**Book 2**

**The Book of Romans**

**Part 2 of 3**

**This is the second of three study guides on Romans chapters 1-8.** Because Romans is set up to make points that systematically build on each other, it would be helpful to start with the first study guide first.

**Introduction**

The book of Romans is one of the longest and most significant things written by the Apostle Paul, formerly known as Saul of Tarsus. Paul was a Jewish rabbi belonging to a group called the Pharisees, and he passionately devoted his life to observing the Torah of Moses and the traditions of Israel. He viewed Jesus and his followers as a threat to these traditions, so he persecuted them. His life was changed, however, when he had a radical encounter with the risen Jesus himself. Paul was commissioned to become an apostle for Jesus, an official representative to the world of non-Jewish people (or Gentiles).

As part of this new vocation, he started going by his Roman name, Paul, and he traveled about the ancient Roman empire telling people about the risen King Jesus. These new converts would form communities called churches, and Paul would occasionally write letters to these churches to foster their faith, address specific problems, or answer questions. The book of Romans is one of these letters written later in his career.

In this series guide, we want to help you grow in your confidence as a student of the Bible. We have a couple of ways we aim to meet this goal. One way is by providing guiding questions that help as you read the letter of Romans. Each week will be structured similarly. There will be five sessions for each week:

* **Discovery**: Day 1 will feature questions that prompt you to read the focus passage/chapter and carefully observe what the passage is saying.
* **Deeper Look**: On days 2-4, the questions and activities will invite you to re-read the passage, taking a deeper look at the

cultural connections and theological topics of the verses and interpreting the applicable meanings of the passage.

* **Do It**: The questions on Day 5 will focus on reflection and challenge us to discern how the Lord wants us to apply the teaching of the passage to our lives.

Our prayer is that this study guide would provide on-ramps for you to enter into reading Romans, tools to help you understand the book, and encouragement to apply what you understand by living it out in your life!

References

1 Bible Study Fellowship, (2017). “Romans Introduction Lesson,” p. 2. San Antonio: BSF International.

2 Godet, F. L. (1977). Commentary on Romans. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications. (As cited in “Romans Introduction Lesson”).

3 Luther, M. (1976). Commentary on Romans. P. xiii. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications. (As cited in “Romans Introduction Lesson”).

**Week 1:**

**Condemned through Adam; Justified through Christ**

**Key verses: Romans 5:10; 5:18-19**

**Romans 5:10 -** *For if, while we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to Him through the death of His Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through His life.*

**Romans 5:18-19 -** *Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.*

**Day 1: Discover Romans 5:1-11**

**Read Romans 5:1-11.**

Before you read, pray for eyes to see and ears to hear the spiritual truths the Lord has for you today! As you read the passage, observing what it says without interpreting. For each verse, use the space below to record your observations:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Verses* | *My observations* |
| 5:1-5 |  |
| 5: 6-8 |  |
| 5: 9-11 |  |

These verses explain in legal-like language how we can become righteous through Christ. With Romans 8:18-39, they also serve as bookends for Paul’s discussion on sanctification, the process of taking up your cross and following Jesus to become more like Him.

Organize your observations by summarizing what you observed that the passages said about the topics below.

* How have we gained access to the grace of God?
* What does this passage say about sufferings?
* In what ways are the three persons of the Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) portrayed in this passage?
* In what ways does God show His love in this passage?
* Who can receive God’s love?
* How is a believer justified?
* How is a believer reconciled with God?
* How is a believer saved?

**Day 2: Deeper Look – Romans 5:1-11**

When we read scripture, we need to interpret the meaning OUT OF the passage, not INTO it.

**Read** **Romans 5:1-2** in the following versions of the Bible.

**English Standard Bible:**

*Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.****2****Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

**The Amplified Bible:**

*Therefore, since we have been justified [that is, acquitted of sin, declared blameless before God] by faith, [let us grasp the fact that] we have peace with God [and the joy of reconciliation with Him] through our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed).*

**The New Living Translation:**

*Therefore, since we have been made right in God’s sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us.****2****Because of our faith, Christ has brought us into this place of undeserved privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God’s glory.*

**The Message:**

*By entering through faith into what God has always wanted to do for us—set us right with him, make us fit for him—we have it all together with God because of our Master Jesus. And that’s not all: We throw open our doors to God and discover at the same moment that he has already thrown open his door to us. We find ourselves standing where we always hoped we might stand—out in the wide open spaces of God’s grace and glory, standing tall and shouting our praise.*

The Greek word, *dikaioo*, may be translated, “to render righteous,” “to declare righteous.” It is also translated as “justified.” What are some other ways that concept is translated in the Romans 5:1?

Which of these ways of translating *dikaioo* make the most sense to you or impact you the most?

Another key word in this passage is *peace*. In the Greek, it is *eirene* and may be translated, “the tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and content with its earthly lot, of whatsoever sort that is,” (Thayer’s Greek Lexicon).

In what ways have you experienced peace?

In the way it is used in Romans 5:1, is peace a feeling? Why or why not?

According to this passage, what does it mean to act in or by faith?

What is the role of problems (trials, sufferings) in the life of a believer?

How would you describe your character at this moment of time?

How may focusing on the hope of God’s glory give you comfort and peace?

**Read Ephesians 2:1-9.**

What is your personal experience of believing in the Lord Jesus Christ for your salvation? In the space below, take some time to reflect on your own experience of God’s grace and the work of saving you and giving you Christ’s righteousness.

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**Day 3: Discover Romans 5:12-19**

**Read Romans 5:12-21**, observing what the passage says. For each verse, use the space below to record your observations:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Verses* | *My observations* |
| 5: 12-14 |  |
| 5: 15-17 |  |
| 5: 18-19 |  |

**Day 4: Deeper Look - Romans 5:12-19**

As described in Romans 3:19-26 and those first eleven verses in chapter 5, justification by faith is our personal trust in Christ’s sacrifice paying the price for our sins to make us right with God, sparing us from His righteous judgment which would otherwise condemn us for our sins to eternal punishment separated from Him in Hell.

**Read Romans 5:12.**

Who is this “one man?”

In verse 14, Paul makes clear the “one man” he’s talking about is Adam, whose rebellion against God in the garden poisoned all of humanity after him with a sinful human nature. Have you ever felt, “That’s not fair! I never ate from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, ADAM did! What did I do to deserve inheriting a sin nature?”

The term ***federal headship*** refers to the idea that the consequences of what the leader at the top – say, a nation’s ruler or a corporation’s CEO – does or says cascades down to those under their leadership. For example, if the CEO invents the iPhone or is arrested in a bribery scandal, there are employees beneath him who benefit or suffer because of something they personally had no control over.

The only way to escape the consequences of such a leader’s bad decisions is to change our nationality or find a job at a different company. We need a better leader and a new identity. “That criminal creep Cogswell destroyed the company. I had to quit my job at Cogswell Cogs, but fortunately I’m now a Spacely Sprockets employee.”

**Read Romans 5:6-8 and 5:14-17** and then work through the questions below.

List the ways Adam, or “a pattern,” and Jesus, “the one to come” are similar and different. In what ways does Jesus set the pattern right?

What is “the gift” and how does it compare to the “trespass”? Why do you think it is important to understand Adam and the origin of sin in contrast to Jesus who takes away the sins of the world?

Think back to the thought “That’s not fair! What did I do to deserve inheriting a sin nature?” and how we suffer because of something Adam did that we personally had no control over. What response do these verses provide to that line of thinking?

What is “the gift” and how does it compare to the “trespass”? Why do you think it is important to understand Adam and the origin of sin in contrast to Jesus who takes away the sins of the world?

How do you respond to God as you consider this gift? Have you received it? In what ways do you continue to receive it?

**Day 5: Do it**

**Read the following verses** and relate them to the ideas in Romans 5:12-19 about our old Adam identity and our new Christ identity. Pray and meditate on the idea of being freely given by God a new identity, with a clean slate and a new nature defined by the righteousness of Christ instead of the sin of Adam.

**Read John 3:3 | Read 1 Peter 1:23 | Read 2 Corinthians 5:17**

**Read 2 Corinthians 5:14-17**.

When the New Testament uses the word “flesh,” most of the time it’s to describe our old “Adam” sinful nature.

Reflect on your life and think about where you are now as a person.

In what ways do you see things differently and see things with a perspective more like Christ’s? What has changed in how you view others?

In what other ways do you see the life of Christ in your life? How would you like to see Jesus rule over more of your life?

**Week 2**

**Justified by Faith to be Baptized into…*Death?***

**Key verses: Romans 6:4-6, 6:11**

**Romans 6:4-6** *- We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin.*

**Romans 6:11** *- In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.*

**Day 1: Discover Chapter 5:19-6:21**

**Read Romans 5:19-6:21.** As you observe, think of what’s happening in this passage in the context of what Paul has said so far.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Verses | My observations |
| 5:19-216:1-2 |  |
| 6:3-9 |  |
| 6:10-14 |  |
| 6:15-21 |  |

This week, we’ll be looking more closely at the idea of being justified by faith instead of the works of the law, as described earlier in Romans 3 and Romans 5.

**Day 2: Deeper Look – Romans 6:1-14**

**Read Ephesians 2:8-9.**

This idea that our capacity for righteousness comes from God and not our own self-effort or sinful human nature saturates the New Testament. The “commandments” of the New Testament play out differently from the laws of the Old Testament. The instructions God gives us in the epistles (the letters between Acts and Revelation) to “work out our salvation” tend to follow an interesting pattern: an **indicative** paired with an **imperative**.

**An indicative statement “indicates” a spiritual truth,** most typically explaining something that God has done for us and/or provided for us. **An imperative statement tells us the actions we should take** in response to being empowered by that truth.

Sometimes the imperative is stated before the indicative, and, often, more than one indicative may be grouped with one or more imperative. Sometimes an entire chapter might be indicative, then maybe a “Therefore…” with a string of imperatives. But indicatives/imperatives most of the time follow a pattern like this: “Because this indicative is true, ***therefore*** ***then*** do this imperative.”

For example, **1 Peter 2:9-10** reads:

*But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.*

The **indicatives** are:

* “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession”
* “Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God”
* “Once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy”

The **imperative** is:

* “Declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”

For the verses below in Romans 6, try to **hunt for these indicative/imperative relationships** and **fill in the missing pieces**. Think about the consequences of a focus on obeying imperative verses without the context of indicative verses. How might that focus lead to personal failure and discouragement and/or attitudes of self-righteousness? (The first one has been filled in as an example.)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **What are the indicatives?** | **What are the imperatives?** |
| **Indicative verses:** Romans 6:3-4**Indicatives:** We’re baptized into Christ’s death. We’ve been buried. Christ was raised from the dead. | **Imperative verse:** Romans 6:4**Imperative:** Walk in newness of life. |
| **Indicative verses:** Romans 6:5-7**Indicatives:** | **Imperative verse:** Romans 6:6**Imperatives:** No longer be a slave to sin |
| **Indicative verses:** Romans 6:8-10**Indicatives:** | **Imperative verse:** Romans 6:11**Imperatives:**  |
| **Indicative verse:** Romans 6:14**Indicatives:** | **Imperative verses:** Romans 6:12-13**Imperatives:**  |

**Day 3: Deeper Look - Romans 6:3-9; Colossians 2:12-15**

Read Romans 6:3. “Death” probably would NOT pop into most people’s minds when they think about the celebration of the rite of baptism, which we associate with the joyful rebirth for a new believer in Christ.

Wikipedia offers this definition of the original Greek words for baptism:

*The Greek words are used in a great variety of meanings. βάπτω and βαπτίζω in Hellenism had the general usage of "immersion," "going under" (as a material in a liquid dye) or "perishing" (as in a ship sinking or a person drowning), with the same double meanings as in English "to sink into" or "to be overwhelmed by," with bathing or washing only occasionally used and usually in sacral contexts.*

The significance of “immersion” or “going under” is why Grace Church and many other churches choose to perform baptisms with a “total dunk.” The total depravity of our sin nature makes our old-self Adam identity highly problematic. Adam isn’t like a broken bone that can be set and healed after some time in a cast. Adam is more like a body overrun by cancer. Adam needs more than a tumor removed or an organ transplant; he needs a *full-body transplant*. For us to be born again as a new creature with Christ’s DNA of righteousness, “Adam” doesn’t need his problems patched up and fixed; *he needs to DIE.*

**Read Romans 6:3-9** and **Colossians 2:12-15.**

Work through the line of thinking in these verses and summarize your thoughts.

**Day 4: Deeper Look – Romans 6:16-20**

In the second half of Romans 6 and into Romans 7, we find ourselves with a bit of a spiritual identity crisis. It’s as if we’ve gotten a body transplant into cyborg body and the nervous system hasn’t made the connections and the different parts of the new body haven’t assimilated to work together smoothly yet. We need some serious physical therapy to figure out how to walk with these crazy new bionic legs.

**Read Romans 6:16-20**, where Paul gives us a new identity comparison – that of a slaves and freed people.

After the end of the American Civil War, many freed slaves, having only known a life of slavery, had no idea how to go about living a life of freedom and their lives potentially still fell into old patterns of slavery.

**Read verses 20-21** and think about someone still trapped in a sin nature without Christ who would be obliviously out of sync with God’s heart.

What does it mean for a slave of sin to be “free in regard to righteousness?”

Still thinking about verses 20-21, what thoughts do you have about what “slaves to righteousness” might look like in verse 18.

**Romans 6:14** says the reason sin won’t be our master is because we’re under grace instead of being under law. We’ll revisit this when we dig into chapter 7, but note the thoughts you have now in response to these questions below:

What does it mean to be under law?

What does it mean to be under grace?

How would being under grace prevent sin from being our master?

**Day 5: Do It!**

How can the ideas in **Romans 6:14** make it easier, even *natural*, for us to live out **Romans 6:15-20?**

**“Because Jesus is our righteousness, there is nothing we could do to make God love us more, and nothing we have done to make God love us less.” – J.D. Greear**

Meditate on **Romans 6:15-20 and Colossians 2:12-15**

Think back to the Wikipedia descriptions of "immersion" and "going under" and imagine a pool of milk or ink, or – to tie into other Gospel imagery – *blood*. If someone is submerged in such a pool, what would you see when you looked down at the person under the surface?

How do these verses and this imagery explain how God sees us and how we our unconditionally loved independent of our actions?

Pray to God to help you see and know his love for you and to help you grasp what it means to have a heavenly Father who sees you as holy and righteous submerged under Christ’s holiness and righteousness.

**Week 3**

**Sanctified by Faith**

**Key Verses: Romans 7:4, 7:6**

**Romans 7:4 -** *So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.*

**Romans 7:6 -** *But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.*

**Day 1: Discover Chapter 6:22-7:12**

Okay…so now that I’m justified by faith and saved through God’s grace from my sin that would otherwise eternally condemn me, IS THAT IT? Now what do I do?!?

Remember Romans 1:17? **“For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: ‘The righteous will live by faith.’”**

Paul has been using the first six chapters of Romans to build up to how exactly we “***LIVE*** by faith,” going through life, A to Z, day after day, after we’ve been justified before God.

**Read Romans 6:22-7:12 and note your observations below.**

\*For Romans 7:1-3, Paul uses an analogy about how marriage laws work to teach a spiritual point, and the logic and point of this story might be confusing to stay on top of. Map out the sequence of his illustration by breaking down the different systematic steps of his argument and restating them in your own words to interpret later.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Verses | My observations |
| 6:22-23 |  |
| 7:1-3 |  |
| 7:4-6 |  |
| 7:7-12 |  |

Some people have an incorrectly limited view “salvation” simply as justification – the thing that spares us from being condemned to Hell. Salvation as the Bible describes it actually has *two more* “phases.”

**Justification** – Someone places faith in the free gift of Christ’s sacrifice to pay the penalty for their sin and accepts the gift and is restored into a personal relationship with God. The person is spared God’s judgment because God sees Christ’s righteousness since they have been reborn as creatures with a new spiritual nature and identity.

**Sanctification** – The messy and awkward process of maturing into an “adult Christ identity” that begins as soon as someone has been justified and spiritually reborn and ends when a saved child of God physically dies.

**\*Read Philippians 1:6 and Hebrews 10:14** for more on Sanctification!

**Glorification** – The eternal state after physical death as a spiritually perfect being in direct communion with God in Heaven.

**Day 2: Deeper Look - Romans 7:1-3**

**Re-read Romans 5:20-21.**

What are the two opposing “rulers” (the ones who “reigned”) in verse 21?

Think back to Romans 6:14 (“For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.”). Packed into that verse is an important idea: If we are under law instead of grace, *sin WILL BE our master!* The challenge of living in freedom as a slave to righteousness instead of a slave to sin is what we saw at the end of chapter 6. Chapter 7 offers the solution of how we get out from under the law.

Review your notes from yesterday about the illustration of the married woman. In the seventh chapter of his book *Walking in Victory*, Dennis McCallum provides this commentary on this passage:

*Divorce laws have changed a lot since Paul’s day, but the legal principle he cites has not. The law only has jurisdiction over someone while that person is alive. Marriage law doesn’t apply to the dead, and widows are free to remarry. This analogy points to our freedom from the law.*

*Like most analogies, if we press it too far there are inconsistencies. For instance, here, the woman apparently refers to us. We are bound to a demanding husband who is impossible to please: the Law of God. To be perfectly consistent, the husband should die before the woman is free, but that would mean the Law of God dies, which is not possible. So, the one who dies in the analogy is the woman herself – that is, us. Death severs the bonds of law. Because we have died with Christ, we have moved beyond the reach of the Law.*

*Just as death severs the bonds of civil law, it also severs the jurisdiction of the Law of God that Moses brought down from Mt. Sinai. The Law only has jurisdiction over us while we live. Since God views us as having died with Christ, where does this leave us about the Law of God? Paul clearly gives us the answer in verse 6: The law no longer has jurisdiction over us!*

WHAT?!? Isn’t the Law of God good for us? Shouldn’t we be following God’s commandments? Why would Paul ever say, in the same way we ***died to SIN*** having been “crucified with Christ” in Romans 6:5-11, that we “were ***also*** *made to* ***die to the LAW*** through the body of Christ” too?!? That sounds crazy! What does this even *mean* to bereleased from the law in verse 6?!? Is Paul equating the law to sin by making those two sets of arguments?!? The first part of Romans 7:7 sets the record straight on *that* misconception.

In the next few days, we’ll dig even deeper into making sense of this, picking up there again in Romans 7:7. But a quick answer to these questions is that God intended for the Law of God for certain roles for us and *not* other roles.

Something that will help us is to wrap our heads around Romans 6:14-15 to understand what it means to be under grace and not under the law.

What does it mean to be under grace? Re-read those verses.

**Read Mark 12:28-34** and **Galatians 5:14**

Pray and meditate on this idea of maintaining a standard of love for God and others under grace.

How might that mindset keep our actions aligned with God’s heart and obedient to Him without falling into legalism and self-righteousness?

**Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-7.**

From this passage and the other verses above about a “law of love,” can you identify how people might perform good deeds, demonstrate moral behavior, and avoid immoral behavior and yet still be sinning?

**Read Romans 7:4**

Romans 7:4 lists a reason that we want to die to the law is “in order that we might bear fruit for God.” How might being bound to the law prevent us from bearing fruit for God?

**Day 3: Deeper Look –** **Romans 7:7-12;** **Galatians 2:15-3:5**

**Read Romans 7:7-12.**

An article about circumcision from a New York Jewish cultural news site made the following statement:

*Commandments are about* *improving ourselves, raising ourselves from mere biological objects to moral beings, about moving from facts to values, and about constantly striving for spiritual perfection.*

How does Romans 7:7-11 throw a big monkey wrench into that philosophy?

How might a commandment that stimulates people to sin and discourages people in their attempts to be righteous play a positive role for the sanctification of Christians?

Review the following verses to help you arrive at an answer:

**Read Romans 4:5-6 | 2 Corinthians 12:9 | Galatians 2:21 | Philippians 3:8-12 | Hebrews 4:16**

**Read** **Galatians 3:21-27** in the New American Standard Bible translation, which, instead of the word “guardian” that some translations use, uses the word “tutor” with a footnote, “Literally, *child-conductor.”*

What does this passage describe about how the role of the law changes after we’re reborn into our new identities as new children of God?

**Read Galatians 2:15-3:5.**

In what ways does this passage connect with what’s been happening in Romans 5-7?

**Day 4: Deeper Look – Colossians 2:12-3:4; Matthew 14:22-33**

**Read Colossians 2:12-15**

Think about it specifically in the context of justification; then continue to **read Colossians 2:16-3:4** and think about these verses in the context of sanctification.

What conclusions can you draw from this Colossians passage to align them with what Paul has been exploring in Romans?

**Read Matthew 14:22-33** for a story describing another practical definition of Christian faith: keeping our spiritual eyes on Christ.

**Read Jude 1:4**

How might keeping our focus on Christ steer us from using our freedom from the law as a weird excuse to sin?

**Day 5: Do It!**

We should certainly understand, recognize, and confess our sins; but a big problem with a focus on rules and how we fail or succeed in obeying the rules is that it takes away our focus on Jesus and puts it on ourselves and our own performance. This self-focus distracts us from obeying the two commandments that matter most: loving God and loving others!

Our first Romans series study guide noted that Romans 4:24 worked nicely as a biblical working definition of faith: **"being fully persuaded that God has power to do what he had promised."**

Sanctification by faith means that those who have been saved by Christ aren’t relying on their own power to overcome sin or grow spiritually but are relying on God’s power through the Holy Spirit to work in us and make us more like Christ.

“Means of grace,” are sort of like spiritual food that God has provided to us to grow closer to Christ and more fully experience His love and grace, moving us to deeper spiritual maturity and power.

Where and how might you have experienced the transforming power of God by taking advantage of these spiritual provisions for you?

How might you invest in those “means” more deeply to better know Christ, stay focused on Him, and in doing so, become transformed by God to become more and more like Christ?

**Week 4**

**Sanctification=Jesus rescues me daily from my sinful nature**

**Key verse: Romans 7:24**

**Romans 7:24 -** *What a wretched person I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

**Day 1: Discover Romans 7:14-25**

**Read Romans 7:14-25.**

As has been our practice, ask the Lord to lead you as you search His word to grow nearer to Him. Read the passage observing what the passage says:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Verses* | *My observations* |
| 7:14-20 |  |
| 7:21-25 |  |

Look at the verb tenses between verses 13 and 14. In verse 13, list the verbs used. Then do that in verse 14. Which is in the past tense? Which is in the present tense?

List all the ways the “law” is described.

How is “sinful nature” described?

What is the law at work in verses 21 and 23?

What are the two types of slavery mentioned in v.25?

**Day 2: Deeper Look – Romans 7:14-20**

Christian scholars wonder about this section of Romans. Is Paul speaking of his experiences related to sin before he became a believer or after? Tim Keller argues that Paul is describing his current relationship with sin as a believer. Considering this perspective, let’s consider the following questions. In yesterday’s work, we took a deeper look at the transition of verb tenses between verses 13 and 14; it changes from past to present tense. According to Keller, “A natural reading would tell us Paul is speaking of his own “now.”

How is the law “spiritual” and how does Paul explain he is “unspiritual”?

**Read Luke 7:41-43.**

How does Jesus describe how a greater awareness of our sin affects our relationship with the Lord?

What is something you do that you don’t want to do and a good thing you don’t do that you really want to do?

In what ways do you, like Paul, face an on-going struggle with sin?

Ask the Lord to give you wisdom to discern the root of this struggle. Often, our struggle with sin is founded on a deception about God or our relationship with Him that is deeply rooted in us, perhaps since childhood. Ask the Lord for discernment, so you can hear his voice as he leads you to understand the root of this sin.

**Day 3: Deeper Look – Romans 7:14-20 in relationship to Ephesians 4:17-6:20**

Yesterday, we read through a section of Romans where Paul admits his struggle to live out his faith, resisting sin and doing what he knows pleases the Lord. Today, we will visit another of Paul’s letters to understand more fully what we are to resist and how we are to live out our new identities as children of God. When we trust in Jesus as our Savior, we have a new identity in Christ.

**Read 2 Corinthians 5:17.**

What is the “old” that has gone? What is the “new” that is come?

**Read Ephesians 4:17-23.**

How does Paul characterize the “old self”? How are we made new?

**Read Ephesians 4:25-5:7.**

How does living in our new identity in Christ impact…

…our speech? (see v.25, 29, v. 4)

…our response to anger?

…our work?

…our relationship with others when they have wronged us?

…our sexuality?

…our relationship with money/our things?

**Read Ephesians 5:8-14.**

What are followers of Christ commanded to do in this passage?

**Read Ephesians 5: 15-20.**

How do we live as one filled with the Spirit?

**Read Ephesians 5:21-6:9.**

What should the relationships within households of believers be like?

* How should spouses relate?
* How should parents and children relate?
* How should dependents (this passage uses “slaves”) relate?
* How should leaders (this passage uses “masters”) relate?

**Read Ephesians 6:10-20**

* In what ways does the Lord provide strength for believers?
* Where is the battle believers face ultimately occurring?
* What does prayer in the Spirit look like in your walk with the Lord?

**Return to Romans 7:14-20.**

How do the readings in Ephesians help you understand this passage a bit better?

**Day 4: Deeper Look – Romans 7:21-25**

**Read Romans 7:21-25.**

How would you describe Paul’s struggle with sin?

Paul asks a question in verse 24. Have you asked that question before? What is your answer to that question?

Why is Paul’s answer the only feasible one for humanity?

**Read Galatians 3:23-24.**

What is Christ’s relationship with the law and how has that affected our relationship to the law?

**Read Colossians 1:19-23.**

How has Christ reconciled us to God and what are the implications for how God now sees us? How does the promise of verses 22 and 23 encourage you as you content with the struggles resented in Romans 7:14-25?

**Day 5: Do it-Romans 7:21-25**

Take some time for reflection on these verses.

Recount a time when you felt like Paul, in distress over your sin. Is there an area of distressing or habitual sin you want to bring to the Lord today?

How may these verses, and the study of Romans 6 and 7 help you pray?

*Used with permission from*



629 Wesleyan Ave. Barberton, OH, 44203

234.417.0002 | barberton@graceohio.org