

Romans

An Exegetical Analysis

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Romans

Syllabus

Purpose

The purpose of this course is to give students an improved understanding of Paul's letter to the Romans by taking an expository approach to the text that guides them into a basic understanding of the background, purpose, and meaning of the letter.

Course Requirements

Students will demonstrate their understanding of the text by all of the following: 1) participating in class discussions, 2) completing the daily course work, 3) taking the provided quizzes and tests.

Grading

Student work will be graded using an adjusted curve based on the accuracy, thoroughness, and originality of the answers produced. Discussion questions must show a thorough grasp of what we discussed in class.

Lesson Plan

Lesson 1 Introduction

Lesson 2 Chapters 1-2

Lesson 3 Chapters 3-4

Lesson 4 Chapters 5-6

Lesson 5 Chapters 7-8

Lesson 6 Chapters 9-10

Lesson 7 Chapters 11-12

Lesson 8 Chapters 13-14

Lesson 9 Chapters 15-16

Lesson 10 Final Test

Lesson 1

An Introduction

Background and Focus

Every written document has context. The further we are removed from the time and place of its writing, the more important it is that we stop and familiarize ourselves with the context before we begin to interpret the written material. Is this poetry or prose? Did this happen in recent times or long ago? Did this take place in American culture or another culture? Is this the original written document or a translation of a document written in another language? Why was this document written? Who was it written to or about? The answers to all those questions are important for accurately interpreting what is being read.

In this case, the book of Romans is a letter. Paul wrote it from Corinth (16:1; Acts 20:2-3) as he was collecting funds for the Judean Christians who were facing a severe food shortage. It was addressed to the Christian churches in Rome.

Partly because Rome was the capital of the Roman empire, the Roman churches had a unique history. The gospel message was likely initially carried to Rome by the Roman Jews who were present at Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:10). However, ancient sources tell us that in A.D. 49 all Jews were expelled from Rome because of constant rioting over the Christ (Acts 18:2). This left a unique Christian church composed only of Gentiles. After the death of Claudius, five years later, in A.D. 54, the Jews were allowed to return. But this created a conflict in the Roman church between the Jewish and Gentile Christians. Paul's *Letter to the Romans* is written roughly three years after the Jewish Christians return to Rome.

There are three primary reasons that Paul wrote this letter to the Roman churches.

1. He has established churches all over the eastern Mediterranean and his increasing notoriety is forcing him to move on and spread the gospel in new areas. He particularly has in mind preaching the gospel in Rome and Spain (15:23-24).
2. He has been struggling for years with the divide in the church between the observant Jews and the converted Gentiles. He is hoping that the generous collection he has raised from the largely Gentile churches in Asia Minor can serve as a big step toward bringing reconciliation between the Jewish Christians in Judea and the Gentile Christians in Asia Minor (15:25-27,31).
3. He has heard troubling news about the conflict in the churches in Rome and feels the need to write an explanation of the place Jews and Gentiles fill in Christianity (16:3-5; Acts 18:2).

Let's dive deeper into this ancient letter, written in a completely different place, culture, and time; and see what we can learn about Paul's burden, the nature of God, and the essence of Christianity. After all, if it has been preserved for thousands of years, it must hold some important truths!

Outline

A Brief Synopsis

Paul's letter to the Romans can be divided into five main sections and two sub-sections that all work together as one cohesive unit to convey Paul's message to his readers.

1:1-17 Introduction

Paul introduces himself and announces the good news that God is providing salvation through Jesus the Christ to both Jews and Gentiles. This is the foundational theme of Paul's letter, and he will continue to discuss the place of Jews and Gentiles in the Christian church throughout the book.

1:18-8:39 A Common Salvation

Are there different requirements for salvation if a person is a Jew or a Gentile? In this section, Paul teaches that both Jews and Gentiles are on an equal footing before God and are saved in the same way.

1:18-3:20 All Are Guilty Before God

Paul points out that while Jews and Gentiles tend to fall into different types of sins, they are still both guilty before God because they have all broken His holy laws.

3:21-8:39 All are Saved by Faith

The Jews think of following Jesus as an extension of obeying God's commands to Israel, while the Gentiles think of salvation as freedom from the bondage of their pagan religions. Paul teaches that, in fact, both Jews and Gentiles are saved by believing in Jesus and surrendering their lives to Him.

9:1-11:36 A Unique Plan

So is there no difference at all between Jews and Gentiles? Paul explains God's plan to use Jews and Gentiles in unique ways to bring all men to a common salvation.

12:1-15:13 A Unified Church

How do these doctrinal understandings work out in the church? Paul urges both Jews and Gentiles to serve one another in sacrificial love, present a good testimony to the world, and have patience and grace with each other's weaknesses.

15:14-16:27 Conclusion

Paul closes with words of commendation and encouragement for many believers that he knows personally and a benediction that summarizes his message to the church at Rome.

Greetings to the Church at Rome

Chapter 1:1-17

Paul introduces himself and announces the good news that God is providing salvation through Jesus the Christ to both Jews and Gentiles. He also explains his intentions and his purpose for writing.

1 Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, 2 (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) 3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; 4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: 5 By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name: 6 Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:

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

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. 9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers; 10 Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you. 11 For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; 12 That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.

13 Now I would not have you ignorant,

1:1 Today we might look at the return address on the envelope to tell who a letter is from. In the first century, letters started with the name of the author.

1:1 The word translated “apostle” refers to someone who is legally authorized to act on someone else’s behalf.

1:1 The word “gospel” means “glad tidings” (Isa. 40:9). Interestingly, the Greek word translated “gospel” was also used to announce the birth of the Emperor Augustus.

1:2 Paul quotes extensively from the prophets to show that God intended both Jew and Gentile to be saved through the Christ.

1:4 The Spirit of God proved that Jesus was the Son of God by resurrecting Him from the dead.

1:6 The question of who are “the called” is a topic that Paul will address in later chapters.

1:7 Paul’s signature greeting, “grace to you and peace” is created by shortening the traditional Greek word for greeting to “grace” and combining it with the traditional Jewish greeting “peace (shalom)” to create a unified greeting that includes both Jews and Gentiles.

brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto) [that is, prevented so far], that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles. 14 I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. 15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. 16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. 17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith [Hab. 2:4].

1:14 The word “debtor” here refers to “one who is obligated” to do something.

1:14 The word “barbarians” was used to refer to those who did not speak Greek.

1:15-17 Paul wanted to go to Rome because he was eager to boldly proclaim the good news that God, by His power, offers righteousness to all through faith in Christ.

1:17 The phrase “faith to faith” could be indicating that both Old and New Testament saints are saved by faith (Chap. 4).

Summary

In his introduction, Paul declares himself to be a slave of Jesus the Christ and a legal representative of the resurrected Savior. He shares his interest in the churches at Rome, commending them for their Christian witness and informing them that they are constantly in his prayers. He expresses an intense desire to visit and strengthen the churches at Rome but admits that his plans have been thwarted so far. He closes the section with a bold declaration of the good news of God’s salvation which serves as an introduction to the next section of the letter.

Exercises

Questions and Discussion

Questions

1. What type of literature is the book of Romans? _____

2. What three main cultures influenced the churches at Rome? _____

3. What city was Paul writing from? _____

4. How did the death of the Emperor Claudius affect the Jewish Christians from Rome?

5. Besides Isaiah 40:9, what other verse in Isaiah uses “good tidings” when describing the coming of the Messiah? Copy the verse and reference. _____

Discussion

1. Is there anything unique about being an apostle? How is being an apostle different from being an elder or a disciple? _____

2. How did the resurrection prove that Jesus was the Son of God? Is the resurrection important for Christians today? If so, in what way? _____

3. Did Paul ever preach the gospel in Rome or Spain as he had planned? _____

Lesson 2

The Guilt of Humanity

Is salvation somehow different depending on whether one is a Jew or a Gentile? Not at all! In fact, Paul teaches that both Jews and Gentiles are on an equal footing before God. While it is true that Jews and Gentiles tend to fall into different types of sins, they are both guilty because they have broken God's holy laws. Because of this, all humanity is rightfully under the judgment of God.

The Gentiles Are Guilty Before God

Chapter 1:18-32

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; 19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. 20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: 21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, 23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: 25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

1:18 The word translated “hold” here means “to suppress” or “to lay claim to.” In other words, we stifle the truth by claiming to have the truth while living wickedly.

1:20 We cannot see God, but the fact that things exist that we could not create, proves that Someone greater than us exists.

1:21 If good things happen to us that we are not directly responsible for, but we do not give thanks or glory, our hearts are foolish and vain and cannot discern the truth.

1:23 Ps 106:19-20

1:23 Because the universe is bigger than we are, we need a higher power. If we refuse to acknowledge God, we must look for something else to control the universe.

1:24,26,28 “God gave them...” Since God is the Creator, the Jews did not distinguish between “natural” consequences and divine intervention.

1:25 When we try to take charge of a universe over which we have no control, the anxiety can drive us to sinful behaviors.

26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: 27 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient [that is, not fitting]; 29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, 30 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31 Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: 32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

1:26 The more insecure we are, the worse our behavior becomes. In our refusal to trust God, we find our ability to trust others broken. We crave closeness, but find we are unable to build healthy relationships. At their core, all divergent relationships are a desire to find closeness without being vulnerable.

1:28 The Greek word translated “reprobate” here refers to someone who finds temptation irresistible and fails again and again.

1:29-31 This long list of sins is characterized by the fact that all are done to protect or advantage one person at the expense of others.

1:32 Eventually a person can feel so helpless and angry that they rebel against what they know is right and openly applaud sinful behaviors.

Summary

The Gentiles are guilty before God because, though they are created with an awareness of God and a sense of right and wrong and can see confirmation that God exists by looking at Creation, they have chosen to reject Him. Instead of thanking God and honoring Him for the good things they enjoy, they look to themselves, famous or powerful people, or other created things. This has led them into every kind of sinful and immoral behavior. They are aware of the results of sin but sin anyway.

The Observant Jews Are Guilty Before God

Chapter 2:1-2:29

1 Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. 2 But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. 3 And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? 4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? 5 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; 6 **Who** Will render To every man according To his deeds: 7 To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: 8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, 9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; 10 But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: 11 For there is no respect of persons with God.

12 For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law [or under the law] shall be judged by the law; 13 (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. 14 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a

2:1 It is easy to think of ourselves as superior to obviously sinful people, but many times similar failings have a place in our own hearts in ways that are socially more acceptable. For instance, instead of seeking attention through rebellious behavior, we may seek recognition through Christian service.

2:3 Often the same sins that are happening in the world are happening in religious circles. They are just done in more socially acceptable ways (i.e. gossip disguised as prayer requests instead of physical fighting), or they are hidden from public view.

2:6 Ps 62:12; Prov 24:12

2:6-11 In these verses, Paul uses a literary structure called a chiasm (ki'-asm). This common Biblical structure, named after the Greek letter x, arranges parallel ideas so that the main point comes in the middle. In this case, Paul emphasizes the fact that God is a fair judge who will punish Jewish sinfulness. His points are arranged like this: A) v.6 Everyone is judged in the same way. B) v.7 The righteous receive eternal life. C) v.8 The wicked receive God's wrath. C') v.9 The wicked receive anguish. B') v.10 The righteous receive glory. A') v.11 God judges everyone the same way.

2:12 The word translated "without law" means "without being under an established legal system."

2:13 There is no special merit in being familiar with Christianity or being a religious person.

2:14 Even the most isolated cultures are

law unto themselves: 15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;) 16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

17 Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, 18 And knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; 19 And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, 20 An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law. 21 Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? 22 Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? 23 Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? 24 For The name of God is blasphemed among The GenTiles Through you, as it is written.

25 For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. 26 Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? 27 And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law? 28 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: 29 But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

aware of right and wrong and have societal standards.

2:17 Paul says the Jews “boast of God.” The thought here is that they feel superior because they know the law and are God’s chosen people. In a similar way, a religious person today might feel superior to those who are obviously sinful. Like the Pharisee in the temple, we might feel superior because we are keeping God’s commandments.

2:21 The observant Jews, who would never “steal,” also had a rule that if you willed your wealth to the temple, you didn’t have to financially support your aging parents because it was “God’s money” now.

2:23-24 2:21 It is easy for religious people to feel like they are keeping God’s laws because they are doing what is expected of them and to not really examine how they are ignoring God’s laws in less noticeable ways. This is why so many Christians are accused of hypocrisy.

2:24 Isa 52:5, Eze 36:20

2:25 In New Testament times, observant Jews placed heavy emphasis on the “outward signs” of law keeping. Later rabbis even suggested that those who were circumcised would not go to hell.

2:25-29 Paul describes circumcision as an outward sign of an inward commitment to God. Thus a person who has never received God’s written law, but is committed to serving God is “circumcised” even without physical circumcision, and one who has received the written law of God (the letter) and is physically circumcised is still only a hypocrite if his heart is not committed.

Summary

The Jews, who were likely agreeing with Paul's description of the wickedness of the Gentiles, now come under equally strong condemnation as Paul addresses their guilt before God. He points out that since the Jews have the instruction of God's law, they are even more accountable than the Gentiles for their wrongdoing. He also reminds them that God's acceptance is not based on race or ancestry but on faithfulness. Finally, he uses circumcision to prove that outward signs are no substitute for a heart that is committed to God.

Exercises

Questions and Discussion

Questions

1. Why is God's judgment on mankind fair and appropriate? _____

2. In what ways might people today worship the creation more than the Creator? _____

3. Looking at Paul's list in verses 29 to 31, how many of the things in this list are still a struggle for you? (No need to list them.) _____

4. Why was it wrong for the Jews to judge the Gentiles as more guilty? _____

5. In what socially acceptable ways might Christian's steal, commit adultery, or practice idolatry? _____

Discussion

1. How is it possible to know God just by looking at Creation? _____

2. Explain the progression from a refusal to recognize God, to ingratitude, to pride, to idolatry, to immoral behavior and destructive habits. _____

[illegible]

3. Why might Christians feel superior to other people? How might they actually be inferior? _____

[illegible]

Lesson 3

The Way to Righteousness

The Jews were thinking of following Jesus as an extension of obeying God's commands to Israel, while the Gentiles were thinking of salvation as freedom from the bondage of their pagan religions. Paul teaches that, in fact, both Jews and Gentiles are saved the same way, by believing in Jesus and surrendering their lives to Him.

Everyone is Guilty Before God

Chapter 3:1-20

1 What advantage then hath the Jew? Or what profit is there [that is, what is the value] of circumcision? 2 Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles [that is, messages or laws] of God.

3 For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? 4 God forbid: yea, let God be [found] true, but [or though] every man [be found to be] a liar; as it is written, That Thou mightest be justified in Thy sayings, and mightest overcome When Thou art judged [by sinful men].

5 But if our unrighteousness commend [or demonstrates] the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man) 6 God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?

7 For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner? 8 And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? Whose damnation is just.

3:1-2 Paul will discuss in more detail the unique place God has for the Jewish nation in chapters 9-11.

3:3-4 Does people refusing to believe God make His laws void or ineffective? No! In fact, when we ignore or criticize God, we are not exonerated, but found guilty.

3:4 Ps 51:4

3:5 If our wickedness shows how right God's laws are, should we get credit for that? Of course not!

3:7 What if somehow good comes out of my evil doing? Does that make me less guilty? Absolutely not!

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

10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, noT one: 11 There is none That undersTandeTh, There is none That seekeTh afTer god. 12 They are all gone ouT of The Way, They are ToGeTher become unprofitable; There is none That doeTh good, no, noT one. 13 Their Throat is an open sepulcher; WiTh Their Tongues They have used deceit; The poison of asps is under Their lips: 14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and biTterness: 15 Their feet are swifT To shed blood: 16 desTrucTion and misery are in Their Ways: 17 and The Way of peace have They noT knowN: 18 There is no fear of god before Their eyes.

19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under [the authority of] the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. 20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin [or for the law only exposes sin].

3:9 No human being of any race, creed, or time, except Christ Himself, can claim to be sinless before God.

3:10-18 In these verses, Paul quotes a series of Old Testament passages. A closer look at the context of these passages shows that in each case a different people group is being declared wicked. The logical conclusion of this series of quotes is that no one is exempt from guilt. All deserve the righteous wrath of God's judgment.

3:10-12 Ps 14:1-3

3:13 Ps 5:9; 140:3

3:14 Ps 10:7

3:15-17 Isa 59:7-8

3:18 Ps 36:1

3:19 Ps 107:42

3:20 If you are a lawbreaker (as we all are), then following other laws or even changing behavior and following all laws does not remove your guilt in the eyes of the law. Even if you only ever murder one person, you are still a murderer and are guilty of homicide.

Summary

The Jews are uniquely blessed because God gave them His written law. In fact, the Jews unfaithfulness to God's laws, instead of reflecting badly on the law of God, demonstrates how right God's law is and how just He is in condemning them. Both Jew and Gentile stand condemned as lawbreakers before a righteous God. No amount of careful law keeping afterward can take away that guilt.

Everyone Is Saved By Faith

Chapter 3:21-31

21 But now the righteousness of God without [or apart from] the law is manifested [revealed], being witnessed [to or prophesied] by the law and the prophets; 22 Even the righteousness of God which is [found] by [or through] faith of [or in] Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference [between us]: 23 For all have sinned, and come [or fallen] short of the glory of God; 24 Being justified [that is, acquitted] freely by his grace through [or by] the redemption [or payment] that is in [or offered through] Christ Jesus: 25 Whom [that is, Jesus] God hath set forth to be a propitiation [or atoning sacrifice] through faith in his [that is, Jesus'] blood, to declare his righteousness [instead of ours] for the remission [that is expunging or removal] of sins that are past, through the forbearance [or deliberate restraint] of God; 26 To declare, I say, at this time his [that is, Jesus'] righteousness [instead of ours]: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay: but by the law [that is, legality] of faith. 28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. 29 Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: 30 Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. 31 Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

3:25 The word “propitiation” refers to a gift or atoning sacrifice given to appease a deity.

3:25 The Greek word translated “remission” here actually means “neglect of prosecution.” Paul is saying that God was not unjust when He did not punish the sins of the OT saints because He had already planned for Jesus to be the atoning sacrifice.

3:26 How can God be just and still let guilty people go free? It is only through the righteousness of Jesus the Christ.

3:27 Since in a legal sense we are declared “not guilty” not because of all the good deeds we have done, but because Jesus offered the atoning sacrifice and we place our faith in Him, there is no room for pride or self-satisfaction.

3:28 Paul reiterates that law-keeping could never wipe our record clean. Only faith in Jesus work can do that.

3:30 Paul concludes that since there is only one God, the Jews and Gentiles must have the same God and thus the same way to salvation.

3:31 If we have to turn to Jesus to be declared innocent, then it shows that the law was doing its job of condemning us for our sins. It also shows that the legality of the law has been upheld. We have not been let off unjustly or because the judge felt like it. We are cleared justly and legally through faith in the work of Christ.

Summary

In this section, Paul spells out the key premise of the next five chapters. He begins by affirming that God through the law and the prophets has revealed a way to righteousness that is independent of law keeping. He explains that since both Jews and Gentiles have sinned, this is the only way for anyone to find righteousness. God can justly offer this righteousness to law breakers because He has provided Jesus as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of mankind. Therefore anyone who places their faith in the shed blood of Jesus can be righteous before God.

Paul concludes that this plan of God accomplishes three things: 1) It removes any justification for human pride since no one can acquire righteousness on his own merits. 2) It sets Jew and Gentile on a common plain, both in their guilt and in their way to salvation. 3) It establishes God's law as just and not at fault for man's sins.

Abraham Was Saved By Faith

Chapter 4:1-25

1 What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh [or our natural ancestor], hath found? 2 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. 3 For what saith the scripture? abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. 4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. 6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, 7 Saying, blessed are They Whose iniquities are forgiven, and Whose sins are covered. 8 blessed is The man To Whom The Lord Will not impute sin.

9 Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? For we say that faith was reck-

4:3 Paul reminds his readers that the Genesis account does not say that Abraham was marked down as righteous because of his obedience or because of his hard work for God, but because he believed what God said.

4:3 Gen 15:6

4:4 If you are working to pay off a debt, you cannot say that debt was freely forgiven.

4:6-8 "Imputeth" and "impute" are from the same Greek word translated "counted" and "reckoned" in verses 3-4. This Greek word is an accounting term meaning "to calculate." Paul quotes David to provide an additional proof that God can "calculate" us to be righteous even if we have committed sins in the past.

4:7-8 Psalm 35:1-2

oned To Abraham for righteousness.

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

11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: 12 And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.

13 For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law [or observance of the law], but through the righteousness of [or that is imputed by] faith. 14 For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: 15 Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression.

16 Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all, 17 (As it is written, I have made Thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead [or restores the dead to life], and calleth those things which be not as though they were. 18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall Thy seed be. 19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: 20 -- He staggered not at

4:9-10 Two overlapping questions: Is God's offered righteousness only for observant Jews? And was Abraham counted righteous before or after he obeyed?

4:10 Ancient rabbis calculated that circumcision came twenty-nine years after the promise was made. The point is that if God "counted" Abraham righteous long before he was circumcised then circumcision couldn't possibly be required for salvation.

4:14 If obedience to God's laws is all that is required for sinners to be saved, then the work of Christ is unnecessary and we have no need to place our faith in Him.

4:15 Instead of bringing righteousness, the law actually brings judgment. Before a particular law exists, one cannot be condemned for breaking it; but as soon as one is made, it brings punishment to those who break it.

4:16 It is not only Jews who can find this righteousness. It is anyone who places their faith in God.

4:17 Gen. 17:4

4:17 God restored Abraham's and Sarah's bodies so that they could conceive Isaac.

4:19 What God predicted was physically impossible, but Abraham believed God anyway. He was willing to take the risk of taking God at His word because he believed God to be capable and trustworthy.

the promise of God through unbelief; but
was strong in faith, giving glory to God;
21 And being fully persuaded that, what he
had promised, he was able also to perform.
22 And therefore it was imputed to him for
righteousness.

23 Now it was not written for his sake
alone, that it was imputed to him; 24 But
for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if
we believe on him that raised up Jesus our
Lord from the dead; 25 Who was delivered
for our offenses, and was raised again for
our justification.

Summary

Paul turns to Genesis and the example of Abraham, the “father” of Israel, to show that this way to righteousness was already revealed from the earliest times. Having already made clear that “all have sinned” Paul asks us to consider how Abraham was “counted” righteous. Was it by working so hard that he paid off the “debt” for his sins? No, it was by believing that God could and would fulfill His promise to bless all nations through his descendant, Jesus the Christ.

Paul then uses the fact that Abraham was uncircumcised at the time the promise was made, and that God promised he would be the father of “many nations” to conclude that this same way of being “counted” righteous applies to all people, not just Jews.

Defining Faith

It is crucial when following the doctrinal discussions of Paul in Romans to understand what he means by “faith.” Faith in the Jewish mind is a belief in God and what He is able to do. In 4:18-24 Paul gives an example of what he means when he talks about “faith.” Abraham, knowing God to be powerful and trustworthy, chooses to believe in God's capabilities which causes him to accept God's promise and motivates him to follow God's direction. Thus “faith” is a conclusion about God drawn from evidence and experience that makes one willing to act in obedience to His direction.

Exercises

Questions and Discussion

Questions

1. What is Paul's response to the various excuses people give as to why they should not be condemned? _____

2. We might think that our tendency to break the Law means the law is too strict, but Paul says that it instead shows that the law is doing its job. In this context, what is Paul suggesting the job of the Law is? _____

3. Since keeping the law after we have broken it does not remove our condemnation, Paul says that God has provided another way to righteousness that falls outside the law. What is this way to righteousness that he is talking about? _____

4. According to the lesson notes, what is the meaning of the Greek word translated "impute" in 4:8? _____

Discussion

1. Why is it impossible to both be saved by keeping the law and by placing our faith in Jesus? _____

2. Why is it important to Paul that Abraham was counted righteous by God before he was circumcised? _____

3. If God clearly says that we will be judged by our deeds (2:6), why does Paul emphasize that careful keeping of God's laws will not save us (4:5-6)? _____

Lesson 4

Salvation Explained

Paul has already explained that salvation comes through faith in Jesus the Christ and His sacrifice. But what does that mean, and how does it work for the believer? In this section, Paul dives deeper into the significance of Jesus' death, how one man dying can offer salvation to the whole world, and how we can be freed from sin while still living in a body that is susceptible to temptation.

Christ Died for Sinners

Chapter 5:1-11

1 Therefore being justified [that is, declared innocent] by [or through] faith, we have peace [that is, reconciliation] with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace [that we do not deserve, but] wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations [that is, sufferings] also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience [that is, endurance]; 4 And patience, experience [that is, maturity]; and experience, hope: 5 And hope maketh not ashamed [or our hope is not disappointed]; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

6 For when we were yet without strength [that is, unable to save ourselves], in due time [or at the proper time] Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die [or it is rare for someone to die for a righteous man]: yet peradventure [or but perhaps] for a good man some would even dare to die. 8 But God commendeth [clearly shows] his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, being now justified [that is, declared

5:1-5 In this paragraph Paul summarizes all the benefits we receive through the work of Christ: freedom from guilt, reconciliation with God, God's favor, a growing maturity, an enduring hope, and the outpouring of the love of God through the Holy Spirit.

5:1 The word translated "peace" here is often used to describe the relationship between governments. The thought here is that whereas two entities were previously opposed to one another, they have now been reconciled.

5:3-5 It might seem odd that Paul introduces suffering into a discussion about salvation, but we will see in his expanded discussion on this topic in chapter 8 that Paul considers suffering an important part of salvation and being joined to Jesus.

5:6-8 How exactly are we saved? We are saved by a righteous one (Jesus) who was willing to die in our place.

innocent] by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath [that is, the judgment of God] through him. 10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. 11 And not only so, but we also joy [or rejoice] in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

5:10 Paul is not content to only say that we are saved by Jesus' death. He further hints that we are saved by Jesus' resurrection. How can this be true? He discusses this in more detail in chapter 8.

Summary

Paul builds on his previous example of the righteousness granted to Abraham to conclude that we also by the same method can access God's favor and forgiveness. He explains that Jesus' sacrifice for us is the means by which we can escape the judgment of God.

Jesus Compared to Adam

Chapter 5:12-21

12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon [or spread to] all men, for that [or because] all have sinned: 13 --for until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed [or taken into account] when there is no law. 14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure [that is, a type or pattern] of him that was to come. 15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. 16 And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offenses unto jus-

5:12 One man, Adam, sinned and death came into the world. Then because of our sins, death spread to everyone. This is the difficulty that must be resolved by salvation.

5:13-14 Even though, technically, those who lived between Adam and the giving of the law to Moses could not be accused of breaking the Law, they still were sinners and they still died. So in a narrow sense (technically guilty or not) they were affected by Adam's sin.

5:15-17 Jesus offers the reverse of what Adam offered. Adam introduced death and it ended up affecting everyone, but Jesus offers life to everyone as a free gift no matter what laws they may have broken.

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

18 Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

20 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: 21 That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

5:17 The phrase "they which receive" suggests that while salvation is a universal offer, only those who accept it "reign in life."

5:18 In the same way that Adam sinned and so death hung over all men, but only those who actually sinned died; Jesus death offers life to all men, but only those who accept it are rescued.

5:20 The law points out our sins and condemns us to punishment, but Jesus offers grace that exceeds any punishment that law breakers deserve.

Summary

Just like Adam's sin brought death to the whole world, Jesus' sacrifice offers salvation to the whole world. The first Adam brought sin and death, but the last Adam, Jesus, offers life and hope.

We Are Now Dead to Sin

Chapter 6:1-14

1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

3 — Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead

6:1-2 When we begin to understand that God's offer of forgiveness is free (that is, it costs us nothing), as selfish humans our next question is, "Can I sin all I want and just ask God to forgive me?" Paul rejects that idea in the harshest possible language.

6:3 In his first response to the question of why we shouldn't keep sinning after conversion, Paul turns to one of his favorite

by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: 6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. 7 For he that is dead is freed from sin. 8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: 9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. 10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. 11 Likewise reckon [or calculate] ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. 13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

themes: dying with Christ.

6:4 Paul is not talking about mode of baptism here as some have alleged. He is saying that when we are baptized, we are joined with Christ, and when we are joined with Christ, we also join him in death and resurrection—death to sin and resurrection to what God wants from our lives.

6:7 A dead person no longer breaks the law. In the same way, a Christian should be dead to sin and no longer break God's laws.

6:11 We are not actually righteous, but God can count us righteous because of Jesus sacrifice. In a similar way, we are not actually dead to sin, but we can count ourselves dead to sin by crucifying our sinful desires.

6:13 The Greek word translated "members" here refers to any part of the body. Every ability we have should now be surrendered to God and His direction.

Summary

Paul addresses a question people might have when they begin to understand that God is freely offering righteousness to sinners: Why not keep living a sinful life and just let God forgive us? He uses the illustration of death and resurrection to prove that salvation and sin are not compatible. Just like we wouldn't expect a dead person to keep on doing the same things he used to, a Christian should not keep on sinning. Instead our new life in Christ calls us to godliness.

Sin Is No Longer Our Master

Chapter 6:15-23

15 What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. 16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? 17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. 18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. 19 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh [or I speak in familiar human terms so that you can easily understand]: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. 21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. 22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. 23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

6:15 Paul now answers the question about sinning after conversion with a different illustration, emphasizing the fact that faith in Christ requires a change in behavior.

6:16-19 Paul explains that if we want to have the salvation Jesus offers, we must come under his control. Formerly, we were slaves to sin. But now, we are slaves of Jesus. We cannot serve both.

6:20-22 Paul creatively uses the terms “slave” and “free” to emphasize his point. When we were enslaved by sin, we could claim no righteousness but were destined for death. Now we are freed from the bondage of sin, but we are slaves to God to gives us everlasting life.

6:23 Paul contrasts “wages” and a “gift.” We work slavishly for sin, but all we “earn” is death. However, when we surrendered to God, He offers us eternal life as a free gift.

Summary

Should Christians sin? Paul answers the question this time using masters and servants as an illustration. It is impossible for someone to give his full allegiance to two masters. If we are servants of God, we cannot also be servants to sin. Each master also offers his own reward. If we serve sin, we get death. But if we serve God, we receive eternal life.

Exercises

Questions and Discussion

Questions

1. List some of the benefits Paul says we receive from the work of Christ. _____

2. Compare and contrast the results of Adam's sin and the results of Jesus' death. _____

3. If you could sin as much as you want without going to hell, would you? Why or why not? _____

4. How does Paul say dying with Christ should affect our interest in sin? _____

5. Who is our master before conversion? Who is our master after we are converted? _____

Discussion

1. If Jesus came to bring life, why do we still die? _____

2. Is Jesus' death substitutionary? If so, in what ways? _____

3. Despite Paul's warnings, many today use Paul's teaching on salvation by faith as an excuse for overlooking sin in their lives. How would you answer the question of why we can't keep sinning after conversion? _____

Lesson 5

The Conflict Between the Flesh and the Spirit

God has come to earth and offered us salvation and eternal life as a free gift. This is a wonderful thing, but a problem remains. We are stuck in sinful bodies and living in a broken and dying world! In this section, Paul explains why temptation and suffering are still part of the Christian's experience and tells us how to triumph in spite of these realities.

We Are Married to Christ

Chapter 7:1-6

1 — Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? 2 For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. 3 So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. 4 Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. 5 For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins [or our sinful desires], which were [awakened] by the law [or what the law called sin], did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. 6 But now we are delivered [or released] from [the condemnation of] the law, that being [made] dead [to that] wherein we were held [or that which held us]; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

7:1-2 Paul uses the laws of marriage and the fact that a dead person is not required to keep the law to illustrate how things change when we are joined to Christ.

7:4 Jesus death (and our death with him) frees us from the condemnation and requirements of the law.

7:5 Before we came to Christ, our sinful desires and actions were contrary to the law of God and brought a death sentence on us.

7:6 When we die with Christ, we are delivered from the condemnation of the law and are free to serve Him uncondemned.

Summary

In this third illustration of his answer to the question, “Why not continue in sin?” Paul uses marriage to demonstrate that once we have committed ourselves to Christ, we can no longer live as we did before. Just like a woman is free from marriage ties to her husband after he dies, we too are free from the law and its penalties after we are joined to Christ, our bridegroom. But now we serve a new partner, Jesus the Christ.

We Are Trapped in a Sinful Body

Chapter 7:7-25

7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin [or sinful]? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust [or desire], except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. 8 But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence [or kinds of desires]. For without [the knowledge of] the law sin was dead [that is, I did not recognize sin]. 9 For I was alive [or uncondemned] without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived [or condemned me], and I died [or was sentenced to death]. 10 And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. 11 For sin, taking occasion by [or seizing the opportunity to break] the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me [or sentenced me]. 12 Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

13 Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. 14 For we know that the law is spiritual [or divine]: but I am carnal, sold under [or enslaved by] sin. 15 For that which I do I allow not [or know I shouldn't]: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. 16 If then I do that which I would not,

7:7 The law is not the problem. The law merely points out the fact that we are not living as God wants us to.

7:7 The use of “I” in this verse and throughout the passage is likely a rhetorical device in which Paul recounts his own experience as typical of all humanity.

7:7 The word “lust” here means “longing for the forbidden.” (The same Greek word is translated “concupiscence” in verse 8.)

7:7 Ex. 20:17

7:8 The phrase “without the law sin was dead” means that sin is not recognized or acknowledged until the law condemns it.

7:9 There is no sentence of death until the law pronounces it, but once sin is identified, death is the verdict.

7:10 Those who follow God’s laws find life, but those who break them are condemned to death.

7:13 God’s good laws did not cause death. It was our choice to sin that condemned us to death.

7:16 When we admit that what we are doing is not good, we are also admitting that what the law requires is good.

I consent unto the law that it is good. 17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. 19 For the good that I would [or want to do] I do not: but the evil which I would not [or don't want to do], that I do. 20 Now if I do that I would not [or don't want to do], it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

21 I find then a law [that is, fact or truth], that, when I would [or want to] do good, evil is present with me. 22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24 O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

7:20 Paul clarifies that while our minds know better and can choose between right and wrong, it is our fleshly desires that draw us into sin.

7:21-23 Paul explains that because Christians are still in a physical body, they are still susceptible to temptation.

7:23 The introduction of another “law” here can be confusing, particularly since Paul has been asserting that the law is good and right. This new use of “law,” however, is simply a reference to another authority or master.

7:24-25 Jesus is the key to being delivered from our physical bodies. Only through Him can we get a new body that is not susceptible to temptation.

7:25 Paul uses a common Greek literary technique that combines the conclusion of one section with the introduction of the next. In basic essence, he is saying, “So we have two warring realities, my mind that knows better and my body that wants to sin anyway. What am I supposed to do about that?”

Summary

In case his previous illustration is misunderstood, Paul explains that the law is not the problem. We stand condemned under the law only because we followed our fleshly desires into sin.

The law is not evil, nor is it intended to bring death. We ourselves even acknowledge that our sinful behavior is not right. However, because we are sinners, we need another way to righteousness; that is, Jesus the Christ.

Paul's use of slave and master imagery in 7:13-25 emphasizes the choice that we have. We can choose to be enslaved by sin and die or to follow God and be saved.

Choosing God Brings Life

Chapter 8:1-17

1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in [or joined to] Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: 4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 5 For they that are after [or living according to] the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after [or living according to] the Spirit the things of the Spirit. 6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. 8 So then they that are in [or are following] the flesh cannot please God.

9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. 10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead [or dying] because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up [or resurrected] Christ from the dead shall also quicken [or resurrect] your mortal [or earthly] bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors [or have an obligation], not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 13 For if ye live after

8:1 Building on his previous discourse, Paul assures us that those who are joined to Christ and are following the direction of the Spirit are no longer under the sentence of death.

8:2 Paul uses “law” creatively in this verse to point out that we have a choice of two masters. We can either be joined to Jesus and follow His Spirit to life, or we can live under the condemnation of the law and receive death.

8:3 The law could never offer forgiveness to lawbreakers, but Jesus who lived a perfect life could.

8:3 In the Septuagint, the Greek phrase translated “for sin” is often used to refer to a sin offering.

8:4 Because of Jesus atonement, lawbreakers can now be declared righteous as long as they are joined to Him.

8:5-8 Paul offers us the choice of following the Spirit to life or following our carnal desires to death.

8:10-11 Because we live in a sin-cursed world, even Christians’ bodies die. But for those who serve Christ and have His Spirit, our physical bodies will one day be resurrected to new life.

8:12 We no longer have a debt to pay because of our sins. Instead we are free to follow Christ to life.

the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify [or put to death] the deeds of the body, ye shall live. 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. 15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, [that is] Father. 16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

8:14 The phrase “sons of God” echoes similar phrases in the Old Testament used to describe Israel (Hos. 11:1; Deut. 14:1; Isa. 43:6).

8:14-17 The relationship is no longer criminal to judge, but father to son. We are now part of the family of God.

8:15 The Aramaic word “Abba” is immediately followed by the Greek word of the same meaning. Both of these terms mean “father” and have a variety of uses including family relationships and prayers.

Summary

Paul emphasizes that the benefits are all on the side of those who reject the lure of sin and choose God as their master. Paul’s use of “Spirit” in this passage serves two purposes. First, it teaches us that the Spirit is our guide in following Christ. Second, it reminds us that since the Spirit resurrected Jesus, He can also resurrect us as well. Paul concludes that those who follow the Spirit’s direction and serve Christ rather than sin can have the sentence of death removed and be adopted into the family of God.

The Christian and Suffering

Chapter 8:18-39

18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. 19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. 20 For the creature [or creation] was made subject to vanity [that is frustration or transitoriness], not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same, in hope 21 Because [or that] the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glori-

8:18 In Paul’s concluding statement in the previous section, he mentioned that only those who suffer with Christ can be glorified with Him. Now Paul expands on that thought.

8:18 The word translated “reckon” is a Greek accounting term that means “to calculate.”

8:20 Because of sin, creation did not fulfill its created purpose, but God allowed it to continue because He desired our salvation.

ous liberty of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. 23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. 24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? 25 But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

26 —Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. 27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? 32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? 33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. 34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. 35 Who

8:23 The physical bodies of Christians are still subject to the curse of sin in this transitory period before the creation is restored.

8:24-25 The hope of the resurrection and eternal life help us endure earth's trials.

8:25-27 The Spirit intercedes for us in our trials, bringing our needs to God as God intended.

8:28-30 God is working out a good plan for His chosen people. This people, who He has called out for Himself, He both "foreknew" (prophesied), and predestinated (planned) that they would follow the example of Jesus and share in His glory.

8:29 Christ is the "firstborn" but God's intent is to bring many people into His family.

8:31-32 Why would trials cause us to doubt? God is clearly for us since He gave His own Son to redeem us.

shall separate us from the love of Christ?
Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution,
or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36 As it is written, for Thy sake We are
killed all The day long; We are accountEd
as sheep for The slaughTer.

8:36 Ps. 44:22

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

8:37 No earthly trials can separate us from
Christ. In fact, they draw us closer to Him.

38 For I am persuaded, that neither death,
nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor
powers, nor things present, nor things to
come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any
other creature, shall be able to separate us
from the love of God, which is in Christ
Jesus our Lord.

8:39 The word translated “creature” in this
verse refers to any created thing.

Summary

The beautiful, promise-filled picture Paul paints for the believer in 8:1-17, begs the question, “Why do Christians still suffer?” Paul puts Christian suffering in perspective by clarifying a number of important things. First he assures us that the future glory God has in store for us far exceeds any temporary suffering that we are called to experience. Second he points out that suffering sharpens our hope and strengthens our endurance. Third he reminds us that the Spirit of God intercedes for us, that God is working out a perfect plan, and that God is trustworthy and loving.

Exercises

Questions and Discussion

Questions

1. How does Paul’s marriage illustration in 7:1-6 illustrate the relationship between us, Christ, and the law? _____

2. What are the two parts of man Paul talks about in 7:7-25? _____

3. According to Paul in 8:20-21, why does God leave Christians in a broken world? _____

4. When Paul says that “all things work together for good,” what things is he referring to in the context? _____

5. How can Paul call Christians “more than conquerors” if Christians can expect suffering and death? _____

Discussion

1. Do Christians have both flesh and spirit? If so, how do they interact? If not, why not? _____

2. Is it possible to know whether or not we have the Spirit of God? If so, how? _____

3. According to Paul in 8:10-11, how is our body dead and how is it made alive? _____

4. What does Paul mean in 8:29 when he says, “whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate”? _____

Lesson 6

God's Chosen People

So, if everyone is saved the same way and everyone follows Christ the same way, and everyone shares the same hope, what about God's promises to the nation of Israel? Are the Jews not God's special people after all?

God Is Sovereign Over the Nations

Chapter 9:1-33

1 I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, 2 That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. 3 For I could wish that [I] myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: 4 Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the *adoption*, and the *glory*, and the *covenants*, and the giving of the *law*, and the *service* of God [that is, the temple worship], and the *promises*; 5 Whose are the *fathers* [or the patriarchs], and of whom as concerning the flesh *Christ* came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

6 Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect [or failed to be carried out]. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel [that is, not all descendants of Jacob are God's chosen people]: 7 Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in *Isaac* shall Thy seed be called. 8 That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. 9 For this is the word of promise, *at This Time Will I come, and Sara shall have a son.*

9:1-3 Paul loves his people so much that he is willing to sacrifice his own life for theirs.

9:4-5 All the glory of the Old Testament, with God's promises, mighty deeds, and the giving of the law, is centered around the Israelite nation.

9:6 It is not God or His promises that have changed. God never promised that every descendant of Abraham would be saved.

9:7 Ge. 21:9-12

9:8 The phrase "that is" is an indicator that what follows is Paul's interpretation of the quoted text.

9:8 God specifically chose the descendants of Isaac for His purposes.

9:9 Ge. 18:10,14

10 And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; 11 (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) 12 -- It was said unto her, The elder shall serve The younger. 13 As it is written, jacob have i loved, buT Esau have i haTed [that is, rejected].

14 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. 15 For he saith to Moses, i Will have mercy on Whom i Will have mercy, and i Will have compassion on Whom i Will have compassion. 16 So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. 17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for This same purpose have i raised Thee up, ThaT i mighT sheW my poWer in Thee, and ThaT my name mighT be declared ThroughouT aLL The earTh. 18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? 20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? 21 -- Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour [or for everyday use]?

22 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: 23 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, 24 -- Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

9:10 Paul takes his illustration further. Not all Isaac's descendants were God's chosen people. God specifically chose Jacob.

9:12 Ge. 25:21-23; 9:13 Mal. 1:2-3

9:13 In addressing the question, "Are all descendants of Abraham God's chosen people?" Paul is addressing a national question. Even though he mentions names of individuals in his selected illustrations, he is still speaking in a national sense. God chose the Israelites, not the Edomites.

9:15 Ex. 33:19

9:16 Paul concludes that it is entirely up to God how He chooses to use people groups and nations. Ultimately, if he choses to use the Jews or the Gentiles in special ways, that is His choice.

9:17 Ex. 9:16

9:18 Pharaoh and the Egyptians brought glory to God through their rejection of Him while God magnified His mercy by leading the Israelites safely out of Egypt.

9:19 When pointing out God's sovereignty, the obvious question that comes to our minds is, "If God is sovereign why does it matter how we respond?"

9:20 Paul uses the familiar illustration of a potter from Isaiah (29:16; 45:9) as an Old Testament example of the Jews rebelling against God's sovereignty.

9:22-23 Paul points out that God in His sovereignty has always predetermined that the wicked will face His wrath and the righteous will share in His glory.

9:22-24 Paul shifts here to looking at the faithful versus the unfaithful. God not only sovereignly choses what to do with the nations. He also sovereignly decides how to respond to the faithful and unfaithful peo-

25 As he saith also in Osee, i Will call Them my people, Which Were noT my people; and her beloved, Which Was noT beloved.

26 and iT shall come To pass, ThaT in The place Where iT Was said unTo Them, Ye are noT my people; There shall They be called The children of The living god.

27 Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though The number of The children of Israel be as The sand of The sea, a remnant shall be saved: 28 for he Will finish The Work, and cuT iT short in righteousness: because a short Work Will The Lord make upon The earTh.

29 And as Esaias said before, except The Lord of SabaoTh had left us a seed, We had been as Sodoma, and been made like unTo gomorrha.

30 What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. 31 But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. 32 Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; 33 As it is written, behold, i lay in Zion a sTumblingsTone and rock of offence: and Whosoever believeTh on him shall noT be ashamed [that is, disappointed].

ple groups within those nations. However, He is very patient because His ultimate goal is the redemption of all peoples.

9:25-26 God has not changed His plan. Hosea himself prophesied (2:23; 1:10) that God would welcome the Gentiles.

9:27-29 Paul looks to Isaiah (10:22-23; 1:9) to prove that God already said the unfaithful Jews would be cut off.

9:30-31 Paul's immediate conclusion is that since the Jews were not faithful and the Gentiles accepted salvation, God has welcomed the faithful Gentiles while rejecting the faithless Jews. However, he will have more to say about God's promises to Israel as a nation later.

9:32-33 Is. 8:14; 28:16

Summary

While Paul readily admits that God has blessed the Jews in many ways, He also points out that God has always been free to select people groups for His purposes. He did not select all of Abraham's descendants, but selected only Isaac's descendants. He did not even select all of Isaac's descendants, but selected only Jacob's descendants. He even selected the Egyptians to show His power to the Israelites. So it should not be surprising that He now has selected the Gentiles as well. In fact, the welcoming of the Gentiles and the rejection of the unfaithful Jews was foretold by the prophets.

The Chosen Are Those Who Believe

Chapter 10:1-21

1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. 2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. 4 For Christ is the end [or goal] of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

5 For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. 6 But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) 7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) 8 But what saith it? The Word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. 12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. 13 For Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they

10:1-4 Paul reiterates his desire that all the Jews would be saved, and restates why the unbelieving Jews are being rejected.

10:3 Deut. 9:4-6

10:3-4 Many of the Jews did not understand that God was offering them righteousness through faith in Jesus.

10:5 Paul uses Moses' statement in Lev. 18:5 to conclude that only those who keep the whole law perfectly can be justified by the law.

10:6-7 The phrase "that is" is an indicator that what follows is Paul's interpretation of the quoted text.

10:6-8 Paul interprets "the word" of Deut. 30:12-14 as a prophecy of the time when faith in the hearts of men would be sufficient for salvation because of the work of Christ.

10:11 Paul emphasizes that the phrase "whosoever believeth" (translated "he that believeth" in Isa. 28:16) means anyone can be saved, not just Jews.

10:11 In some contexts "be ashamed" refers to a guilty verdict (see Isa. 50:7-9).

10:13 Joel 2:32

have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written, **h**ow beauTiful are The feeT of Them ThaT preach The gospel of peace, and bring glad Tidings of good Things! 16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, **l**ord, Who haTh believed our report? 17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

18 But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, Their sound WenT inTo aIl The earTh, and Their Words unTo The ends of The World.

19 But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, **i** Will provoke you To jealousy by Them ThaT are no people, and by a foolish naTion **i** Will anger you.

20 But Esaias is very bold, and saith, **i** Was found of Them ThaT sought me noT; **i** Was made manifesT unTo Them ThaT asked noT afTer me.

21 But to Israel he saith, **a**ll day long **i** have sTreTched forTh my hands unTo a disobedienT and gainsaying people.

10:15 Isa. 52:7

10:15 The “gospel of peace” is the glad tidings of reconciliation between God and man. (Both “gospel” and “glad tidings” are translated from the same Greek word.)

10:16 Isa. 53:1

10:16 Since not all that hear the news believe it, many of the Jews remain unsaved.

10:18 Paul is likely using Ps. 19:4 as in analogy. Just like God’s character is evident throughout creation, God’s salvation message has been preached throughout the empire. (The Greek word translated “world” here has multiple meanings including universe, earth, empire, and mankind.)

10:19 Moses himself had predicted in Deuteronomy 32:21 that God would use another nation to draw the nation of Israel to Himself.

10:20 Paul applies Isaiah’s “them that sought me not” to the Gentiles.

10:20-21 Isa. 65:1-2

Summary

In one of the unique paradoxes of the book of Romans, Paul points out that God’s chosen are those who choose to embrace the good news of salvation through Jesus the Christ. While many of the Gentiles have believed, many of the Jews have refused. He further reminds his Jewish readers, that the acceptance of the Gentiles was not a sudden change of plans or a surprise, God had predicated it since the earliest times.

Exercises

Questions and Discussion

Questions

1. What advantages did the Israelites have? _____

2. How does Paul explain that God has not broken promises such as Isaiah 49:13-16? _

3. Isaiah says, "I will call them my people, which were not my people." According to Paul, who is God now calling "my people"? _____

4. In 10:14 how does Paul suggest that people hear the gospel? _____

5. The Greek word translated "world" has multiple meanings. List the ones given in the lesson notes. _____

Discussion

1. Did Esau have any chance at salvation? Why or why not? _____

2. What determines whether a person is appointed to judgment or to salvation? _____

3. Was it wrong for the Jews to continue to faithfully obey the law of Moses? Why or why not? _____

Lesson 7

God's Plans for Jews and Gentiles

Paul's discourse on God's sovereignty, describing His rejection of unfaithful Israel and His welcoming of the Gentiles raises some questions. Has God forsaken the nation of Israel? What are God's plans for the Jews and Gentiles? What place does each people group hold in the Christian church? Paul turns his attention to these questions next.

Has God Forsaken the Jews?

Chapter 11:1-36

1 I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot [or know] ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? How he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, 3 Lord, They have killed Thy prophets, and digged down Thine altars; and **i** am left alone, and They seek my life. 4 But what saith the answer of God unto him? **i** have reserved To myself seven Thousand men, Who have not bowed The knee To The image of baal. 5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded 8 (According as it is written, **god haTh given** Them The spirit of slumber, eyes That They should not see, and ears That They should not hear;) unto This day.

9 And David saith, **leT** Their Table be made

11:1 God has kept His promises. This is amply demonstrated by converted Jews like Paul.

11:2 Ps. 94:14, 1 Sam. 12:22

11:2 "of Elias" or, in the passage about Elijah (Instead of using chapter and verse, the Jews referred to Scripture passages by key figures or events.)

11:3-4 1 Ki. 19:18

11:5 Paul repeats that God's promises to Israel have always been promises to the faithful remnant.

11:7-8 This is a reference to Paul's discussion of God's chosen people groups in chapter 9. "The election" are the minority who accept salvation through Jesus. The "blinded" are the majority who reject God's offer and look to the law for salvation.

11:8 Deut. 29:4; Is 29:10

a snare, and a Trap, and a sTumbling-
block, and a recompence unTo Them: 10
LeT Their eyes be darkened, ThaT They may
noT see, and boW doWn Their back alWay.

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

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

13 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch
as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I mag-
nify mine office: 14 If by any means I may
provoke to emulation them which are my
flesh, and might save some of them. 15 For
if the casting away of them be the reconcil-
ing of the world, what shall the receiving
of them be, but life from the dead?

16 For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is
also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the
branches. 17 And if some of the branches
be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive
tree, wert grafted in among them, and with
them partakest of the root and fatness of
the olive tree; 18 Boast not against the
branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest
not the root, but the root thee.

19 Thou wilt say then, The branches were
broken off, that I might be grafted in. 20
Well; because of unbelief they were bro-
ken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not
high minded, but fear: 21 For if God spared
not the natural branches, take heed lest
he also spare not thee. 22 Behold there-
fore the goodness and severity of God: on
them which fell, severity; but toward thee,
goodness, if thou continue in his goodness:
otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. 23 And
they also, if they abide not still in unbelief,
shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft

11:9-10 Ps. 69:22-23

11:11 God's sovereign purposes are not
arbitrary, but redemptive. God's purpose
in welcoming the Gentiles is to move the
Jews to turn to Him.

11:15 Instead of rejecting the Jews, God is
eagerly waiting to accept them.

11:16-24 In case the Gentiles are now
thinking proudly about their place in God's
family, Paul reminds them that the prom-
ises and the patriarchs belong to the Jews.
The Gentiles are welcomed into that cove-
nant family, but are not superior.

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

25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. 26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion The deliverer, and shall Turn away ungodliness from Jacob: 27 For This is my covenant unto Them, When I shall Take away Their sins.

28 As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. 29 For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. 30 For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: 31 Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. 32 For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.

33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! 34 For Who hath known The mind of The Lord? Or Who hath been his counselor? 35 Or Who hath first given To him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?

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

11:25 To the Jews, a "mystery" was something that could only be known through divine revelation. It often was used in reference to future events.

11:26 Is. 59:20-21

11:26 "All Israel" refers to Israel as a people group and not to every individual (see also Joshua 7:25).

11:27 Is. 27:9; Jer. 31:33

11:29 Paul reminds his readers that God's promises do not change.

11:33 Paul rejoices at how God's sovereign decrees (judgments) govern the nations for His purposes and the blessing of His people.

11:34 Is. 40:13-14

11:35 Job 35:7; 41:11

Summary

The previous discussions on God sovereignly selecting people groups for His own purposes and many Jews being rejected because they refused to accept the offer of salvation through Christ, raise the obvious question, “Has God given up on the nation of Israel?” Paul answers with an emphatic, “No!” He explains that Jews are indeed being saved (including himself), that the acceptance of the Gentiles does not displace the Jewish nation, and that God has a future plan for Israel after the time of the Gentiles is fulfilled. He then rejoices in the intricacy and beauty of God’s plan to save both Jews and Gentiles.

Unified Through Service

Chapter 12:1-21

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable [or logical] service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly [or in an accurate way], according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. 4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy [that is, preaching], let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith [or only what God has revealed]; 7 Or [if your gift is] ministry [that is service], let us wait on our [or use it for] ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; 8 Or he that [has the gift of] exhorteth [or encouraging], on [or use it for] exhortation: he that giveth, let

12:1-2 Paul revisits his earlier themes of Jesus as a sacrifice for us and Jesus’ followers choosing to be led by the Spirit of God by evoking temple imagery where instead of animal sacrifices, church members are themselves the sacrifice.

12:3 In the previous chapter, Paul warned the Gentiles to not think too highly of themselves. Throughout the book he has warned the Jews to humbly accept God’s offer of salvation. Here he urges all believers to embrace humility.

12:4-5 Paul pictures all believers working together as parts of one unified body of Christ.

12:6-8 Instead of being proud of our gifts or critical of those who do not see things the way we do, Paul urges believers to use their different gifts for the good of their fellow believers. Let God bless others through you!

him do it with simplicity [or liberality]; he that ruleth [that is, leads], [let him lead] with diligence [or earnest effort]; he that sheweth mercy [or whose gift is acts of compassion], with cheerfulness [or cheerful willingness].

9 Let love be without dissimulation [that is, hypocrisy]. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to [or cling to] that which is good. 10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; 11 Not slothful in business [or not lacking in holy zeal]; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; 12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; 13 Distributing to the necessity [or needs] of saints; given to hospitality.

14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. 15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. 16 Be of the same mind one toward another [that is, live in harmony with one another]. Mind not high things [or don't be conceited], but condescend to men of low estate [or humble people]. Be not wise in your own conceits [or proud of your own ideas].

17 Recompense to no man [or do not return] evil for evil. Provide things honest [or do what is right and proper] in the sight of all men [or in relating to everyone]. 18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. 19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath [or leave it for God to judge]: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; i Will repay, saith the Lord. 20 Therefore if Thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he Thirst, give him drink: for in so doing Thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. 21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

12:9-12 Genuine love, refusal to be involved in gossip or division, patient kindness, putting others' needs ahead of our own, setting a good example, and being generous with what we have are all important factors in building a strong church and getting along with people from different backgrounds and viewpoints.

12:14 Matt. 5:44

12:15 Paul calls believers to empathy and sharing in each others joys and sorrows instead of criticism and thinking we know better how to do things or how people should be feeling.

12:17 Matt. 5:39

12:18 Paul doesn't say "try to live peaceably." He says, "If there is any possible way, using every resource at your disposal, live at peace with everyone."

12:19 Deut. 32:35

12:20 Prov. 25:21-22

12:20 "coals of fire" refers to the judgment of God. Each act of kindness is another opportunity for repentance and increases the accountability of the one who receives it.

Summary

Paul now turns to the question of what a mixed church of Jews and Gentiles should look like. He exhorts members to follow Jesus' example in offering themselves in sacrificial service, to love and support one another in the body of Christ, and to live peaceably together by practicing ready forgiveness.

Exercises

Questions and Discussion

Questions

1. What is the context of Psalm 69:22-23? Explain how the verses describe David's experience and how they are prophetic of Jesus. _____

2. Who is Paul talking about in 11:14 and what does he mean by "provoke to emulation"? _____

3. What is the "mystery" Paul is saying has now been revealed in 11:25? _____

4. What Old Testament verse tells us that pride causes relationship problems? Write out the verse and the reference. _____

5. What does the phrase "not slothful in business" mean? _____

Discussion

1. Why is Paul so overwhelmed with the wisdom of God in 11:33-35? How is this realization the opposite of traditional views about predestination? _____

2. Choose one of the spiritual gifts Paul mentions and list 3 practical ways that it might be used in the church. What is your spiritual gift? _____

3. It is natural to want to hurt others who have hurt us or to defend ourselves when attacked. Why, practically speaking, is it better to show kindness and forgiveness than to seek revenge? _____

Lesson 8

A Unified Testimony

In chapters 13 and 14, Paul continues his discourse on what the unified body of Christ looks like. He first addresses the witness of the church in the public sphere, then turns his attention to how to resolve theological and practical differences in a godly way. His burden is to see both Jews and Gentiles working together in harmony and showcasing Christ to the world.

The Christian in Society

Chapter 13:1-14

1 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers [that is, the governing authorities]. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. 2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance [or institution] of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. 3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: 4 For he is the minister [or servant] of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. 5 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. 6 For for this cause pay ye tribute [or taxes] also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. 7 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute [or tax] to whom tribute is due; custom [or toll] to whom custom; fear [or respect] to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. 9 For this, Thou shalt

13:1 Since emperor worship was an important part of Roman society, there was automatic tension between the Christian church and the state. Paul urges Christians to be respectful of government authorities to show that they recognize government as a God-designed institution.

13:3-4 God has a good purpose for government. They are to encourage good behavior and punish evil behavior.

13:5 We obey civil laws not only to avoid civil penalties, but also because it is the right thing to do.

13:9 Ex 20:13-17, Matt. 22:40

noT commiT adulTery, Thou shalt noT kill,
Thou shalt noT sTeal, Thou shalt noT
bear false WiTness, Thou shalt noT coveT;
and if there be any other commandment,
it is briefly comprehended in this saying,
namely, Thou shalt love Thy neighbor
as Thyself. 10 Love worketh no ill to his
neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of
the law.

11 And that, knowing the time, that now
it is high time to awake out of sleep: for
now is our salvation nearer than when we
believed. 12 The night is far spent, the
day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the
works of darkness, and let us put on the
armor of light. 13 Let us walk honestly, as
in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness,
not in chambering [or illicit affairs] and
wantonness [or flagrant immorality], not
in strife and envying. 14 But put ye on the
Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision
for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

13:10 Since the law is designed to prevent
people from taking advantage of others or
hurting them, and true love would never
harm another person, if we truly love other
people, we will not need to worry about
breaking God's laws.

13:12-14 Christians who are living for God
and anticipating Christ's return will not be
involved in sins that bring shame to the
church or the name of Christ.

Summary

How does the unified Christian church look and function in broader society? First, they respect governmental authorities. Instead of joining the Jewish insurrection or the Roman anti-tax movement, the Christians would be known for paying their taxes and obeying the laws of the land. Second, Christians truly love other people. Showing unselfish love for all would give them a reputation for being good, caring people. Third, they would not be involved in the common public sins of the rest of society but would be known for their upright, moral lives.

Dealing with Differences

Chapter 14:1-23

1 Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. 2 For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. 3 Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. 4 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

5 One man esteemeth one day above another. Another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. 6 He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth [meat], eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. 7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. 8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. 9 For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living. 10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? Or why dost thou set at nought [or look down on] thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. 11 For it is written, **as i** live, **saiTh** The **l**ord, every knee shall **boW** To me, and every Tongue shall confess To **g**od.

12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. 13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stum-

14:1 Believers who embraced traditional Jewish customs were to be welcomed, but disputes over these matters was to be avoided.

14:2 If you were taught all your life that eating non-kosher food was sinful, it would be difficult to just start eating non-kosher food after conversion.

14:4 It is easy for us to look critically at others who don't do things the way we think they should be done. Paul says we should accept those who are different and leave the judging of motives to God.

14:5 Gentiles had to abandon their holy days because of their ties to idolatry. Many Jews still observed holy days. Paul says that observing or not observing are equally acceptable as long as God is the one being honored.

14:7-8 It is not about what we would like other people to do, but about what honors God.

14:10 Matt. 7:1

14:11 Isaiah 45:23

14:13 Instead of judging others, we should make sure that we don't undermine someone else's sincere belief in God.

blingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

14 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean. 15 But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat [or food], now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died. 16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of: 17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. 18 For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.

19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things where-with one may edify another. 20 For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence. 21 It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. 22 Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. 23 And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

14:14 No food can actually defile our soul. But if we do something that we believe is wrong, it can harm our conscience.

14:15-16 If we flaunt our liberties, and encourage others to ignore their conscience, we can cause others to sin.

14:20 While all foods are clean, it is wrong to eat something if it will cause another to violate his conscience.

14:23 If we do what we believe is wrong, we dishonor God in our hearts and sin against Him.

Summary

The Roman church was largely made up of Gentile believers. Many of these people had likely attended the Jewish synagogue for years before their conversion and thus were observant of Jewish customs in varying degrees. Add to this the recent return of the Jewish Christians after the death of Claudius and the expiration of his decree expelling them from Rome, and you have a church with a high probability for tension and disagreement over religious observances. Paul here urges those whose faith is strong (who understand that traditional Jewish religious practices are not necessary for salvation) to have forbearance with those who are weak (who feel that traditional Jewish religious practices are important ways to honor God). He specifically prohibits forcing people to violate their consciences.

Exercises

Questions and Discussion

Questions

1. What does Paul mean by “the higher powers” in 13:1? _____

2. What is at the heart of all the commandments? _____

3. What does “make not provision for the flesh” mean? _____

4. How is looking down on others and God’s judgment related? Compare 14:10 with Matthew 7:2-3. _____

Discussion

1. Do governments always do the will of God? How should the Christian relate to corrupt governments? _____

2. Does it matter whether or not we observe holidays? Why or why not? _____

3. Paul says that the more conservative tend to judge the more liberal and the more liberal tend to look down on the more conservative. What are some practical examples of that in your experience? _____

Lesson 9

Concluding Thoughts

Paul concludes his letter with a call for all Christians to follow Jesus' example, a discussion of his plans for traveling to Rome, and greetings and encouragement for specific friends. He finishes with a beautiful benediction for the saints.

A Call to Christlike Behavior

Chapter 15:1-13

1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2 -- Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. 3 For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of Them That reproached Thee fell on me. 4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. 5 Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: 6 That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

7 Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God. 8 Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister [or servant] of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: 9 And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For This cause I Will confess To Thee among The genTiles, and sing unTo Thy name. 10 And again he saith, Rejoice, ye genTiles, WiTh his people. 11 And again, praise The Lord, all ye genTiles; and laud him, all ye people. 12 And again, Es-

15:1 Are our spiritual beliefs and convictions really superior to others? If so, we should be even better equipped to be patient and compassionate with others.

15:3 Ps. 69:9

15:3-6 Jesus is our example of humble servant hood that calls diverse people groups to God.

15:7 Did Jesus refuse to accept us until we were perfect? Certainly not! In a similar way, we should love and encourage others despite their faults.

15:9-12 Paul points out that one of the key reasons Jesus came was to fulfil God's promise to welcome the Gentiles into God's family.

15:9 Ps. 18:49

15:10 Deut. 32:43

15:11 Ps. 117:1

aias saith, There shall be a root of jesse,
and he That shall rise To reign over The
GenTiles; in him shall The GenTiles TrusT.

15:12 Isa. 11:1,10

13 Now the God of hope fill you with all
joy and peace in believing, that ye may
abound in hope, through the power of the
Holy Ghost.

Summary

As Paul wraps up his discourse on differences in the church, he urges the Gentile believers to welcome and bear with the believing Jews, and encourages the Jewish believers to recognize and embrace God's plan for the Gentiles. In sum, Paul urges all believers to encourage and accept one another so that they can experience God's blessing.

Paul's Plans

Chapter 15:14-33

14 And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another. 15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God, 16 That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost. 17 I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God. 18 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, 19 Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have

15:14-16 Paul expresses confidence in his readers, but explains that he is moved by a desire to see the Gentile church flourish to the glory of God.

15:19 Paul says that he has preached the gospel from Jerusalem (the southernmost point of his ministry) all around the Mediterranean to Illyricum (above Philippi, the northernmost point of his ministry).

fully preached the gospel of Christ. 20 Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation: 21 But as it is written, To Whom he Was noT spoken of, They shall see: and They ThaT have noT heard shall undersTand.

22 For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you. 23 But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you; 24 Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company. 25 But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister [or give the collected gift] unto the saints. 26 For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem. 27 It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things. 28 When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain. 29 And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

30 Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; 31 That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints; 32 That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed. 33 Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

15:21 Isa. 52:15

15:22-23 Paul has been too busy preaching to take a trip to Rome, but now that opposition is increasing, it is time for him to move on to new territory.

15:26 Paul has collected funds from Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Corinth, and perhaps other churches as well.

15:28 The phrase "sealed to them" indicates that Paul and the elders who accompanied him were being careful to ensure that the donated funds were safely delivered to Jerusalem and not tampered with along the way.

15:31 Because of Jewish opposition, Paul's next trip didn't go as he planned. Instead he was arrested in Jerusalem. But he did spend at least two years preaching at Rome. And Clement (an early church elder at Rome) writes that Paul preached in Spain after his release.

Summary

In this closing section of the letter, Paul explains his motivations for writing. First, as the apostle to the Gentiles, he feels a particular responsibility to the church at Rome. Second, he is planning his next mission trip and would like to stop in Rome on his way to Spain. He also asks for the Roman Christians' prayer support as he delivers the offerings lifted for the support of the saints at Jerusalem.

Individual Greetings and Benediction

Chapter 16:1-27

1 — I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea: 2 That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succorer of many, and of myself also.

3 Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus: 4 Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. 5 Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my well-beloved Epaphroditus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ. 6 Greet Mary, who bestowed much labor on us. 7 Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

8 Greet Amplias my beloved in the Lord. 9 Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved. 10 Salute Apelles approved in Christ. Salute them which are of Aristobulus' household. 11 Salute Herodion my kinsman. Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord.

12 Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who la-

16:1 Paul is writing from Corinth, the capital of the Roman province of Achaia in Greece. Cenchrea is a port city located only five miles away.

16:1 Phebe, a servant (lit. deaconess) and generous supporter of the church, is apparently Paul's letter carrier.

16:3 "Priscilla" lit. Prisca (Luke adds the diminutive "illa" in Acts to show endearment. The translators apparently added it here to avoid confusion.)

16:7 Andronicus and Julia are apparently a missionary couple ("apostle" has multiple meanings including that of missionary) who are related to Paul. However, we don't know what the exact relationship was.

16:10 Aristobulus was the brother of Herod Agrippa I. He had died a few years earlier, but these may be servants of his family.

16:11 Narcissus had served the emperor Claudius, but died prior to this writing.

bor in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which labored much in the Lord. 13 Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine. 14 Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them. 15 Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them.

16 Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.

17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. 18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. 19 For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil. 20 And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

21 Timotheus my work-fellow, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you.

22 I Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord.

23 Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the chamberlain [or treasurer] of the city saluteth you, and Quartus a brother. 24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, 26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of

16:16 A kiss of greeting was typically reserves for close friends and family. Paul's institution of the holy kiss encourages church members to consider each other part of the family of God. This was likely a particular challenge for a mixed church like Rome.

16:21 Acts 17:5, 20:4

16:23 I Cor. 1:14

16:25-26 In a fitting conclusion, Paul reiterates his premise (1:2) that God has revealed through the prophets his plan for both Jew and Gentile to be saved through Jesus the Christ.

the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: 27
To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

Summary

Paul introduces Phebe, who is carrying his letter. Greets his friends in the church at Rome including his dear friends, Priscilla and Aquila, who helped him in Ephesus for years before returning to their home city of Rome. He then warns against agitators and false teachers, and shares greetings from his current companions including Timothy who has been helping Paul with church administration since his second missionary journey. Paul closes with a benediction that summarizes God's plan for welcoming both Jews and Gentiles into the church.

Exercises

Questions and Discussion

Questions

1. Who are the "strong" and who are the "weak" in 15:1? Explain. _____

2. How was Jesus a servant of the Jews (15:8)? _____

3. According to 15:15-16, what was Paul's purpose in writing to the Roman churches? _____

4. What did Paul mean when he said that he had “no more place in these parts” (15:23)?

5. List several Gentile churches that gave funds for the Christians at Jerusalem. _____

Discussion

1. In 15:5 Paul encourages the Roman Christians to be “like minded.” Whose thinking was he wanting them to copy? _____

2. How could Paul call the Roman Christians “full of all goodness” when they were bickering with each other? _____

3. Is our practice of the holy kiss today consistent with Paul’s intention for the first century believers? Explain. _____
