrupulous about observing OT ceremonial laws.
2. May have been Gentile converts who strongly objected to any contact at all with food or drink offered to pagan idols.
3. May have been members of the ancient Essene community who developed regulations more strict than required by the Mosaic ceremonial law.

B. What were the problem areas tripping up the weak in Paul's day?

1. They were stirred up over which food was proper for a Christian to eat.
2. They were stirred up over which religious holidays to observe.

Any parallels in our day?

C. Why should we learn to accept the weak?

1. Because God himself has accepted them. v.3
2. Because we have no right to judge another believer on such disputable, non-essential issues. v.4
3. Because those on both sides of some issues are acting with thanksgiving to the Lord. v.6-8
4. Because we will each give an account of ourself to the Lord. v.10-12 cf. 2 Cor. 5:10 *bema*

II. LEARN TO AVOID MISLEADING THOSE WHO ARE WEAK (14:13-23)

A. We should be willing to forego a Christian liberty to avoid misleading a weaker brother into destructive sin.

B. However, our liberty is not license to ignore other Christians.

* See verse 13 -Stumbling block - *proskomma* -Obstacle - *skandalon* (14X)

C. The text continues by giving a series of reasons why we should avoid harmful uses of our Christian freedoms:

1. We should be willing to refrain because Christian love demands it. (v.15)
2. We should be willing to refrain because we have higher values than insisting on our rights. (v.16-18)
3. We should be willing to refrain because we want peace and mutual edification in Christ's church. (v.19-21)
4. We should be willing to refrain because we don't want to condemn personal consciences. (v.22-23)

Summary with some suggestions on how to tackle debatable issues:

- a. Begin by determining if Scripture says anything directly about the issue. If the Bible prohibits it then it's a matter of submitting to the authority of the Word.
- b. IF there's no direct statements in Scripture than apply general principles as follows
 1. Accept those who are weak and believe the practice is wrong.
 2. Avoid misleading them by willingly forgoing our liberty.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

1. Pick a debatable issue that you have seen in your area. Think through what the options are and how the teaching of Romans 14 sheds light on what should be done.
2. What are some reasons why we should refrain from some of our rights as Christians?

SESSION #39 1 CORINTHIANS 8-10 GOOD OFFERED TO IDOLS

While Romans 14 teaches about debatable, controversial issues such as what we eat, 1 Corinthians 8-10 teaches on the same issue. Paul wrote this letter from Ephesus c. 53-55 AD, that is 2-4 years before writing Romans. It helps us understand Romans.

I. A TRANSCULTURAL PRINCIPLE: LOVE FOR OTHER BELIEVERS SHOULD MOTIVATE US WHEN DECIDING HOW TO USE OUR CHRISTIAN FREEDOM (8:1-13)

A. Paul writes this to answer some questions a delegation from Corinth had raised - cf. 7:1, 8:1

B. Why was this question raised? It was hard to avoid idolatrous practices and feasts in Greek and Roman society. Corinth was filled with pagan temples to false gods.

C. Paul gives 3 reasons for voluntarily refraining from meat to idols in presence of the weak:

1. Because it's a morally neutral issue with no spiritual advantage in eating it, nor disadvantage in avoiding it. So concern for other believers should take precedence (8:8)
2. Because flaunting our freedom can damage the spiritual lives of the weak (8:11)
3. Because Christ is affected by an offense against his people (8:12)
4. Chapter ends with good summary of the principle in 8:13

II. TWO APOSTOLIC EXAMPLES (9:1-27)

A. First example - Paul was willing to forego his own personal rights for the sake of God's people (9:1-18)

1. Begins chapter with 4 rhetorical questions that relate to his freedom.
2. Paul had apparently received some criticism.
3. So he goes on to assert his credentials
4. He regards preaching the Gospel as something for which he feels divine compulsion. It carries its own reward. v.18

B. Second example - Paul showed self-restraint before all people so he might reach some v. 19-27

1. Paul has just cleared himself of the charge of impure financial motives. So he now proceeds to show his concern to always be available to others.
2. In v. 19-23 he shows how he wanted to see the great number of converts
3. Then in v. 24-27 he talks about his desire to be conscientious in his mission to present the gospel, but he knew he was still left with his greatest problem: himself. (example of Isthmian athletic games in Corinth every other year.)

III. WARNING FOR ALL BELIEVERS: The ancient Israelites lack of self-restraint led to open idolatry (10:1-13)

A. Paul writes to people who had the OT Scriptures - but didn't exempt them from being undisciplined and slipping into sin.

B. Why did Paul refer to these OT examples? To remind us that they serve to teach us 10:12

IV. EXHORTATIONS: AVOID PARTICIPATING IN IDOL FEASTS AND FLEE ALL IDOLATRY (10:14-22)

A. Direct statement in v.14 "flee from idolatry."

B. Significant problem in Corinth. Shrine to Athena and temple to Demeter

V. OVERARCHING PRINCIPLE: Do everything for the glory of God (10:23-33)

A. Paul seems to go beyond the obvious wrong of participating in idol temple to other situations:

1. Situation of wife shopping in the market.
2. Situation of being invited to a non-sacrificial meal.

B. Paul concludes by raising the bar to the highest standard possible

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

1. What differences and similarities do you see between Rom. 14 and 1 Cor. 8-10?
2. Is the problem of idolatry present in your country? If so, how is it impacting believers?

SESSION #40 ROMANS 15:1-13 LIBERTY IN THE CHURCH

In preceding chapter Paul gave 2 general principles to preserve unity:

- * The strong were to learn to accept the weak with whom they disagreed.
- * The strong were to be willing to forego some of their liberties to prevent misleading weak

I. WE SHOULD ENCOURAGE UNITY BY SEEKING TO PLEASE OTHERS (15:1-4) HOW?

- A. We please others by bearing with the failings of the weak. Who are the weak?
- B. We please others by setting aside egocentric preoccupations
 What's the example in v.3? Christ who fulfilled prediction of Psa. 69.
 What's the hope builder in v.4 to keep us from being discouraged?
 "Scripture is the divine storehouse for all the furniture for the Christian life." (Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary on the Whole Bible, 1962 p.1180)

II. WE SHOULD ENCOURAGE UNITY BY SEEKING TO GLORIFY GOD TOGETHER (15:5-13)

- A. We glorify God by means of his gifts to us.
 * The text mentions divine gifts that enable us to unite and please him: endurance, encouragement, and a spirit of unity.
 * Christ gives us a spirit of unity according to v.6 *"that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."*
 * Isn't that what we should see as we walk into our worship assemblies?
 Cf. Everett Harrison, Expositor's Bible Commentary (1976) p.152-153 *"This does not mean that believers are intended to see eye-to-eye on everything, but that the more Christ fills the spiritual vision, the greater will be the cohesiveness of the church. The centripetal magnetism of the Lord can effectively counter the centrifugal force of individual judgment and opinion."*
- B. We can glorify God by accepting those whom he has accepted -v7-8
 1. God has not only accepted the Jews, he has also accepted the Gentiles.

Romans 15	Old Testament Quotations
v. 9b	2 Sam. 22:50, Psa. 18:49
v.10	Deuteronomy 32:43
v. 11	Psalms 117:1
v. 12	Isaiah 11:10

What do all four quotations have in common?

2. So there's no room in the church for what? ethnic exclusiveness or racial elitism.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. What are some examples where you have seen Christians bearing with the failings of the weak?
2. Paul condemns racial elitism. Is this a problem in your country, or has the problem been eliminated in the church community?

SESSION #41 ROMANS 15:14-21 GIVING AND RECEIVING ADMONITIONS

Review context: Ch.1-12 give doctrinal summary of Christian faith. Ch.12-16 spell out practical implications of the foregoing doctrine.

ch 12 exhorts us to present ourselves as a living sacrifice to the Lord

ch 13 exhorts us to obey the government and exercise mutual love

ch 14 exhorts the strong to accept the weak who disagree on debatable matters

ch 15 exhorts us to look for ways to please one another rather than being selfishly preoccupied

How can we summarize this passage: We need to give mutual admonitions as well as receive apostolic admonitions.

I. WE NEED TO GIVE MUTUAL ADMONITIONS (15:14)

A. What does the word “instruct” mean? Synonyms: counsel, warn, exhort, admonish

1. Word implies: problem in life of believer that needs to be addressed verbally

2. Goal: encourage positive changes in the life of the believer

3. J.B. Phillips: “*You are capable of keeping one another on the right road.*”

B. Who does this apply to? not just church officers & pastors but whole church

C. What are the qualifications Paul gives?

a. Moral qualifications: should possess an abundance of goodness

b. Intellectual qualification: should possess an abundance of knowledge — knowledge of the Christian faith, knowledge of God and his will as revealed in Scripture.

II. WE NEED TO RECEIVE APOSTOLIC ADMONITIONS (15:15-21) Why?

A. Because we tend to forget cf. v.15

cf. C.S Lewis, Mere Christianity

“if you have once accepted Christianity, then some of its main doctrines shall be deliberately held before your mind for some time every day. That is why daily prayers and religious reading and churchgoing are necessary parts of the Christian life. We have to be continually reminded of what we believe. Neither this belief nor any other will automatically remain alive in the mind. It must be fed. And as a matter of fact, if you examined a hundred people who had lost their faith in Christianity, I wonder how many of them would turn out to have been reasoned out of it by honest argument? Do not most people simply drift away?”

B. Because the apostles were called by God. God gave them the authority to write and speak his words. Thus we need to take their counsel seriously.

C. Because God confirmed the apostles’ authority.

What was the evidence that confirmed Paul’s authority to write so boldly?

1. Confirmation of life response in the Gentiles - cf. v.18

2. Confirmation of signs and miracles - cf. 2 Cor. 12:12, Heb. 2:4

3. Confirmation of the spread of the Gospel.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. Look for opportunities to instruct and counsel other Christians. “You are capable of keeping one another on the right road.” Do you know anyone now veering off the right road? If so, do you care enough to reach out and help?

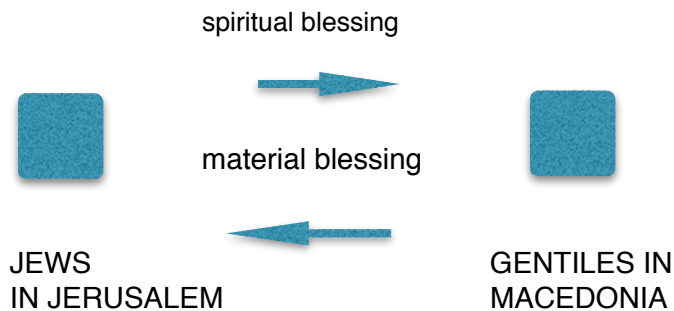
2. Does the authority of apostles continue into today’s church?

SESSION #42 ROMANS 15:22-33 FUTURE PLANS

I. FACE THE FUTURE WITH PROPER PLANS (15:22-29)

A. Apostle Paul's plans for the future:

1. Paul made proper plans for the distant future to travel to Rome and on to Spain.
 - How did he go about making these plans in his mind?
 - a. He was shaped by his commitment to work in uncharted territory. cf. v.20-21
 - b. He was shaped by a desire to visit Spain. Why?
 1. It was considered the end of the earth, the westernmost edge of the known world. - Roman troops had occupied the area of Spain since c.200 BC
 2. Along the way Paul wanted to fulfill his long-standing desire to visit the Christians in Rome whom he had never before met.
 - 3. He could receive what? Assistance to complete the remainder of his journey.
 - 4. His long range plans anticipated what? (v.29) The blessing of Christ!
 - 5. Did Paul ever realize these long-range plans? Yes, he reached Rome but unexpectedly as a prisoner.
2. Paul also made proper plans for the more immediate future. He was in the city of Corinth and wanted to head back to Jerusalem. Why?
 - a. He wanted to insure the safe delivery of a gift from the Macedonians and Achaian Christians to the needy believers in Jerusalem.(v.25-26) "contribution" v.26 is koinonia.
 - b. He wanted to fulfill what he thought was an obligation (v.27)



B. Application to our plans for the future

1. We have an apostolic precedent to make future plans. Orderly thinking and planning strategies, both long and short-term, are not unspiritual. However we are given a warning about not doing so humanistically. cf. Jas 4:13-14
2. We have an apostolic precedent for unselfish consideration of the needs of others when making our future plans. cf. 15:2 "Let each of us please his neighbor for his good."

II. FACE THE FUTURE WITH PROPER PRAYERS (15:30-33)

A. Paul's prayers show the urgency of intercession.

1. Urgent intercessions should be motivated by a common identity with Christ and a love of HS
2. Urgent intercession is a way of joining in the struggles of other believers.

B. Paul's prayers show the importance of specifying specific requests:

1. He requests prayer for safety.
2. He requests prayer for a successful ministry - gifts delivered to Jerusalem
3. He requests prayer for a joyful and fretting visit by God's will (v.32)

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. How can you apply this text in your church's planning for the future?
2. How can we encourage intercessory prayer in the church?

SESSION #43 1 CORINTHIANS 15, 2 CORINTHIANS 8-9 GENEROUS GIVING

Romans 15:25 “At present I am going to Jerusalem bringing aid to the saints.” Third missionary journey in Corinth. Going to make c.2000 mile detour. Instead of Rome he’s going to return to Jerusalem. Why?

I. THE FIRST REFERENCE TO THE JERUSALEM COLLECTION APPEARS IN I COR. 16:1-4

A. Paul asks the Corinthians to start collecting funds that can be given to the saints in Jerusalem. Note how they were to gather these gifts:

1. He wanted them to know they weren’t the only ones receiving this request.
2. He wanted them to do so in a disciplined, systematic way - first day of week
3. He wanted them to give in proportion to their resources - v2
4. He wanted them to have it ready when he came to visit them in person.
5. He wanted them to select a representative who could be sent to deliver the gift with letters of introduction.

B. Why did the saints in Jerusalem need this collection?

1. Years earlier there had been famine in reign of Claudius -c.AD46 - cf. Acts 11:27-30
2. Now about decade later (c.57 AD) another need arises. Why?

C. To understand this text it’s helpful to realize the original social setting. There was significant social stratification in Ancient Mediterranean Society.

II. THE SECOND REFERENCE TO THE JERUSALEM COLLECTION APPEARS IN 2 COR. 8-9

A. Why in this second letter does Paul need to give an extended section on encouragement to give generously?

B. He encourages them to give generously using the same of the churches in Macedonia (8:1-15)

C. He also lets them know that he had boasted about them to other churches, especially those in Macedonia (9:1-5)

D. What does Paul teach about how to give? (9:6-15)

1. We should give cheerfully rather than reluctantly or under compulsion.
2. We should give with confidence that God can bless us abundantly.
3. We should give knowing that this will meet the needs of the saints.
4. We should give knowing that it results in others giving thanks to God.

III. THE THIRD REFERENCE TO THE JERUSALEM COLLECTION APPEARS IN ROM. 15:25-29

A. Why was this collection for the Jerusalem saints that Paul continued to talk about over a period of time, even making a 2000 mile detour to carry it out?

1. Paul realizes the theological significance by using various Greek terms to describe it: grace (charis); fellowship (koinonia); service (diakonia)

2. The gift was a visible expression of the interdependence and unity of believers throughout the world.

3. The gift was also an expression of joy - cf. Rom. 15:26-27; 2 Cor. 8:2

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. Do you know anyone in need? Are there some practical ways you could be generous in meeting their needs?

2. Suppose you were a Christian in Rome hearing that Paul needed to deliver this gift to Jerusalem before visiting your church. Do you think you could explain to others why you think this collection for Jerusalem was important?

SESSION #44 ROMANS 16 CONCLUDING GREETINGS AND INSTRUCTIONS

I. COMMENDATIONS OF AN IMPORTANT WOMAN (16:1-2) Phoebe from Cenchreae

A. Where's Cenchreae? Neighboring town to Corinth on Saronic Gulf

B. Who is Phoebe?

1. She's called "a servant of the church" (diakonos) cf. 1 Pet. 4:10, Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:8 cf. Apostolic Constitutions 8.19, 20, 28
2. What was the role of deacons? They visited the sick, cared for the needy, provided for the financial and material needs of the church. Not a teaching/ruling office.
3. She's called a *prostatis* to Paul and many in the church.
4. Some suggest Phoebe was the person who personally delivered the letter

II. GREETINGS OF IMPORTANT PEOPLE IN ROME (16:3-16)

A. How can Paul name all these people in Rome since he had not visited there yet? He has meet some of them during his ministry in the eastern Mediterranean areas. Some may have come when Claudius had expelled the Jews from Rome, including some Jewish Christians

B. What insight do these names reveal about the first century church at Rome?

1. Since the majority of the names are Gentiles, it illustrates the mainly Gentile makeup
2. Many of the names are ones that would have been given to slaves or those set free
3. This shows the prominent presence of women in the early church - 10 out of 27

C. Prisca and Aquila - from Roman province of Pontus

1. Helped Paul during 18 mo. in Corinth. Moved to Ephesus. Returned to Rome.
2. "Risked their necks" v.4. Had church in their home.

D. Andronicus and Junias - identified as kinsmen and fellowship partners. May be husband/wife

E. Household of Aristobulus - May have been brother of King Herod Agrippa I

F. Rufus - May be son of Simon of Cyrene who carried cross -cf Mark 15:21

G. Holy kiss?

III. APPEALS ABOUT DIVISIVE PEOPLE (16:17-20)

A. Why in this context does he interrupt? Perhaps put warning here knowing it will make more of an impact.

B. Paul doesn't name the false teachers but he describes what is fairly typical of false teachers: They create divisions and distract believers from important things. Reference to "appetites" (v.18) may point to the Judaizers who taught that salvation is based on faith in Christ plus works of the law - including dietary laws as a means to be ritually clean before God.

C. He gives a note of hope that God will crush Satan under your feet cf. Gen. 3:15

IV. GREETINGS FROM PAUL'S ASSOCIATES (16:21-23)

A. He singles out 7 additional individuals associated with Paul in Corinth

B. This includes Tertius who is the amanuensis

V. CONCLUDING DOXOLOGY (16:25-27)

A. Paul returns to the ongoing theme of the gospel:

1. The Gospel is Christo-centric
2. The Gospel was promised in the writings of the prophets
3. The Gospel is for all nations
4. The Gospel relates to faith

B. Note symmetry - Romans 16:25-27 with 1:1-7;

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

1. Who do you think Phoebe was? What kind of leadership role did she have?
2. Scan thru the names in this chapter. Single out one who you think is your favorite person. Why did you chose that person?

SESSION #45 A QUICK SURVEY OF THE HISTORY OF ROME

I. THE MYTHICAL BEGINNINGS OF ROME IN 753BC

A. Romulus and Remus twin sons of war god Mars. Abandoned along river Tiber, rescued and nourished by a wolf. Romulus killed brother Remus, founded city named after himself in 753BC

B. Why this geographical location?

1. Roads converging making possible to travel between Etruria, Latium, and Campania
2. Being on Tiber River provided access to the Sea
3. Built on 7 hills. (cf. Rev. 17:9)

II. FROM KINGDOM (753BC - 509 BC) TO A REPUBLIC

A. Kingdom ruled by Etruscan kings. During this period at war with neighbors. Struggled to consolidate its power and position.

B. 509BC uprising against Tarquinius Superbus, the last king. Virtuous Roman lady named Lucretia violated by king's son. So out of revenge stabbed herself. Family needed to avenge her. The citizens of Rome rose up against the king and his family. End of monarchy, replaced with republic having a constitution.

* In place of king used pair of chief magistrates or counsels holding power for one year.

* Established Senate. Added elections for magistrates and citizen assemblies

* Constitution remained for 5 centuries

III. THE ERA OF THE REPUBLIC (509BC TO 27BC)

A. Originally republic had two consuls chosen from patricians.

B. In c.494BC patricians created a plebeian magistracy. Expanded from two to five.

C. Eventually the plebeians organized in 287BC created a council of plebeians whose decisions had the force of power.

D. Power struggles followed between patricians and plebeians. Corruption became a problem.

E. Republic grew unstable. Some civil wars resulted in more division - setting stage for Julius Caesar to rise to power.

IV. THE ROMAN EMPIRE (27BC - 476 AD)

A. After second civil war Octavian became the Emperor Augustus with control over the military. Transition back to one-man rule.

B. Julius Caesar most famous Emperor. Had military training, good at languages, a good public orator.

* Ended up joining army to repay debts

* Military success brought him to top magistracy. Conquest of Gaul enabled him to seek more power. Refused to step down, moved army across Rubicon river, an act that started a civil war.

* Emerged as victor and made "dictator in perpetuity."

* Assassinated by group of senators on Ides of March, 44BC at age 56.

C. Augustus succeeded him. Line of descendants called the Julio-Claudian dynasty which lasted till Nero (54-68AD)

* Augustus inherited wreckage of the republican state. His methods were harsh but he did put an end to the civil war and ushered in an era of peace. This set the stage for the coming of Christ and spread of Christianity - cf. Lk. 2:1

* Ruled during an age of the flourishing of books, poetry, drama, and architecture. It's said that he "found Rome a city of brick and left it a city of marble."

D. Succeeded by Tiberius. During public ministry of Jesus he was the emperor. Mentioned in Luke 3:1. During Paul's lifetime we had following emperors: Caligula, Claudius, and Nero.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. Can you think of any lessons we can learn from the Roman Empire that might help us today?
2. How would you contrast the Apostle Paul with the famous Roman emperors?

SESSION #46 THE FALL OF ROME AND ITS LEGACY

I. THE RULE OF NERO (54-68AD)

- * Taught by Seneca.. Came to power pretending to favor Senate. But over time ignored their advice and ruled with absolute power.
- * Had his rival, Claudius' son Britannicus, assassinated.
- * Ordered the murder of his mother Agrippina in 59AD and number of Senators
- * July 64 AD fire broke out destroying 50-70% of city. Scapegoating led to persecution of Christians.
- * May have beheaded apostle Paul.
- * Ended up committing suicide in 68AD without leaving a clear plan of succession.

II. THE RULE OF CONSTANTINE (306-377AD)

- A. At death of his father acclaimed emperor by the army at York in 306 AD. Conversion when he saw vision of shining cross with Greek words "By this sign conquer." Saw Christ in dream following night. Not till near his death was he baptized by Eusebius in 337AD.
- B. 313AD, year after his conversion, published Edit of Milan proclaiming religious tolerance across Empire. Made Sundays a holiday. Ordered building of Church of Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and Church of Nativity in Bethlehem. Some question the "purity" of his Christian faith.
- C. Called the first ecumenical Council of Nicea 325 AD opposing Arianism.
- D. Founded the city of Constantinople in Turkey as capital of Empire in 330 AD.

III. THE FALL OF ROME

- A. In spite of reign of Constantine and growth of Christians, the empire continued to decline. cf. Edmund Gibbon, who wrote The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire (1776-88) said: *"It seems that all empires reached an apogee from which the decline is steady and often almost unnoticed by the people at the centre of the fall."*
- B. Internal factors contributing to decline.
 1. It held an arrogant view that it had the right to rule the world.
 2. Corruption in the ranks of leadership such as Nero and others.
 3. Vespian, who followed Nero, ordered the construction of the Coliseum. Humans sacrificed satisfying the blood lust of the people. Crucifixion and other violence to distract people, symptomatic of culture of death.
 4. Distant provinces outside Rome began to spin out of control by 271 AD.
 5. Could the fall of Rome be linked to their vicious persecution of Christians?
- C. What would outlast Rome is the eternal Kingdom of Christ which Paul helped establish through the Roman empire.

IV. THE LASTING LEGACY OF ROME

- A. The heritage evident in fields of architecture and engineering. (Coliseum, Partheon, Arch of Titus, Arch of Constantine, Roman forum, etc.)
- B. Left behind beautiful mosaics and paintings.
- C. Left network of roads enabling armies to circulate.
- D. Good at refining existing technologies.
- E. Left legacy of poems, plays, and writings from their poets and thinkers: Horace, Ovid, Virgil, etc.
- F. They developed a calendar ;with the names of months we still use today.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. What accounts for the fall of Rome and what lessons does it have for nations today?
2. Was Constantine making Christianity the religion of the land positive or negative?

SESSION #47 PAUL'S LIFE

- * Paul moves the story of Jesus from its early Jewish setting to the Gentile world.
- * Paul's 13 letters make up about one-quarter of the New Testament.
- * Yet Paul has been controversial.

KEY QUESTIONS ABOUT PAUL	REFORMED EVANGELICAL: THOMAS SCHREINER	ROMAN CATHOLIC: LUKE TIMOTHY JOHNSON	POST NEW PERSPECTIVE: CHRIST AND THE CHURCH IN PAUL: DOUGLAS CAMPBELL
WHAT DID PAUL THINK ABOUT SALVATION?	Salvation is deliverance from the consequences of sin: divine vengeance and eternal destruction. It is a manifestation of God's love by rescuing sinners, by grace and not merit. Instrument is substitutionary death of Christ for the ungodly.	Chiefly about liberation (hostile powers, cosmic & social) & transformation	Salvation is trinitarian & missionary activity mediated thru Christ and Spirit. Salvation is gift of God himself resulting in life, liberation, and community.
WHAT WAS PAUL'S VIEW OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRIST?			
WHAT IS THE BEST FRAMEWORK FOR DESCRIBING HIS THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE?			
WHAT WAS PAUL'S VISION FOR THE CHURCHES?			

I. PAUL'S EARLY YEARS IN THE CITY OF TARSUS - Acts 22:3

- A. Background on the city of Tarsus. SE coast of Asia Minor. In modern Turkey called Tersous. c. 6000 years old. Capital of Rome province and became third largest city in Roman Empire.
- * residents famous for loudmouthed ambition. Flaunted exotic festivals for their gods, especially Tarku. Hosted bustling academy and famous for schools including courses in philosophy and medicine - cf. Acts 21:39
- B. What was Paul's early life in Tarsus like?
- * In his home Aramaic spoken and traditional Palestinian Jewish customs preserved.
 - * Privileged to be a Roman citizen.
 - * Date of birth not clear. Likely within a decade of Christ's birth. Likely died as a martyr in 60's.

II. PAUL'S EARLY SCHOOLING IN JERUSALEM

- A. At some point, perhaps age 12, Paul was able to go to Jerusalem and study under Gamaliel I - most famous rabbi of his time.
- B. At least trilingual: Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic, and perhaps Latin.
- C. It may be during this time in Jerusalem that he accomplished what he referred to in Galatians 1:14. He says that as a Pharisee he "advanced in Judaism beyond many contemporaries in my race, remaining exceedingly zealous for my patriarchal traditions."

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. What would you say are some of the reasons why Paul is such a significant figure?
2. What do we know about Paul's early years that help us to understand how he ended up the Apostle that he was?

SESSION #48 LIFE OF PAUL CONTINUED**III. PAUL'S CONVERSION AND CALL (C. AD32-35)**

A. In Paul's extreme commitment to Judaism he became involved in persecuting Christians - cf. Stephen's stoning Acts 7:59-8:3

B. Conversion - Acts 9:3-6; 22:6-11, 26:12-15, Gal. 1:15-16

Where did he go: Arabia, Damascus, Jerusalem, Tarsus

IV. PAUL'S MISSIONARY TRIPS AND WRITING MINISTRY

A. First missionary trip (c. AD46-48, Acts 13-14)

B. Second missionary trip (c. AD 48-51; Acts 14:36-18:22)

C. Third missionary trip (c. 52-57 AD; Acts 19-21)

D. Caesarean imprisonment (57-59AD; Acts 23:23-26:32)

E. Voyage to Rome (59-60 AD; Acts 28)

F. Roman imprisonment (60-62AD)

While in Rome wrote prison letters: Ephesus, Philippians, Colossians, and Phillemon.

G. Ministry in the West (62-64 AD)

H. His thorn in the flesh - 2 Cor. 12:1-10

1. What was the context of his receiving his thorn in the flesh?

2. What was the purpose of the thorn? To prevent Paul from becoming exalted above measure

3 What was the identity of the thorn?

a. Some say it means a form of physical suffering or illness - cf. Gal. 4:15, 6:11

b. Others suggest it was theological suffering - because Paul does not succeed in winning the Jews to the Gospel.

c. Yet others suggest it was apostolic suffering in the form of constant opposition to his apostolic ministry.

d. The reality is that we cannot identify what his thorn was. This has advantages. Why?

I. Death (64-65 AD?)

* Some conjecture that his death came under the deranged oversight of Nero. Probable site was the Tre Fontane on the Ostian Road in Rome. Traditional site of burial is near Basilica of St. Paul in Rome.

* What did Paul say in advance about his death? cf. Phil. 1:20-24; 2 Tim. 4:6-8

JESUS CHRIST	APOSTLE PAUL
Conceived by the Holy Spirit in the virgin Mary	Normal birth with two parents
Both in Bethlehem as predicted in advance and announced by angels and appearance of star	Born in Tarsus in obscurity
Raised in Nazareth	Raised in Tarsus and moved to Jerusalem
Began public ministry with baptism by John	Called to ministry in dramatic conversion on road to Damascus when he encountered the resurrected Christ.
Experienced atoning crucifixion as sin-bearer with resurrection on third day	Died for his faith but not as sin-bearer. Experienced no resurrection the third day
Wrote no NT letters	Wrote 13 NT letters
Only traveled once outside Palestine, to Egypt as child	Traveled thousands of miles throughout the Roman world in Europe and Asia
Was the co-equal, co-eternal Son of God	Was a mere mortal who considered himself a servant and messenger of Jesus Christ

SELECT RESOURCES ON ROMANS

(This is not an approval of all that each book teaches, rather an overview of some commentaries that may be helpful to consult) 10/14

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