

# Seven Bible Studies 2017

## Epistles

### January 1: Romans 1-2 (Ryan Ingle)

January 1, 2017 ~ The Epistle Study : Romans 1 & 2

“and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Romans 1:4 NIV

Our faith, our hope of salvation would not be possible if it wasn't for the love Christ had for us! Keep that in mind as we embark on this year's challenge of immersing ourselves more in the WORD.

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. 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.””

Romans 1:16-17 NIV

“But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God’s wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed.”

Romans 2:5 NIV

Christ's death allowed for our sins to be forgiven! There is plenty of sin in this world! God gave man to their own sinful desires in the last chapter. We have to remember not to hold evil will or feelings towards others. The world does look at Christians to see if there is a difference between them and us. If we judge those in the world but yet do the same evil as they do and 'condemn' them, we leave nothing for them to desire!! Show a true heart of forgiveness.

#### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:

Thank you, Ryan, for guiding us through the epistles study. I'm glad the first 15 minutes of 2017 was spent meditating on Christ canceling my debt. Truly God's eternal power & divine nature is seen by all. I'm grateful for His forgiveness & incredible patience.

#### **Comment:**

Christina McClung:

Thank you

#### **Comment:**

Doug Twaddell:

Such an important reminder as we enter the new year. Both at the youth rally and the Excelsior New Year's service, we talked about how Christianity is a "show and tell" religion. Both are important, bit together they are powerfully in our lives and in the lives of those around us.

#### **Comment:**

Butch O'Neal:

Thank you, Ryan. Romans 2:5 is very sobering! How much we need to teach those!

### **Comment:**

Marc Hermon:

Loved the timing on your post! Thanks for helping us "retain God in our knowledge". I love vs. 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".

### **Comment:**

Randy Ingle:

Well done

### **Comment:**

RichardandJeannie Owens:

Do you believe that Roms. 1:27 could refer to the HIV epidemic among other things?

### **Replies:**

Marc Hermon:

"the wages of sin is death". There is no escape for any of us from a physical death. We are guilty and the hearse will be coming for us all. However, there are many sinful behaviors in this world that can clearly bring this death judgement to us sooner than later. Praise be to Jesus who overcame so that we might not take part in the SECOND death!

### **Replies:**

Steven Wright:

An observation RichardandJeannie Owens! Since the HIV virus, is apparently a newcomer, what did they "recieve" as a result via partaking of sexual sin 2,000 years ago? This question is submitted in support of MarcHermon's reply above. There is nothing new about the realities of sin, whether in the now, or, more to the point, after the judgment - without our repentance of sin. A person may die physically having contracted the Aids virus, but that does not mean they are unfit or incapable of seeking an eternity with God spiritually if they become or repent as, a child of God.

## **January 8: Romans 3-4 (Randy Ingle)**

Romans 3-4: Epistles

God's righteousness upheld:

Was there any advantage to being a Jew? To the Jews there was, but as the new law which Christ brought was introduced things were beginning to change. We are justified through faith in Christ Jesus and not of our own deeds.

None of us are righteous, Jews or Greek all are sinful. All have turned away and served sin in one way or another.

In verse 20 it says by works of the law no human will be just in the sight of God, since we read the law we know how to behave. The righteousness of God through faith in Christ to all who believe, there is no distinction ( between Jews and Greek). All fall short of the glory of God and justified by grace as a gift, through the blood of Christ.

We are all capable of having faith regardless of circumcision (race). We all can uphold the law through faith.

4. Further explanation is given with Abraham being justified through his faith. Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness. We also just like him in that we have that same opportunity.

Blessed is the man whom the Lord doesn't count his sin. Why? Because of his faith his works reflected his love for God as any of us are also capable.

Praise God for such a wonderful blessing!!!

### **Comment:**

Charles Fry:

From last week: Romans 1:16

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

And today: Romans 3:23

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

### **Comment:**

Steven Wright:

A "Beatitude" is found in (4:8).

### **Comment:**

Marc Hermon:

A comparison of Rom 4 and James 2 is probably important here. Many people including Martin Luther feel that they somehow contradict each other which can not be farther from the truth. They both refer to Abraham being justified by his faith. Paul stresses that Abraham's faith was not contingent on the law of circumcision and James stresses that Abraham's faith was a faith that manifested itself in doing good works.

### **Comment:**

Ryan Ingle:

Thank you for the summary!

### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:

Thank you, Randy Ingle! I very much appreciate you (& Ryan) leading discussion with our epistle study. "Justified" & "Credited" are central themes. Although man clearly & totally deserves to be declared guilty, because of his trust in Christ, God declares him righteous. (a righteousness from God, Rom 1:17) Christ's righteousness will be credited to believers as their own b/c He died to pay the penalty for our sins. God cancels the debt & instead credits righteousness. This is why Abraham's faith was "credited to him as righteousness" because it was true faith: complete confidence in God's promise. "Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God!" This justification by faith is universally true. So do not waver! Instead be strengthened and give all glory to God for delivering Christ to death for our sins & raising Him for our justification.

## **January 15: Romans 5-6 (Ryan Ingle)**

January 15 The Epistle Study of Romans 5 - 6

Who woke up this morning praising God for the mercy and grace He has shown us in allowing His only Son to die for our sins?

“through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.” (2-4)

It is difficult as a Christian to always realize that our sufferings are good for us...we just want them to be over with but it is helping to build our character!

“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (5:8) The best reminder of how much love was shown for us! It is through his grace we have this hope of eternal salvation.

“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.” 5:18-19

Even though sin entered through the Adam and Eve, which sin is death, eternal life was given to man through one being, the Son of God..

“What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 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.” (6:1-4) This passage sums it up for us as Christians, through our baptism we have begun a new life...our past has been buried in the waters of baptism!!! Halalualah!!

“Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires...For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.”

Romans 6:12, 14

Remember, we want to be slaves of righteousness! Do away with what pleases you for such a little time in life and put on Christ, Who has brought you the gift of eternal pleasures of glorifying God!

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (6:23)

### **Comment:**

Charles Fry:

Thank you, Ryan! Great highlights of some truly foundational truths.

### **Comment:**

Steven Wright:

Thank you Ryan! And one of our elders, brother Tom Griffin spoke to these very things this afternoon!

### **Replies:**

Ryan Ingle: Very very good chapters that we should rejoice and think upon!

Steven Wright:

Amen!

## **Comment:**

Marc Hermon:

These chapters are a good pair to read together. Ch 5: The gift of grace covers our sins. Ch 6: but don't take the gift of grace for granted by remaining in your sin.

In other words, our actions can't earn us heaven but they can keep us out.

## **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:

Thank you, Ryan! Excellent thoughts pulled from these 2 chapters. Where sin abounded, grace abounded much more. Praise God for providing for our redemption!

## **January 22: Romans 7-8 (Randy Ingle)**

### **Part A: Romans 7**

We begin with a parallel of how marriage is like our relationship with Christ. Once we are married we are bound to our spouses until death. When we commit to Christ he wants us to treat it likewise. We should be committed completely to him leaving the world and it's sinful ways behind lest we be as an adulterer who turns back to sin.

God hates divorce. This is further example of his hatred of divorce. To God it is an example of a lack of commitment.

Verse 7 begins with the question of whether or not the law is sin. Is this not what is going on around us today. The world around us is saying the word of God is outdated and wrong even hateful. We have the law and therefore we know what sin is. The law is righteous, as the giver is as well.

The law is good, but sin is where the problem is. We are flesh and are under sin as our bodies war against it. Paul states his own battle with sin as he talks about the good things he wants to do he doesn't and the things he hates, which are sinful he is drawn in by and participates in. Sin dwells in our bodies and tempts us. It causes us to be in constant battle.

Thanks be to God for giving us hope through Christ Jesus.

My posts may be short as I have to text it without a working computer. I will cover chapter 8 tomorrow.

## **Comment:**

Debbie Bolinger:

Thanks for reminding us what God says about divorce...

## **Comment:**

Kevin Crittenden:

When we are tempted by sin ( 24/7 for me), can we look to our brethren for some needed "course correction"?

James 5:16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

How can we make this happen? Nobody wants to air their dirty laundry or risk being the object of judgement. People may not even want to HEAR about our problems, being embroiled with their own.

## **Replies:**

Ginger Hermon:

Ecc. 4:9-12: Two are better than one, Because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, For he has no one to help him up. Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; But how can one be warm alone? Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

Denise Waits:  
One of my favorite passages, Ginger.

### **Comment:**

Kevin Crittenden:

Paul shared his weaknesses with us, using that as an example for us. He wasn't a bit concerned about how people would view him. He was being edifying in a most personal way and how helpful that has been. We know that we are not alone in fighting sin.

### **Replies:**

Randy Ingle:

Yes, I think that admission by Paul would be something helpful for all to consider. Especially those that have grown weary and fallen away. I have a relative who thinks we all believe we are perfect. I try to let her know we aren't, but she will have nothing to do with listening unfortunately. We are not perfect in fact far from it but need Christ to make us clean. We need to attempt to put away sin as much as possible

Ginger Hermon:

Oh wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me?... Nothing but the death & resurrection of Jesus Christ can make any sinner free from the law of sin and death. Praise God that believers are delivered from that power of the law. We are under a covenant of grace; under the gospel of Christ, no longer under the law of Moses (which could point out & condemn sin but could not remove it). This difference is spoken in this chapter with an analogy of being married to a new husband. The second marriage is to Christ. The law's power to condemn no longer threatens us because we are crucified with Christ (Rom. 6:2-7). Through His death we are freed from obligation to the law as a covenant, as the wife is from her vows to her first husband through death. For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace (Rom. 6:14). Law provides no enablement to resist the power of sin; it only condemns the sinner. But grace enables it. Titus 2:11-12: For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives.

### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks be to God - through Jesus Christ our Lord! Deliverance comes through Him. Randy: I'm grateful for your thoughts on today's study. I especially liked the illustration you used with marriage.

### **Part B; Romans 8**

Verse 6 says a lot about the first part of this chapter. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. We have two choices. One to serve our own fleshly desires, or to serve God.

If the spirit of God dwells in you then you will have life through Christ. We can find freedom from sin in our lives through the righteousness of our Savior Jesus Christ.

~Heirs of Christ~

We are not in debt to sin, but to the life that Christ gives to us through HIS righteousness to his father. If we are willing to suffer for a while with him then we can be justified through him.

~Future Glory~

The suffering we see here in our mortal bodies is nothing to endure compared to the glory that awaits us who remain steadfast in our convictions through Christ Jesus.

We were not willingly subjected to sin, but God put us here to manifest a faith in us through Christ, therefore eliminating the sin altogether through him who we are faithful to. If we are only faithful to our own fleshly desires we are dead to Christ and have no hope. We have hope for something we currently can't see, therefore we must be patient. Something that is becoming harder to have is patience because society is all about now. We must strive for it. Anything worth having is worked at, service to God is the same way.

Sometimes when we pray we don't know what to pray for, but the spirit that lies in us knows our needs and does the talking for us. All things work together for those that love him.

29-30 do not mean there is predestination as some may say. Those who hear the word are those who are called but many fail to listen and take heed. Those of us who listen intently will be chosen not of our own goodness, but through faith in Christ.

Nothing can separate us from God if we are faithful to him. We will always be conquerors through God and Christ who love us.

### **Comment:**

Marc Hermon:

There are only two destinations pre-determined by God, Heaven and Hell. The works of people and types of people that will go to these two destinations have also been predetermined. Now it is your choice to decide which pre-determined path you want to follow.

### **Replies:**

Ryan Ingle:

If only we had heard this in a sermon today...

### **Comment:**

Charles Fry:

While Romans 7 confesses weakness and failure, Romans 8 shouts victory in Christ, success in the Holy Spirit and security in God's love and faithfulness. Jesus died for me, the Spirit dwells in me, Jesus reigns and intercedes for me, God loves me and wants me. No power in heaven or earth can break the power of God or diminish what he has done, is doing, and promises to do for his children. This is the climax of Paul's argument for gospel as God's power for salvation, to all mankind; Romans 1:16, 3:23, 5:6, 6:23, 7:14, 8:1-2, 8:37-39.

## **January 29: Romans 9-10 (Ryan Ingle)**

January 29, 2017 - The Epistles - Romans 9 & 10

Paul continues to inform us of how greatly troubled he was with the anguish he had for his past sins in verses 1-5. He did not feel worthy of Christ's gift he was allowed to benefit from...but greatly loved the Jews and wanted to "wake them up".

Let's remember God's promise to Abraham through Isaac that he shall be blessed with descendants so vast to be numbered and nations will be formed through his lineage (Genesis 17). It was a requirement of God's that every descendant of Abraham's needed to be circumcised on the eighth day or they were not part of God's chosen (Gen 17:14).

16 - 18 does tell us that God shows mercy on those he chooses to show mercy and compassion on. He also has used people to show his power through them to us as well. We should count ourselves very fortunate God shows mercy to us as sinners!!

19 - 27

Let's watch ourselves when it comes to judging how some people may be treated differently than others from God. I often find myself thinking this as I read the scriptures. Let's not be like Job and question God. Like verse 21 puts it, "Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for special purposes and some for common use?"

Paul in vs 30 - 33 is still explaining how the Jews had the law on their side but yet took it for granted. The gentiles received God's mercy, which upset the Jews. The Jews lacked the faith that they needed while they had God right in front of them. Key message is don't take God for granted!!

Romans 10

1-4 Paul states his desire is for the Jews to be saved but they are not following God's new law sent through Christ. Instead, they continue to do their own version with great vigor.

9-13 Paul reminds us of the great blessing we have through Christ's death. We must have faith in Him and believe God raised Him from the dead. There is no longer a distinction made on who is saved...both Jews and Gentiles have the new law.

14 - 21

Paul lets the Jews have it! God was very frustrated with the Jews and their attitudes! They had God on their side yet ignored God's requirements. So God gave salvation to all. The Gentiles now had the same hope of salvation which really made the Jews jealous!!

"Then Isaiah is so bold as to say, "I have been found by those who did not seek me; I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me." But of Israel he says, "All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people.""

Let's take this message to heart! Don't take God's grace and mercy for granted! Let's not be like the Jews and feel we are entitled and others aren't! Don't let pride get between God and yourself!

### **Comment:**

Kevin Crittenden:

Thank you, Ryan! "Out of sight is out of mind" is the reality that pervades much of our daily life but should never apply to God. Being cognizant of Him always, turning our face towards His, reaching out our hand for guidance, praising His name with our lips is 24/7. May we conduct our lives in a worthy manner which brings Glory to Him.

### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:

How ironic! (or is it further evidence the Holy Spirit is at work?) This morning I read Wade's post and enjoyed our Filipino brothers sing, "Beautiful!" What gusto and joy! <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1216073151773036/permalink/1224902880890063/> Now I read Romans 10:15. God calls all to be saved! Gospel preachers bring the good news of release from captivity of sin. Israel had the opportunity to hear, since widespread teaching of the gospel occurred. Israel failed to have faith. Praise God for grafting in the Gentiles. May we have zeal based on knowledge of God and spread the gospel! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Exq7F71Z--8> Thank you, Ryan Ingle, for participating in that mission through leading our discussion today in Romans.

## **February 5: Romans 11-12 (Randy Ingle)**

Romans 11-12:

The Remnant of Israel

A majority of Israel failed to believe in Christ as savior. Paul points out himself as a remainder of the Israelites who still are in the right with God, therefore still fulfilling his promise to this nation. He points out that God did not forget the nation he knew before. then he uses Elijah as an example. (1 Kings 19) Elijah pleaded with God thinking he was the only one left faithful. God let him know otherwise. Over 7,000 men had not bowed to Baal. (I hate capitalizing an idol's name, but the Bible does so I will as well) Verse 6 points out grace and election are not separate, and salvation is God's to give and not to do with works.

Reference is made to Is. 29:10 and Deut. 29:4, about how God hardened Israel so they would not see or hear. Hopefully and prayerfully some of them turned to Christ after being away.

#### Gentiles Grafted in

Paul makes reference to his purpose being to preach to the Gentiles and graft them in. In that maybe some fellow Jews will be made jealous and turn some of them to Christ. Heaping coals of fire on their heads is the first reference I think of.

He then makes a parallel of a tree God=roots, they=base, Gentiles= branches. He tells them not to look down on the branches because they receive also from the nourishment of the roots at the base of the tree.

#### Mystery of Israel Salvation

The Jews have become blind but we are told it is a temporary situation. The Jews will eventually acknowledge Christ as the messiah. (Is. 59:12 and a redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression declares the Lord.) When the Jews turn to Christ they will be receiving of God's promise to them, and taking away their sin.

The Jews rejected the gospel as a whole and God regarded them as enemies, but he still loved them for their forefather's sake. Much the way David's decendants found themselves when they were found to be wicked themselves part of the kingdom was still theirs because of David. He is ready to receive them again when they turn back to him.

We are all in need of God's devine mercy and grace which he will graciously give to all who humble themselves and accept his son as their savior.

#### Chapter 12

This chapter I feel we all know it very well. Present yourselves as a living sacrifice that we may find grace in the eyes of the Lord. Once we have accepted the truth we need to also live in it as well. This whole chapter to me puts to rest the idea of once saved always saved. There are rules and a way of life different and unconformed to the world around us.

We are told to essentially love each other and always be bending over backwards to show love and honor to one another, even our enemies we expected to treat well, maybe causing them to see Christ through us.

We are also reminded that we are one body joined together we all have our different functions and not to think more highly than we ought of ourselves because our gifts.

Praise God and in him be the glory, may we always reflect him in our lives.

### **Comment:**

Marc Hermon:

I feel like it would do every Christian good to read Romans 12 each morning to start the day.

### **Replies:**

Kevin Crittenden:

Oh, let's spread the wealth and suggest everyone do that. :-)

Marc Hermon:

as soon as I hit enter I thought the same thing!

## Comment:

Marc Hermon:

Some comments on Romans 11:26

I've heard people say that Jesus can't return yet because "all Israel has not yet turned to God". I think this is a misunderstanding of this passage. I hope that there are more Jews that accept Christ but I do not think this refers to the "nation" of Israel. The words, "and so" mean "and thus in the following manner", which then refers to Isaiah's prophecy that Jesus would come and take away the sins of the world....definitely starting with "Jacob" but also extending to the Gentiles.

Verse 25 states that Paul is talking about a "mystery" here. What is the mystery that Paul refers to so many times in his writings? He clearly describes it at the end of this book in 16:25-26. It is Jesus Christ being the answer to the promise to Abraham that "all nations" through him might be blessed. There is that word "all" again.

So what word(s) could we put after the word "all" that would make sense with the evidence. How about "all who are obedient to Christ", "all who have called upon the name of the Lord" or "all of Christ's kingdom".

So what does the word "Israel" refer to in verse 26? Paul explains this earlier in 9:1-8. Paul is lamenting the nation of Israel but he says that God's word had not failed and then the key statement, "For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. And in verse 8 to make it even more clear, "In other words, it is not the natural children who are God's children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham's offspring."

Paul has already explained this in much greater detail in Ch. 2. "No, a man is a Jew (Israelite) if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code."

So, it seems that the evidence of this book should make us be able to paraphrase verse 26 as "And so all of God's people who accept the promise, whether Jew or Gentile, will be saved since the Messiah came and took away our sins."

So, I don't think we can say that Jesus can't return yet. We can say that he hasn't returned yet and we do know that reason:

2 Peter 3:9 "The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that A-L-L should reach repentance."

## February 12: Romans 13-14 (Ryan Ingle)

2/11/17 ~ THE EPISTLES ~ ROMANS 13

"Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God." (13:1)  
One of the most difficult verses for most Christians to handle. We look at the world and wonder why leaders are in positions as they are...we have to remind ourselves of Isaiah 55:8-9. Which states "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."

We are to listen and follow the law as long as it isn't against God's law for us.

Peter states this in Acts 5:29 which says, "Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than human beings!"

“This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God’s servants, who give their full time to governing. Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.” (13:6-7)

I don't know anyone who likes paying taxes! There are reasons why we pay these as it does help to provide for the essentials of our government. If there is corruption, we can take the opportunity to try and fix it through the legal process without I believe it being an act of rebellion against God.

“Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law. The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery,” “You shall not murder,” “You shall not steal,” “You shall not covet,” and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” (13:8-9)

We as Christians often overlook just how important love is! What more of an example do we need then for Christ to have come to this earth and suffered for us and died such a cruel death? Christians often times get a bad rap of not showing love to those who don't agree with them or who are different/sinful.

“On hearing this, Jesus said to them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.””

Mark 2:17

Christ was the example of how we should be towards sinners. They are the ones who need His message the most. We are to be reminded to LOVE the sinner, and HATE the sin. We don't hate people but it is often thought that we do. We don't condone what sin is committed but we should always love each other!

“And do this, understanding the present time: The hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.

Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.”

(13:11, 14)

Excellent verses for us to memorize! Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord and do not think about gratifying your own sinful desires! How much more important would it be for us to teach this fervently to our children. This is the whole reason Christ died for us as we give into our desires instead of resisting them!

Romans 14

First part of the chapter basically tells us to not quarrel over the small matters. Some followers are stronger in their faith and believe eating meat is fine while others feel they should only eat vegetables. To each person, they should be doing what is right in their own minds, and is scriptural, in serving God.

“If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living.”

(14:8-9)

This passage reminds me of the song Do All In The Name of The Lord.

“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”

Colossians 3:17

“You, then, why do you judge your brother or sister? Or why do you treat them with contempt? For we will all stand before God’s judgment seat. It is written: “ ‘As surely as I live,’ says the Lord, ‘every knee will bow before me; every tongue will acknowledge God.’ ” So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.” (14:10-12)

We should not have the mindset that we are 'holier than others' and look down upon them. We should as the previous chapter stated, show love towards them. (Vs. 13:9)

“If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died.” (14:15)

Let's not be a stumbling block to others who may feel different about a certain issue, such as maybe eating a certain type of meat. It's not worth a big feud over. Make sure we are acting in love towards them!!

“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and receives human approval. Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.” (14:17-19)

Righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit is what pleases God. Put aside the quarreling and do what pleases our Lord and Savior!!

A fitting verse to tie in here I believe is found in Matthew; “For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.” (23:12)

### **Comment:**

Kevin Crittenden:

Thank you, Ryan! As you stated so well, it is difficult not to be embroiled in the political turmoil and partisan animosity in which our country is immersed. How hard it is (for me) to remember to honor our leaders in such times. How hard it is to remember that all are God's children, all are beloved of Him, all are invited to partake of the feast made possible by His horrific sacrifice on the Cross. By thinking I know what is best, I am indeed exalting myself. Best to keep Col 3:2 in mind: "Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth."

### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Ryan, you put a lot of time & thought in these 2 chapters. Much appreciated. ❤️ I believe if we whole-heartedly consider the second coming of Jesus we will clothe ourselves and live these lessons to the fullest. We need to be fully convinced and keep His return on the forefront of our hearts, soul and mind. Only then will all days and all ways be dedicated to God through holy living and godly service.

## **February 19: Romans 15-16 (Randy Ingle)**

The final chapters of Romans 15 & 16 Epistle Study

We are reminded that those who are strong in the faith need to be able to show compassion to those who are weak. LOVE EACH OTHER! We are to be as Christ was seeing how he did not seek to please himself, but took the burden of the reproach of others upon himself. Paul mentions the former days (Old Testament) that it was written through endurance and encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. We have to work as a unit building one another up to get that encouragement, otherwise people start to feel left out and discouraged. What happens next is people fall away. We should always be caring to each other giving the feeling of togetherness. In the spirit of togetherness we can then be able to glorify God as a group. In this way Christ also welcomed you.

Christ the hope of Jews and Gentiles: Christ became a servant to the Jews, in doing that fulfilling the promise he made to Abraham and the patriarchs and so that Gentiles might glorify God in his mercy. Reference is made to OT scriptures in 2 Sam 22:50; Ps. 18:49; Is. 11:10; Ps. 117:1-2. Through the scriptures we find hope and joy and peace in belief through Christ Jesus. Paul the minister of the Gentiles: At the end of vs 21 is reference to the scripture in Is. 52:15. Where it talks of the Gentiles in future tense as something to come thus fulfilling scripture. Paul is bringing the word to new ears to hear it lest he build on someone else's foundation.

Chapter 16 is mostly greetings and commendations but also warns of smoothtalkers who may try to lead you astray. Not to have anything to do with them

## **Comment:**

Marc Hermon:

Two books down for the year. Only 64 more to go! I hope everyone is meeting our goal of just spending more time in the WORD...and not feeling bad if you haven't been able to get to each day's reading. Remember what we read today.

"For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope."  
15:4

I hope reading the Scriptures is doing this for you. I also appreciate our "reading leaders". I look forward each day to not only reading the passage for the day but also hearing from good brothers and sisters about their thoughts on the passage. I encourage you to continue to make it a life priority to stay in the Word.

Don't be WORLDly, Be WORDly!

## **Comment:**

Charles Fry:

The emphasis on the sufficiency of the scriptures and sufficiency of the church members building each other up in the first half of 15 is good. I appreciate Paul's prayer request in Romans 15:31 (HCSB)

31 Pray that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea, that the gift I am bringing to Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints,

Recognizing both the challenge of opposition from the outside and the challenge of pleasing brethren, even with what would seem like an obvious good thing.

V25-26 in 15 ties us back to Acts 20:1 when Paul left Ephesus en route to Jerusalem via Macedonia and Achaia.

## **Replies:**

Ginger Hermon:

Let us be earnest in prayer with and for each other, that for Christ's sake, great blessings may come upon the souls of Christians.

## **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Randy! I would like to do a study on all the Christians referenced in chpt. 16. :-). If I hear of a brother needing a topic for a sermon a great one would be Priscilla and Aquila. Does anyone know exactly how they risked their life for Paul? I'm assuming it may have been in Corinth or Ephesus.

## **Replies:**

Charles Fry:

Ginger, "how exactly" isn't in the text, but it's a reasonable conclusion that it happened in Ephesus. We know that Priscilla and Aquila accompanied Paul from Corinth to Ephesus (Acts 18:18). They stayed in Ephesus while Paul returned to Antioch (Acts 18:24, 26). They were still in Ephesus when Paul wrote 1 Corinthians (1 Cor 16:8, 19) which was before the disturbance/riot that pretty much ended Paul's time in Ephesus

(Acts 20:1). Even before the disturbance Paul had mentioned "many who oppose me" in Ephesus (1 Corinthians 16:8-9). Later on, when Paul was nearly killed in the temple court, it was Jews from Asia (where Ephesus was) who started that riot, having seen Paul previously in Jerusalem in the company of Trophimus the Ephesian (Acts 21:27-29, also 24:19), so we know there was fierce opposition to Paul in Ephesus on the part of both Jews and Greeks. And, after Paul left Ephesus and while he was still on the road through Macedonia before turning toward Jerusalem, Paul wrote this about his recent experiences in Asia (Ephesus):

2 Cor 1:8-9

8 We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about the hardships we suffered in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life. NIV

Exactly how Priscilla and Aquila risked their lives for Paul we don't know, but it must have been in those troubles in Ephesus in Asia.

### **Comment:**

Steven Dallas Thompson:  
Amen.