

Romans: Bible Class Notes

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Foreward

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Foreword

These studies in the Epistle to the Romans were originally prepared as weekly Bible Class lessons for young believers, covering the period of one year. This accounts for the form they take and the questions which follow each of the fifty-two sections into which these studies are divided. The questions remain permanently useful, for the reader may use them to test his own grasp of the instruction given in each study.

It has been refreshing to read these studies, and it is a pleasure to heartily commend them as really helpful, and particularly useful as introductory to the teaching of the Epistle. A careful reading of this book should help the young believer to more intelligently follow up his study in the larger and more comprehensive commentaries on Romans.

The purpose in mind—that of giving in simple, brief, pointed treatment the outstanding features of this great doctrinal presentation of God’s gospel concerning His Son—has been well carried out, so that it is easy to lay hold of the general structure of the Epistle and also get an introduction to many of its important details. This is very necessary if there is to be firm establishment in what our salvation in Christ really means.

It is hoped that this book will have a wide circulation, and that it will stimulate, as indeed it should, those who read it to a deeper and fuller study of this important Epistle.

John Bloore

Lesson 1 - Romans 1:1-7 The Gospel of God

We are going- to travel through the book of Romans together. This book is really a letter, written by the apostle Paul to the Christians living long ago in the city of Rome.

“Paul a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God.”

Now that is what Paul is writing about—“The Gospel” — and this letter might well be called the gospel according to Paul. Twice in this book we read the expression “my gospel.” Matthew, Mark, Luke and John each wrote gospels, but they wrote mostly for sinners. One of them said, “These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name. John 21: vs.....

Paul, however wrote his gospel for saints. In his gospel he tells believers the wonderful story of God’s salvation—how lost sinners are redeemed by blood and made the saints and servants of God.

Now we will stand together in the vestibule of this epistle and take a look at the things we will study together.

In verse one we are introduced to the writer who has three things to say about himself. First of all, he is a

Servant

of Jesus Christ. The word is really “slave.” Of course, he means that the Lord Jesus Christ had bought him with

His precious blood—he was no longer his own. Then he tells us he is an apostle. That means a

Sent One

You remember how he was saved on the way to Damascus. He saw the Lord of glory and was told then that he must go to those still in darkness as the sent one of Jesus Christ. “Unto whom now I send thee.” (Acts ch....vs...). The third thing he tells about himself is that he is

Separated

unto the Gospel of God. That means that his entire life was devoted to the telling forth of the good news of God’s grace to sinners. God had called him to this one thing.

Before the apostle gives us the details about God’s salvation he tells us seven things about the gospel in the first seven verses of our chapter.

The Source Of The Gospel

It is the “gospel of God” (vs.....), and the heart of God is the source of the gospel. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.” (Jno. ch.....vs...). God Himself was the first Evangelist, for when Adam and Eve had sinned in the garden He hastened to tell them of a coming Deliverer.

The Promise Of The Gospel

Verse 2 tells us that all through the ages God was telling out the wonderful story of His love thru His chosen instruments, the prophets. like finger posts along the

way, all the Old Testament writers pointed to Calvary where the promise was fulfilled.

The Theme Of The Gospel

It is all about one person, for it is “concerning His Son Jesus Christ” (vs.....). First, He was the Son of David, so He was really a man. Second, He was also the Son of God, so He was really God. Third, He, the God-Man, died and rose again, so He is our Saviour; He has conquered death.

God’s Method Of Making The Gospel Known

Verse 4 tells us that the Risen Lord enabled and sent forth His chosen ones, who had gone to all nations.

The One Condition Of The Gospel

Those who believed the gospel and obeyed it were saved. They were called by His name, Christ’s Ones, or Christians.

The Results Of The Gospel

we find in verses 6 and 7. Sinners called thus by Jesus Christ were made saints, yea the beloved of God. How wonderful! Then lastly we have

The Blessing Of The Gospel,

even grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. The believers in Rome were amongst those who enjoyed the blessings of the gospel, and I trust all who read this paper are as well. If not, they may be.

Questions

1. Fill in the references left blank.

2. What is the great theme of the epistle to the Romans?
3. What does Paul say in Romans 1:1-8 about those to whom he writes?
4. What does Paul say about the gospel in these verses?

Lesson 2 - Romans 1:8-17 The Need of Salvation

Having told us about the gospel we now see the dear apostle Paul on his knees. I am writing to you, he says, but I want you to know that I never cease to pray for you and thank God for you. The reason for his thanksgiving was that the Roman Christians were not only saved but they let everybody know that they were. Paul had never seen them but wherever he went, he heard about them and this caused him to thank God for them, (vs.....).

He calls God to witness that he always remembered them and mentioned them in his prayers. When he thought of them he longed to see them and asked God to prosper his journey to them.

Three Things He Desired For Them By His Coming To Them

The first was to share with them all the rich gifts he had received from God, thus he wanted them to be established in the faith. He also desired that together they should be comforted by each other's faith. He would not only bring them a blessing when he came, they would be a blessing to him as well, (vs.....).

Now he had many a time purposed coming to them but was hindered. The obstacles, however, had not changed his purpose. He felt under obligation to them and he was ready to discharge the debt he owed them (vs.....). He would preach the gospel in Rome also. He loved to tell the gospel story. He was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. Why should he be, "for it was the power of

God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (vs.....). Now believing is different from working. The law said "do" but it never enabled the sinner to do what it demanded. In the gospel, God provides for the sinner His own righteousness, and it is ours in believing. As we travel through this letter, we will notice that its great theme, is

"How Can A Guilty Sinner Be Justified Before A Righteous God?"

Job asked many years ago, "How should man be just with God?" Job 9 vs....., and Bildad the Shuhite asks in ch. 25 vs., "How then can a man be justified with God?" The gospel answers the question. We find it in this gospel according to Paul, "The just shall live by faith." vs.....

We now reach the first main division of the epistle. We have stood in the vestibule when we were introduced to the writer and the ones to whom he is writing and we have also learned something about his subject. As we read this section from Chap. 1:18—3:20 we notice that it can be likened to

A Great Court Room

for the whole world is arraigned before the Judge. They stand before the bar of God in the supreme court of heaven when the final verdict is given. The world is divided into three groups—The ungodly sinners, the moral sinners and the religious sinners. Here we have the first. We notice the room is draped in black. "The wrath of God" vs..... and these words "Worthy of death" vs.....being the two boundaries of this repellent picture. Here we have all the heathen gathered, sunken

deep in sin, with the clouds of wrath over their heads and the gloom of death ahead, how sad is their condition. They are fit subjects for the demonstration of the power of the Gospel. “For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving diverse lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another” (Titus 3:.....).

There are four things we notice with regard to this vast number of “down and out” sinners 1st—They are under the wrath of God—vs. 18.

2nd—They are without excuse—vs. 19, 20.

3rd—They have sunk into the depths of idolatry—vs. 21-23.

4th—They were unrestrained in their course to ruin— vs. 24-32.

We will look at these one by one.

Questions

1. Fill in all blank references.
2. Why did Paul desire to see the Christians at Rome?
3. What great difference between the law and the gospel is pointed out in this lesson?
4. What does God provide for the sinner in the gospel?
5. How can we make this great gift our own?

Lesson 3 - Romans 1:18-32 Down and Out Sinners

1. They are Under the Wrath of God. vs. 18

Because of man's evil heart—(ungodliness) and his evil ways (unrighteousness) the dark cloud of God's wrath hangs over the heads of guilty sinners. This wrath is revealed from heaven. When God drove Adam and Eve out of paradise He showed His wrath against sin. When He sent the flood and later on when He wrapped Sodom and Gomorrah with a winding sheet of fire He revealed His wrath. But it was not until His Son hung on Calvary that there was the full revelation of God's wrath from heaven. Then the Saviour suffered for the sinner. But for those who are without Christ "there is wrath" and "because there is wrath beware" Job 36.....

Revelation gives us a detailed description of the bursting of the terrible judgment clouds when those not sheltered by the Lamb will be swept by the awful storm into a lost eternity.

2. They Are Without Excuse. vs 19, 20

Some would tell us that the poor heathen are excusable, but God says they are not. God has given them His great picture book—Creation. This book was easy to read. All around them were the things God had made. "The eternal power and divinity of God" were "clearly seen" by the things that He made. The word Paul uses here is the Greek word "Poima" from which we get our word "poem." Creation is God's poem and as we read in Psa. 19:....., "The heavens declare the glory of God and the

firmament sheweth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.”

But man refused to read God’s poem, he refused to remember His Creator or bow to Him. He enthroned in His heart God’s great rival—Sin. Conscience like a faithful sentinel warned man of his folly and wrong in doing this and so he was doubly inexcusable.

3. They Have Sunk Into The Depths Of Idolatry, vs. 21-23.

What a sad picture of man’s departure from God we find in these verses. They give us the seven stages in man’s downward course into the depths of idol worship. The starting point in this dreadful story, that so completely upsets man’s theory of evolution, is the consciousness of the presence of God. The world at one time knew God. After the flood in Gen. 9:1, Noah and his sons stood around the altar and worshipped the God of heaven, but in vs..... a reptile biting the dust of the earth is given the glory due to God. How did all this come about? Man turned his back upon God and then it was easy. They forgot Him, they became self-centered, all sorts of foolish thoughts filled their minds. They roamed on in their intellectual darkness until they had forgotten all about God and set up images of men, birds, beasts and reptiles and bowed down to them. The serpent deceived man in the garden. He said they would be like God if they listened to him. Instead sin made them very unlike God and very much like the one who deceived them and one day all the world will worship the serpent dragon. Rev. 13:3, 4.

4. They Were Unrestrained in Their Course To Ruin. vs. 24-32.

The story of how man degraded himself and became a spiritual, mental and moral pervert is found in these verses. It is a terrible story. Man left to himself sinks into unspeakable and unfathomable depths of vileness and sin. How revolting are the details as given in this story, yet how true is the picture. One day as a missionary in China was reading this chapter he was interrupted by some one calling out "It is not fair for you to expose us thus in public." But we do not have to cross the ocean to see what sin has done. In our own favoured land these very same evils exist and we wonder at God's patience and grace.

Three times in these verses we find the words "God gave them up." vs....., ...and.....First- -Man is given over to his own evil lusts and bodies that should have been consecrated to God's service became the prey of vile passions. Second—He is given over to vile affections and his soul becomes the cesspool of every foul stream and instigator of unspeakable evils. Third—Man is given over to a reprobate mind. The spirit of man that is "the candle of the Lord" Prov. 20:.....becomes a cage for every unclean bird, the workshop of the devil. What a list of evil deeds are found in these verses, how sad that man created in the image of God should so degrade himself. But saddest of all is the fact that "knowing the judgment of God that they which commit such things are worthy of death they not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them," vs.....

Questions

1. Fill in references.

2. Why is man without excuse?
3. What three parts of man were effected by God's giving them up?
4. How deep did man sink in sin?
5. What three words in the last verse of the chapter can be applied to all sinners?

Lesson 4 - Romans 2:1-16 The Self-Righteous Man

In the court room of Romans 1 we have seen the first group of prisoners brought into court and tried. Now the representative man of the second group—the self-righteous moralist—appears on the scene. He listens with complacency to the sentence pronounced, in fact he takes a seat beside the Judge. Looking down from the heights of his morality he condemns the bad man. He would object strenuously to taking his place with the culprits. But listen to the voice of the Judge.

“You face the Judge, O man, whoever you are! Judging others you condemn yourself for you are guilty of the same,” see vs. 1.

We now listen to the solemn words concerning the judgment of God in vs. 2-16, and notice four things with regard to it.

1. “The Judgment Of God Is According To Truth.” vs. 2-5.

When the wrath of king Ahasuerus was upon all the Jews. Mordecai said to Esther, “Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king’s house more than all the Jews.” Esther 4:13. For “how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation.” Heb. 2:..... That is exactly what this man does. He despises the riches of God’s goodness vs. 4. He does not fear the day of doom and refuses the grace that would lead him to repentance.

Refusing God’s goodness, he hoards up wrath against himself vs. 5. God is dispensing grace but He is

treasuring up wrath. Every sin committed is a deposit in the bank of God's wrath. In the day of reckoning the sinner will receive both principal and interest. A poor, old, colored woman when taunted with the folly of believing in a "lake of fire and brimstone" because "no such an amount of brimstone could be found in one place," exclaimed solemnly, "Everybody takes his own brimstone wif' him!"

2. The Judgment Of God Is According To Works, vs. 6-10

There are two classes of people in the world. They are described in these verses. One class is looking upward. They continue in well doing while they seek after glory. They will receive eternal life. Of course every one in this group is a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. When the question was asked "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God" the answer was given, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." John 6:.....,.....

The other class takes sides with self and sin against God vs. 8, 9. They do not obey the truth but obey unrighteousness, yielding themselves to what is wrong. The harvest from such sowing will be wrath and fierce anger, trouble and anguish. At the great white throne they will be judged "according to their works." Rev. 20:12 and be cast into the lake of fire.

3. The Judgment Of God Is Impartial vs. 11-15

"For there is no respect of persons with God" vs.....

I read of a French nobleman who thought that "the Almighty would hesitate before He condemned forever a man of a marquis condition." And I have known many

who thought they were especially favored and had a better chance than others with God; as if there were some by-way of privilege or something that would influence God in their favour. Increased privilege means increased responsibility. We learn that from what the Lord Jesus said concerning the cities where He did His mighty works. It will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for them. Matt. 11:..... The standard of judgment is according to responsibility, vs. 13-15.

4. The Judgment of God is According to the Gospel vs. 16.

The same message that brings joy to the repentant sinner's heart warns the unrepentant of certain doom. The gospel bells ring out a welcome to God's heart and home, they also sound a warning to all who refuse the welcome. Salvation is sure for the believer but wrath is as certain for every unbeliever. Think of the unsaved meeting the Saviour they rejected and having all their sins exposed, for God will "judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." The blaze of that judgment throne will be as unwelcome to the sinner as the glare of the noonday sun to crickets suddenly exposed to it by the removal of their hiding place.

Questions

1. Fill in blank references
2. Why is the moral man of Chap. 2 without excuse?
3. What is the goal of the believer?
4. What four things are noticed with regard to the judgment of God?

5. Who will be the judge in that great day of wrath?

Lesson 5 - Romans 2:17-24 The Jew

The last of the three representative men now appears on the scene.

He is the Religious Sinner

and prides himself in what he is, and what he knows and what he does, and we are not surprised when he puts in a plea of "not guilty." He is no ordinary sort of person. Let us look at him. Do his pretensions have any weight with the Judge?

He prides himself in what he is for he is called a Jew vs. 1. He has a good name surely for that word "Jew" comes from "Judah" which means "praise" Gen. 29:35. But the label means nothing, for God looks at the heart. A great statesman once asked "How many legs would a donkey have if you called his tail a leg?" Educated statesmen said "five." But you know that calling a tail a leg does not make it a leg. Tin may be labelled silver; and brass, gold; but tin will still be tin and brass will still be brass. Christened sinners, confirmed sinners and church going sinners are sinners still. No religious cloak can hide sin from the eyes of God, and every such cloak is as useless as the fig leaf aprons of our first parents in Gen. 3 vs.....

Have we not met this man before? Yes. We have seen him praying in the temple (Lk. 18:9-14) thanking God that he is not like other men. There he lays claim to superior piety, here he clings to his religious fig leaves even in the presence of the Judge. We listen to his pleas as he enumerates his virtues, but all in vain as far as being exonerated or acquitted is concerned.

He has

Five Advantages

that distinguish him from all others.

1. He trusts in the law of God. vs..... But the law is not a resting place. The law only exposes sin. Is it not strange that he should choose that to hide his sin. The law can only pronounce a curse upon the sinner.

2. He boasts in God. vs..... But he will find his boast a vain one. Was God the God of the Jews only? And would God associate Himself with sin? Had he forgotten the experience in 1 Sam. 4:5 when Israel gloried in the ark of God?

3. He knows the will of God. vs..... But this only increases his responsibility, for true happiness is found not in knowing the will of God but in doing it.

4. He has superior discernment, vs..... He professes to have the touchstone of divine revelation which he applies to questions of right and wrong.

5. He has superior training, vs..... He is very orthodox. Has he not been schooled out of the holy law of God?

Because of these advantages he advances

A Fivefold Claim

to superiority. He has graduated and has his degrees. He is quite sure that he is

1. A leader of blind men. vs.....

2. A light to those who are in the dark, vs.....

3. An educator of the thoughtless vs.....

4. A teacher of beginners vs.....

5. A trustee of divine truth vs.....

In the law of God there is a ten-fold claim against man. This man presents a tenfold claim for exemption, building his claim on that very law.

We will subject him to God's rigid cross examination. The court will turn all this back upon himself. "You, your neighbour's teacher, do you not teach yourself?"

Five searching questions are put to this self-righteous Pharisee and they wither up all his self conceit. Five emphatic "Thou's" are hurled at him. vs. 21-23. His preaching may be good but his practice is poor. His life is such a contradiction to his teachings. "The name of God is blasphemed (or railed at) among the Gentiles," He is doubly guilty. He not only transgresses the law he so gloried in but he is charged with bringing reproach upon God's name. What a terrible indictment. How poor a hiding place the law is proven to be.

Questions

1. Fill in references.

2. What man in the gospels is like the religious sinner in our lesson?

3. What incident in the Old Testament proves that God will not associate Himself with sin?

4. Write out verses 19-23 and underline a personal pronoun found more often than any other word in the verses.

5. What is the final charge brought against this religious sinner?

Lesson 6 - Romans 2:25-29

Circumcision

In these, the closing verses of our chapter the subject of circumcision is taken up. This was the great stronghold of the Jew. He thought himself quite safe behind this fortress. Did not circumcision originate with Abraham and was it not then before the law and Moses? Was it not given to separate Israel from all other nations, and the seal of the covenant God made with them?

The Jew put circumcision in the place of faith and love and holiness. But there are some today who put baptism and the Lord's Supper and good works in the place of real conversion to God. Therefore this lesson is an important one for our own day. The Jew is pursued into this hiding place and ferreted out, stripped of the last thread of his self-righteousness.

Four great arguments are advanced.

1. Circumcision Avails Nothing If You Are A Law-Breaker. Vs. 25.

The Jew attached saving value to circumcision. One of their Rabbis said, "Circumcision is equivalent to all the commandments of the law." Here we learn that circumcision put one under obligation to keep all the commandments of the law. Circumcision was but one link in the chain of ordinances and commandments. If one link is broken the whole chain is useless. One might as well have no chain at all. "Thy circumcision is made uncircumcision" by the transgression of the law.

2. Practical Righteousness Is Far More Important Than Circumcision. Vs. 26.

If an uncircumcised man was able to keep the law and live righteous before God, his uncircumcision would be counted for circumcision. Practical piety means much more than special privilege. The judgment of God is based on His own standard of righteousness. Cornelius was an uncircumcised man. He was not sinless, nor was he saved but we read that “he feared God and worked righteousness” and that was more than the circumcised had. He was saved later by the hearing of faith and not by his works of righteousness but God had respect for his piety, but He had no respect for the high pretensions of those who would have condemned him for his uncircumcision.

3. Greater Privilege Means Increased Responsibility. Vs. 27.

If an uncircumcised Gentile kept the law and walked in practical righteousness he would rightly condemn the Jew who transgressed the law and yet gloried in the fact of his “circumcision” and the “letter” of the law.

The brighter the light we possess, the greater the ruin will be if we walk in darkness. The best, when it is corrupted always becomes the worst. Outward profession means nothing. We must possess. It is not creed we need but Christ, not merely ordinances but another heart, not religious teachings but a new nature, a divine birth.

4. Not The External But The Internal Counts With God. Vs. 28, 29.

Not the external form, but the spiritual reality is what God accepts. Did the Jew think that because he was a member of the chosen race, he was specially entitled to salvation—then he must know that no externalities can make a true Jew. The external seal on his body without an inward change of soul means nothing. True circumcision is that of the heart and the true Jew was the one whose praise (as the word Judah means) was not of man but of God.

We could paraphrase these verses to meet present day conditions in this fashion,—

“He is not a Christian who is one outwardly, in name only, neither is that baptism which is only outward, but he is a Christian who is really converted and has experienced the new birth by vital contact with the loving Saviour.”

Both baptism and the Lord’s supper are important, but neither of them have any saving value and woe to the unconverted sinner who trusts to them for salvation.

Questions

1. Find the first reference to circumcision in the Bible.
2. What in the last part of Galatians 6 amounts to much more than circumcision?
3. Write out the words Cornelius heard by which he and all his house were saved.
4. What, before God, counts for much more than outward privilege?

5. What three things are linked with true circumcision in Phil. 3?

Lesson 7 - Romans 3:1-8 The Matter Taken Up

In Lesson Six we saw that the special pleadings of the religious sinner were rejected, and that he was found to be even more guilty than the others.

We now attend the final session of the court. The evidences will be brought in, the voice of the law heard and the Judge's verdict given. Before the case is dosed however, objections are raised in chapter 3:1-5. It is as if some one, roused by the failure of the Jew to put across his pleas of exemption from punishment, rises to his feet. Resenting the blow dealt to Jewish pride he is ready to take the place of a clever lawyer in their defence. He has three great arguments and these he presents in the form of questions. He must be silenced and his arguments must be met before the case is settled.

The first argument is a question of privilege vs. 1. Surely the Jew has some advantage, says this disputant. There must be some profit in having ordinances. You will certainly acknowledge that.

The Answer, vs. 2. Indeed the Jew has advantages. The greatest of all these advantages is that he possesses the Word of God. There is no greater privilege than that.

The second argument is one regarding God's faithfulness vs. 3. The oracles committed to Israel contain promises to them. Now what if some Jews did not believe—God must do as He promised and does not that promise hold good for all Israelites? Was it not given to the nation as a whole? Will His faith (that is His

plighted word) become mere empty sounds because of man's sin?

The Answer, vs. 4. No one will ever be able to charge God with breach of promise. If there is any untruth, it is on man's side. God must be right, otherwise He would not be God. David owned the justice of God, he took part with God against himself in Psalm 51 and finds himself guilty "without one plea." This is the only way blessing can come to a sinner.

The third argument, vs. 5. The right of God to judge sin. If as you say our unrighteousness commends the righteousness of God is God really righteous in judging the sin that magnifies Him in this way? How can God be just in judging sin when grace abounds through it?

The Answer, vs. 6-8. Certainly God is righteous in judging sin. If He were not He could not judge the world. Sin remains sin even tho God be glorified in it. Have you never seen the glory of the sun displayed in the rainbow across the dark thunder clouds? But the black cloud is none the less a dark thunder cloud. God is glorified in His grace, a grace that is greater than all our sin; but does that make the sinner less guilty? Of course not. Does anyone say, Let us do evil that good may come? God will judge any who speak thus and act on such an unholy principle.

It seems strange that Paul should have been charged with saying that. It may have been because of his ever emphasizing the sovereign grace of God much to the dislike of legalistic teachers. All blessing must come from God since man is totally corrupt and his works are either "wicked" or "dead". But man's responsibility is

not set aside by his inability to work good, nor by the fact that grace meets him in his sin and saves him.

Now that the objector has been silenced we have the

Summing up of the Case

and the statement of the court's findings in the judgment against man. On three different occasions God has put on record His verdict about man. The first occasion was in Noah's day when it was plainly seen that God's punishment of the impenitent does not change man's nature. Gen. 8:18-21.

On the second occasion "the Lord looked down from Heaven upon the children of men to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God." The result of the investigation is recorded. "They are all gone aside, they are together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Ps. 14:3.

Now, in our chapter on the third occasion we hear God's testimony about man and the solemn indictment is drawn up and the verdict given.

QUESTIONS

1. Write the expression "the faith of God" (vs. 3) in other words which are found in the lesson.
2. What about man is proven from the writings of Moses, David and Paul?
3. Make a list of the things "of God" found in Romans 3:1-8.
4. Who will rise up in the judgment and condemn these religious sinners? (Matt. 12).

Lesson 8 - Romans 3:9-20 What Man Is

Now that all objections have been met and Jew and Gentile stand condemned before the bar of God the final verdict is given. We have the statement of the court's findings in this case against man, wherein the entire human race is convicted and found guilty.

(1) The Case against man is "proved" vs 9. Now that all the world has been at the trial, what is the result? Has it been proved that the Jew is better than the Gentile—the religious sinner more excusable than the immoral? No, in no wise. It has been proved that all are under sin. The weight of sin is upon all. This is a proven fact. There is no appeal from this for it is a "Supreme Court Decision."

(2) The Case against man is summarized, 10-18 The voice of the law is heard for the voices of self-defense and self-assertion are silenced at last. Passage after passage from the Old Testament are marshalled to bear witness against both Jew and Gentile. From the Psalms, from the Proverbs and from Isaiah come the charges, each quotation adding a bit of drab to the dark picture of man.

An unattractive African Princess, who was flattered into thinking herself most beautiful, smashed a mirror into a thousand pieces, when it revealed her true features. Hateful words were uttered about the mirror, but her features were not made more beautiful thereby, facts remain and are stubborn things. "Foolish woman" we say, "You cannot change facts this way." Let us not be foolish, but listen to what God says about us. Let us

recognize ourselves as we look into God's mirror, His law. There are fourteen distinct features that make up this picture—fourteen distinct counts in this indictment. The first six give us a general description of the human heart. Notice how the words “none” and “all” are repeated in solemn cadence. All these are quotations from Ps. 14.

1. God demands a righteousness but there is no one who has it. vs. 11.
2. There is no one who has any sense of divine things, vs. 11.
3. There is no one who seeks after God. vs. 11.
4. They are all lost having all left the right road. vs. 12.
5. They have all become good for nothing—12.
6. There is not a man who does good, not even so many as one. vs. 12.

After this general description of the human race, we have man brought under God's exray. Robert Burns, the Scotch poet wrote about the blessing of “seeing ourselves as others see us.” Here we see ourselves as God sees us.

7. The throat is like an opened grave, vs. 13. Our polluted words are like the stench of death coming as they do from a putrid heart.
8. The tongue is an instrument of deceit being the index to the heart which is “deceitful above all things” — hopelessly diseased. Jer. 17:9.
9. The lips are the gateway to all the poison that has been inserted into our heart by that old serpent, the devil.

10. The mouth is brim full of cursing and bitterness, vs. 14, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

11. The feet are swift to shed blood (vs. 15). Hatred in the heart makes man a murderer. Think of the blood of the Lord Jesus.

12. Wherever the feet of man go you can trace them by the ruin and distress they leave behind (vs. 16).

13. The way of peace the foot of man has never trodden because he knows it not. (vs. 17).

14. The eyes are blinded to the fear of God, there is no light in them. Therefore man has trodden the pathway of death.

(3) The Case against man is closed, vs. 19, 20. It comes at last—the final verdict of the court. Solemn silence reigns as the voice of the law is heard. Harsh and muffled voices alike are hushed. Every man must, like Job “lay his hand upon his mouth.” This mighty chain of evidences has encircled the whole world and dragged them in “guilty before God.” Every mouth is stopped and only God, the Judge can speak now. What will He say? Will He condemn? Will He hurl forth His anathemas? Or is there, can there be mercy and forgiveness? Listen guilty, silent soul, and thou shalt know. If thou but hear, then thy soul shall live.

Questions

1. Which of the Old Testament books are quoted, containing charges against the sinner?

2. Write statements, telling how the throat, tongue, lips, mouth and feet, tell what is in the heart of man.

3. What is the final verdict of the court?

Lesson 9 - Romans 3:21-5:21 Salvation

We now begin the study of the second great division of Romans. The subject of this portion of the book is Justification. We have already seen how all are under Condemnation. Now we will read of God's wonderful salvation. A salvation that places the sinner, sheltered by the blood of Jesus, beyond condemnation.

This theme is divided into three simple parts

1. The Source of Justification—Ch. 3:21-31
2. The Subjects of Justification—Ch. 4
3. The Blessings of Justification—Ch. 5.

We will notice the lesser divisions as we go but these give us a general view of the new section of the book through which we are travelling together.

We have already learned that all are under sin and all need salvation. We learn now that God not only saves the sinner but that He is doing the right thing when He does it. It would be the wrong thing for any other judge to clear the guilty. Surely it will be interesting to learn how God can be Just and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

The dreadful word "Guilty" is still ringing in our ears. The law has spoken, having pronounced condemnation upon all, it can say no more. It stands stern and silent beside the trembling sinner. It cannot allay his just fears, nor clear his debts. It can only point solemnly to the horror of sin and its dread consequences.

We will leave the court room now. The trial is over. As we pass out we expect of course to see the guilty sinner

led out to the place of execution. We expect to see the awful doom of judgment fall upon the culprit's head. While waiting we hear a voice. The Judge is speaking! What will He say? His voice is not stern as we might expect but loving and gracious beyond measure. Can it be that He will pardon the sinner? Is there mercy? Yes there is, and not only pardon but more than that—justification. The sinners have had their sins exposed—now the Judge displays His own righteousness and says, “This is for you if you will have it. I will take your sins and you may have my righteousness. I will justify you freely by my grace.” Surely this is good news to the sinner who “tremblingly had hoped for mercy.” To be justified is to be just-as-if-I’d never sinned.

Dreyfus was an officer in the French army. Being a Jew and of high rank other officers were jealous of him and succeeded in having him unjustly condemned or court martialed and exiled. Interest was aroused in his case and a fresh trial was demanded by the people of France. Dreyfus was offered a pardon by the court. He refused it. “Take me back,” said he, “I will accept nothing less than a justification.” The acceptance of the pardon would have been an admission of the guilt. Dreyfus was absolved from all guilt by the French court. But Dreyfus was not guilty. God justifies the ungodly.

Two little words must be noticed here. They mark the way from the bondage of sin to liberty and joy and all the blessings of the sinner hinges on them. They are the two words that stand at the beginning of this division,

“But now”—vs. 21

‘But’ tells us it is all different now.

‘Now’ tells us of present salvation, the happy now of present fact.

Once we were under condemnation but now we have salvation
Once we trembled at the law but now His words allay our fear
Once we were left speechless but now we praise the Saviour
Once we feared coming wrath but now the storm clouds are behind us
Once we were guilty but now we are justified
Once we faced punishment but now we see our Substitute.

Once we stood in condemnation Waiting thus the sinner’s doom
Christ in death has wrought salvation God has raised Him from the tomb.

Questions

1. What is the subject of the second great division of Romans?
2. What, that no earthly judge can do can God do righteously?
3. Tell in your own words the difference between a pardon and a justification.

Lesson 10—Romans 3:21-31 God the Justifier

Under trial man proved himself to be wholly without righteousness. Under test he failed to produce what God demanded and without righteousness man could not stand before a holy God. "But now the righteousness of God is seen." "Well," says God, "If man has no righteousness, I have, and I will bring in my own righteousness and put it at the disposal of the sinner who trusts in me."

The story of how God justifies the sinner is found in the verses we have read, Romans 3:21-31 and we notice a number of important and interesting things about God's righteousness in them.

1. God's Righteousness is wholly apart from Law vs. 21.

The law could never justify a sinner, nor could it impute divine righteousness. If any man were able to keep the law and fulfill its requirements that would have been his righteousness. We read in Deut. 6:..... "It shall be our righteousness if we observe to do all these commandments." And if we do not observe to do all, the law could only condemn, for thus it is written. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Gal. 3 vs.....

Only God can wrap the mantle of righteousness round a condemned sinner and place him so completely beyond the reach of the law that there is not a prosecutor who

can lay a single “charge” to his account. Rom. 8
vs.....

2. God’s Righteousness Has Been Manifested vs. 21.

During the time of man’s trial it was held in reserve, hidden from view, but now it is “unveiled,” it is brought into full view so that all may see it and avail themselves of it.

Man’s sin was manifested but now all that is of man fades away and God fills the scene. He is seen in His marvelous grace justifying the sinner.

In the story of the prodigal in Luke 15 we are first introduced to the sad state into which his sins brought him, but later on the prodigal is lost sight of in the arms of a loving father who invests him with the very best from his wardrobe. Thus the righteousness of God displaces our sin and we are seen robed in spotless white.

3. God’s Righteousness was Witnessed by the Law and Prophets—vs. 21.

Just as signs along the road direct the traveler, and point to the destination ahead, so in olden days men of God spoke of God’s righteousness.

The witnesses are not brought in here but we might turn back the pages of history and listen to one or two as they tell of God’s wonderful salvation.

Isaiah, greatest of all the prophets, is a good witness. Hear him in Ch. 46 of his prophecy, vs.....

"I bring near my righteousness, it shall not be far off.
And my salvation shall not tarry."

And again in that marvelous 53rd chapter vs.....

"By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify
many; for he shall bear their iniquities."

And Jeremiah points in the same direction. He speaks of
the coming Son of David who will be Israel's king and he
says, "In his days Judah shall be saved And Israel shall
dwell safely And this is His name whereby He shall be
called

"The Lord our Righteousness." Jer. 23:

At the beginning of the Old Testament times stands
Moses; Daniel and Malachi stand at the close. They too.
witness to the righteousness that has come to us.

See, Deut. 32:4; Dan. 9:24; Mal. 4:2.

4. God's Righteousness is all in a Person, vs. 22.

The righteousness that God has provided for the sinner
is all in and through the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are healed by His stripes;

Would'st thou add to the word?

And He is thy righteousness made

The best robe of heaven He bids thee put on

Oh could'st thou be better arrayed?

Questions

1. Why was it important that man should have a
righteousness?

2. In what way does the story of the Prodigal Son illustrate the manifestation of the righteousness of God?
3. What is the righteousness of God likened to in this lesson?
4. Fill in blank references.

Lesson 11—Romans 3:21-31 (Cont'd.) God the Justifier

5. God's Righteousness is Obtained By Faith (22)

The sinner who believes God and takes Him at His word is clothed with God's righteousness.

Faith is a very simple thing

Though little understood

It frees the soul from death's dread sting

By resting on the blood

Faith is not what we see or feel;

It is a simple trust

In what the God of love has said

Of Jesus as the Just.

It is "unto all" that God offers this salvation, but it is only "upon all them that believe." The sinner who does not believe is still in his sins and under the wrath of God.

6. God's Righteousness is Offered to All (22, 23)

It is upon "all" who believe because there is no difference—no distinction for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. It makes very little difference whether one is in the depths of a mine or on the top of a mountain as far as reaching the stars is concerned. All alike need salvation and it is offered to all and all who

believe have it. The wonder is that so few possess it and rejoice in it.

7. God's Righteousness is the gift of His Grace —vs. 24.

Of course guilty sinners should be punished for their sins nor would it be right if God passed them by, but Christ suffered in our stead. He took our guilt upon Himself and died for us. Now then we are “justified freely by His grace.” The word translated “freely” here is really “gratuitously.” It is translated “without a cause” in John 15:25 and this is very simply its meaning. Men hated the blessed Saviour “without a cause” and just so we are loved by God and “justified” without a cause.

If “grace” is the ground of our blessing “redemption” is the means. God loved us when we were in our sins but His love made it necessary for Him to separate us from our sins and so He sent the Lord Jesus to deliver us. “Redemption” means the payment of a ransom. There was only One who could pay the price to deliver us.

We are redeemed but not with silver

We are bought but not with gold,

Bought with a price the blood of Jesus,

Precious price of love untold.

Many years ago, the principal of a school thought it necessary to make a rule that anyone found playing truant would be punished by flogging. Among the boys of the school was the principal's own son—John. One day it happened to be John's chum who had broken the rule. He was known to be hiding in a wood near by, but the

dread of the flogging kept him from returning for a bad conscience told him he rightly deserved to be punished.

John could not rest, so going to his father he begged to be allowed to be punished instead of his chum. After a while his father consented, and John bravely bore the blows that would have fallen on his chum. Obtaining leave, he found his chum and begged him to return.

“Look at the red marks across my back,” said John. “You can come back now as there is nothing to fear, I have borne the punishment for you.”

The Lord Jesus Christ became a substitute for sinners and died on the cross in their stead, thus He secured their release and satisfied every claim of God against the sinner.

“Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past through the forbearance of God.”

The only other place in the New Testament where the word “propitiation” is found is in Hebrews 10:5 and there it is translated “mercy seat.”

The Judge has become our Saviour and the judgment seat is now a mercy seat.

Think of the publican praying in the temple (Lk. 18:13). He may or may not have known fully what he was saying but his prayer might thus be paraphrased: “O God, be to me what Thou art whilst gazing upon the atoning blood—a mercy seat.”

Questions

1. What is the ground of our blessing?

2. What does redemption mean?
3. What do we learn about redemption in 1 Peter 1:18-25?
4. How is the righteousness of God obtained?

Lesson 12—Romans 3:25-31 (Cont'd)

The Mercy Seat

The trial of man has ended. We have seen the guilty sinners received by the Judge. We have heard His words of welcome and we have seen that the place where they met was a “mercy seat.” Let us linger a while longer and learn more about this wonderful place where a righteous God can meet a guilty sinner in mercy because of the blood of Jesus.

We read about the mercy seat in the book of Exodus. You remember God said concerning it “There will I meet with thee and commune with thee from above the mercy seat” Ex. 25:22.

The mercy seat was the most important article in the tabernacle that was pitched in the wilderness. In fact God commanded the Children of Israel to build the tabernacle in order that there might be a place for the ark and the mercy seat that covered the ark. Beneath that golden lid were hidden the two tables of the law, and above upon it, one with it, were two golden cherubim stretching their wings on high with their faces looking one toward the other. There between the cherubim God had His throne, it was there He dwelt in the midst of His earthly people. Psa. 80:1. And that throne was a mercy seat. Once every year, on the great day of Atonement, the High Priest would take the blood of the sin-offering and sprinkle it upon the golden lid between the cherubim and also upon the ground where his feet stood. Then the priest would go out to the people and tell them that the work was finished. In all this God was teaching them that it was only on the

ground of the shed and sprinkled blood that He could have dealings with them and dwell in their midst.

As the tables of the law lay concealed within the ark so Christ could say "Thy law is within my heart" Ps. 40:8. He was the only One who ever kept it. He magnified it and made it glorious. But that could never save sinners. That could only condemn us. Above the law, on the mercy seat, the blood was sprinkled and the cherubim (symbolizing God's justice) were satisfied; so the Lord Jesus died, His precious blood was shed and God is perfectly satisfied. He rests in the accomplished redemption and He wants us to rest there.

The veil hid from view the holy place where were the ark and the mercy seat. At the moment when the Lord Jesus yielded up His life to God as a sacrifice for sin the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. Matt. 27:50-52. Thus the way was open into the holiest, and the mercy seat was disclosed. God and sinful man could meet in peace and through "faith in His blood" the sinner is justified.

It is this salvation that God "sets forth"— Christ as the mercy seat. God is so eager that sinners shall be saved that He Himself comes out in the glory of His mercy and displays His Son to the view of a guilty world. He lifted Him up on the cross that all might see Him and placed Him on the throne that all might receive Him for "There in the glory He waits to impart Peace to the conscience and joy to the heart Waits to be gracious to pardon and heal All who their sin and their wretchedness feel."

A young woman visiting an asylum was much interested in the strange actions of an old lady who was an inmate. She saw her approach a trellis of flowers, pull out the

lath supporting them, and break it in two uneven portions. Then with a piece of string she bound the two pieces together, thus making a cross. The young woman looking on was filled with sorrow and indignation until she heard the old lady with tear-dimmed eyes exclaim, "Enough for God, enough for justice, enough for me." She understood the deeper meaning of the cross. Mercy cries, "If sentence of death be executed, how shall I be glorified?" Truth cries, "If sentence of death be not executed how shall I be honored?" The Cross is the answer.

The perfect righteousness of God

Is witnessed in the Saviour's blood.

'Tis in the cross of Christ I see,

How God can save, yet righteous be.

Questions

1. What was the mercy seat?
2. In what way did God teach His earthly people that He could only deal with them on the ground of the blood?
3. Find three references in John's Gospel to the Lord Jesus being "lifted up."
4. What did the veil in the temple speak of? (Heb. 10).

Lesson 13—Romans 3:25-31 (Cont'd)

Redemption or Remission

Not only was it necessary for Christ to die that God might shew mercy to sinners, the death of Christ was needed to justify God's dealings in the old dispensation, "to declare His righteousness for the remission," or as it is here "the passing over of sins done aforetime." vs. 25.

The Sin Question Settled vs. 25, 26

For over 4000 years God had passed over sins as if He were indulgent or forbearing. But not until Jesus died on the cross was the sin question settled.

The great Day of Atonement when sins were covered for the entire year was only a picture of the greater Day of Atonement where sins were put away forever at Calvary. The blood of bulls was only the remembrance of sins every year like the accounts on the credit slips. The blood that was shed then pointed to Calvary where the accounts would be met and full payment made to the satisfaction of God. God had that cross in view when He accepted Abel, declared Noah righteous, justified Abraham and forgave sinning David. What He gave them was somewhat on the order of a promissory note. "I promise to pay," said God and He forgave the sinner. The cross has justified Him in doing this.

Notice the two declarations in these verses,

"To declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past,"

"To declare at this time His righteousness that He might be just and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

Thus the Cross stands between the two dispensations and explains God's dealings in both. The sins of those who lived before Jesus died and the sins of those who lived after, all met at the cross and there as far as God is concerned the sin question is settled for all who will believe. Will you?

Boasting Excluded vs. 27, 28.

The blood stained door that admits the sinner, excludes all boasting. Faith enters the door of grace and leaves boasting behind. Once guilty, the sinner's hand was on his mouth,—now sitting at his Redeemer's feet he is silent, too. He has no merit of his own.

In the court room there was a Babel of voices each man proclaiming his own goodness and excusing his badness. If man can boast in nothing else he will boast in being less sinful than his neighbor. Around the mercy seat there is no boasting for all unite in the grand conclusion that "a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." God has successfully "shut out" all boasting by saving sinners wholly apart from the works of the law. Had he given man even the tiniest bit to do there would have been no end to the boasting. He would be like the man who has an interest of one dollar in a million dollar concern and makes himself obnoxious by his continual boasting.

The Whole World Welcome vs. 29, 30

Jew and Gentile alike stand guilty before God. We know there is no difference there. But now that God shows mercy will He respect persons? Will He favour His earthly people the Jews? If God is a Saviour He will be a Saviour to all. He gave the law to the Jew only but the

gospel is universal The Jew who had the law can be justified only “on the principle of faith” and the Gentile who was without the law God would justify by “the means of faith.”

The Law Established vs. 31

After all this glorious unfolding we just expect some one to say, “But if this be true, if God justifies both Jew and Gentile wholly apart from the law is the law set aside?” No, indeed not! is the answer. It is not set aside but it is satisfied. Faith established the law. The believing sinner owning his guilt bows beneath the law’s righteous claim but says “Jesus speaks for me.” The law demands righteousness or vengeance. Both demands are met in Christ. He is our perfect righteousness and He has suffered the penalty of the law in His death on the tree.

Questions

1. Give a two-fold reason for the death of Christ.
2. In what way was a sacrifice in the Old Testament like a promissory note?
3. Give in your own words the reason why saved sinners cannot boast.

Lesson 14—Romans 4

Justification Illustrated

We learned a great deal about “Justification” in Chap. 3, we will learn more about it in Chap. 4, for again the subject is “Justification by faith.” The difference in the two chapters is that Chap. 3 tells us about the God who justifies, Chap. 4 tells us some things about the justified ones.

Two characters are brought before us, taken out of God’s great picture book, to illustrate justification. They are Abraham and David. We shall visit with Abraham first and learn what we can from his experience, then we will listen to David. The question that we shall seek to answer is this

Is Justification by Faith or by Works? or Have Works anything to do with Justification?

Was Abraham justified? Of course he was. “Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness.” Rom. 4:3 and Gen. 15:6. We have learned from Rom. 3 that a justified man is one who has received God’s righteousness. Abraham did that. Abraham is the father of all who believe and the pattern man of faith. Let us ask the question then, “What part did works have in his experience? What did Abraham find as pertaining to the flesh?”

Well, if Abraham received anything because of his own works could he boast about it? Certainly not in the presence of God, for we learned in Chap. 3:27 that boasting is excluded there. “If Abraham were justified by

works he hath whereof to glory but not before God.” Abraham “found” all that he needed in God, he did not work for what he received. When God offered to Abraham the blessing, Abraham simply held open his empty hands to receive what God had to give, and that is faith. How delighted children are to find gifts awaiting them on their birthdays, or on other occasions of presenting” gifts. They do not wait to earn them before taking.

“Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace but of debt, but to him that worketh not but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness” vs. 4, 5.

You see, “work and wages” go together and “faith and grace,” and they are entirely different one from the other. If a man works for me and I pay him that is not grace, that is debt, I owe it to him. But suppose he leaves my employ and I continue to pay him, he has not earned that, that is a gift.

Many years ago Abraham stood upon the great plain of Mamre. He was alone and it was night. All around him the vast plain stretched out. Above him the heavens sparkled with millions of twinkling stars which were really great worlds about which he knew so little. Suddenly the silence of the night is broken, a voice is heard, it comes from the unknown world. “Look up,” it says to Abraham, “View those countless stars glittering there. So shall thy seed be.” What a promise! Abraham is filled with wonder at it, but very simply he takes God at His word and his faith is counted for righteousness. Gen. 15:1-5.

But if faith is very simple the work on which faith rests is very great and this is illustrated for us in the next scene with Abraham. Gen. 15:6-18. He is not looking at the starry sky now but on a scene of death. He has taken several animals, each one typifying Christ; an avenue of blood has been formed "dividing them in the midst and laying each piece one against the other."

Abraham gazes on this scene, the earth at his feet is dyed with blood and great darkness falls upon him. Then again a voice reaches him and right down that bloody way someone comes to meet him. It is God Himself who comes to make a covenant with him, a covenant founded on the blood of the sacrifice. What a picture this is of Calvary where we see the earth stained with the precious blood of the Lord Jesus. All the riches of glory are ours because Jesus died there. God comes to meet us there when like Abraham we stand and gaze upon the bleeding sacrifice slain for us.

Questions

1. What two men illustrate justification for us?
2. Illustrate the difference between gift and wages.
3. Prove that Abraham was justified.
4. What mighty work makes it possible for God to bless?

Lesson 15—Romans 4:6-8

David's Testimony Concerning Justification

In chapter Fourteen we had a visit with Abraham, now we shall visit with David and listen as he describes the blessedness of the justified. David is called “the sweet Psalmist of Israel,” and his description takes the form of a song. He sings one of his sweetest songs when he tells of the justifying grace of God. The reason he can sing so sweetly is that he experienced in his own life the blessing he sings of. He knew “the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works.” vs. 6. He calls blessed those whom the law could only condemn. What a sinner David was! Not only was his own soul plunged into sin’s darkness in one chapter in his life, but he had “given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme.” 2 Sam. 12:4. How could he be happy until he acknowledged his sin and received the assurance of forgiveness. With the old account settled and assured that nothing could be reckoned against him David could be happy. This new found joy he describes for us in Psalm 32.

In Psalm One David sings of the happiness of the man who never sinned. I am sure he was not thinking of himself then. David was a prophet and the Holy Spirit had the Lord Jesus Christ, the perfect Man in view when that Psalm was penned.

In Psalm Fourteen, David strikes the minor key. He says they are “all together become filthy.” So both David and we ourselves are included in these—filthy, unprofitable and godless.

In Psalm twenty-two we see the Holy, Spotless Man of Psalm One treated as if He were the godless one of Psalm fourteen. Hear Him say "Why hast thou forsaken me." The last word of Psalm 22 is, "He hath done this." That is the gospel. Now take your pencil and write in faith, "For me." "He hath done this for me." Then you can enter into the blessedness described in Psa. 32.

The Happiness of a Forgiven Sinner

But surely, we say, one who has sinned so deeply cannot share the same blessing with the One who never sinned? "Oh yes," says David, "you see I sinned and was in great distress until I took my place before God as a guilty sinner; then God freely forgave all my sins, and now I can sing of indescribable bliss and this blessing is not mine alone, it belongs to anyone, whoever he may be, "to whom God imputeth righteousness apart from works."

How hideous sin is and how unhappy we are in its company. Look at the three words David uses to describe it in Psa. 32.

1. Transgression which is really "lawlessness" and speaks of the rebellion of the human will against the will of God.
2. Sin meaning "missing the mark." That is what sin always does. The sinner loses out in the end. Jonah you remember paid the fare to Tarshish but he never got there, and so everyone that sins is disappointed in the end.
3. Iniquity or "crookedness." Sin is quite like its father the old crooked serpent, the devil.

Then David tells us how God deals with our sins. Again he uses three words. They tell a wonderful story of grace.

1. Forgiven—"lifted." God has lifted the awful load from off our shoulders.

2. Covered. That is they are "out of sight." Adam and Eve in Eden needed no covering. As soon as they sinned they sought to hide their sin. They sewed fig leaf aprons together for a covering, but fig leaves cannot hide sin. God took innocent victims, their blood was shed and with their bleeding skins he covered the guilty pair. What a picture of salvation. Only blood can put sins out of sight.

3. "Imputeth not" God not only struck the whole dark list clean off from His books, but left room for no more entries. All our accounts have been charged to the Lord Jesus Christ, He has paid it all and that is why a believer will never come into condemnation.

Questions

1. In which of the Psalms mentioned in our lesson does the believer find himself?
2. Can a sinner be happy if not saved?
3. What three words does David use for sin?
4. Find one other reference to each of these words.
5. What three words describe God's method of dealing with the believer's sins?

Lesson 16—Romans 4:9-12

How Circumcision Illustrates the Doctrine of Justification by Faith

We have visited with Abraham and with David. We have learned from them how sinners are justified. But now a question rises in the mind of some one well versed in the Old Testament writings. Says he, "Abraham and David were truly justified but they were both in a charmed circle of privilege. David was the child of that covenant and Abraham was the father of that covenant. What about sinners outside that circle?"

1. Abraham was justified by faith before he was circumcised, vs. 9, 10. We read the story of Abraham's faith in Gen. 15. It was then he was reckoned righteous. We read the story of his circumcision in Gen. 17. That was at least 14 years after. Many things had happened since the night he gazed upon the stars and received the justifying word from heaven. Circumcision had absolutely nothing to do with his being justified. Abraham was not counted righteous because he was circumcised. In uncircumcision he was declared righteous because of his faith.

2. Abraham received circumcision as a sign after believing, vs. 11. Because Abraham was righteous he received his circumcision as a sign to signify that he was righteous in the sight of God. In Gen. 17 God establishes a covenant with Abraham. This covenant was never to be broken. It was a covenant of grace on God's part. It was to be an eternal covenant. In it God promised many blessings to Abraham—temporal blessings and spiritual

as well. In establishing this covenant God gave to Abraham the rite of circumcision. That was to be the sign of the covenant. What did it signify? We shall see. Circumcision means to cut around or cut away. Abraham's part in the contract was to "cut away" something. What was to be cast aside as worthless? Why a part of himself, but that part was the symbol of the whole. Abraham was to apply the knife to himself. That spoke of self judgment, judgment upon the flesh. Circumcision was the mark of the unprofitableness of the flesh. Abraham bore about in his body a mark that reminded him of the fact that the flesh had no part in God's covenant, it was faith that counted.

3. Abraham received circumcision as a seal upon his faith, vs. 11. When something is sealed it is secured and preserved. The seal is a witness to something that has been finished. Circumcision was God's seal upon the righteousness that Abraham already possessed by faith. With the empty hand of faith he had received God's gift. Now all was sealed to Abraham in the ordinance of circumcision.

For believers in this dispensation there is an ordinance that is a sign and symbol of a finished work. It is baptism. Baptism follows faith. After we have received God's righteousness by faith we pass judgment upon the flesh. That is why the believer is buried out of sight in the waters of baptism.

4. Abraham is the father of all them that believe. vs. 11. God gave this sign and seal to Abraham after he was justified by faith, to make him the father of all them that believe. That is, he is the pattern man of faith.

5. Abraham is the father of circumcision, vs 12.

Circumcision was a sign and seal. It was also a mark of separation. It signified a people separated from the world unto God. Of this true circumcision Abraham is the father. Israel was separated in an outward way. Every believer is to know the true circumcision of the heart. The proof of this will be a separated walk as it was with Abraham.

God said to him, "I am the Almighty God, walk before me and be thou perfect." That is the walk of faith.

Thus we see that the great lesson we learn from the circumcision of Abraham is

Justification by faith apart from works.

The Holy Spirit guided me

To what the Scripture saith;

I grasped the truth; Christ died for me!

I'm justified by faith.

Questions

1. What is proven by the fact that Abraham was declared righteous before he was circumcised?
2. What did circumcision mean to Abraham?
3. Of what was Abraham's circumcision a continual reminder to him?
4. When, according to our lesson, was Abraham declared righteous?

Lesson 17—Romans 4:13-25

The Fourth Illustration from God's Picture Book

The Promise that God gave to Abraham vs. 13.

Again we accompany Abraham. This time to learn about the wonderful promise God made to him and how Gentiles as well as Jews are involved in the fulfillment of it. We have seen Abraham standing alone beneath the starry sky. Then he stood childless and without a possession in the world and God tells him he is the "heir of the universe." To him and to his seed "the uttermost parts of the earth" are given "for a possession." Now that seemed impossible for Abraham was not only childless but all prospect of having children in his home had vanished long since. But God said so and that was enough for Abraham, he believed God.

The first lesson that Paul would have us learn thru this experience of Abraham is that

The promise of God is not dependent upon the obedience of the law. vs. 14, 15.

It was not because of any goodness in Abraham that God gave him the promise. It was not "through the law," that is, it was not on the ground of legal obedience. Indeed a promise is quite different from a command. When God promises He must fulfill, but the law makes demands upon us. It says "Do as I command you," and puts us under obligations. The promise is unconditional.

Verse 14 tells us we can never link “faith” and “promise” and “law” together in one chain. If we try, “law” is sure to break the chain and make “the promise of none effect” because the law worketh wrath, “for where no law is, there is no transgression.”

Solomon put Shimei under law. (1 Kings 2:36-46). He said “You shall have a home in Jerusalem so long as you do not transgress.” Shimei accepted the conditions and said “The saying is good, as my Lord the king hath said, so will thy servant do.” But you put the law about a man and he will transgress. Shimei did. In course of time his servants ran away and he went after them. Shimei brought back his servants from Gath whither they had fled but he lost his life. “Why hast thou not kept the oath of the Lord and the commandment that I have charged thee with?” said the king and Shimei died at the hands of the law he had transgressed. “If they which are of the law be heirs,” all is lost but if “faith,” “promise” and “law” cannot be linked together, “faith” “grace” and “assurance” can. They form a line that can never be broken and that reaches out to “whosoever will” lay hold of it. God gave the promise on the principle of faith that it might be by grace and that it might be sure to all the seed of Abraham. The inheritance will surely be possessed by all of Abraham’s spiritual seed, because when God promised it, it was an unconditional promise.

Let us think of Abraham’s seed for a moment. That seed is divided into three groups and Abraham is the father of them all. There are those who will live up in heaven forever. There are those who will inherit the holy land and possess forever the land of their fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Then there is a third group—the rest of the nations. All the nations of the earth. When God made

the promise to Abraham he had in view this grand and glorious scene of blessing.

The Promise was made by the God of Resurrection, vs. 17.

We read that Abraham's body was dead and God said to him, I have made thee a father of many nations." All human hope of Abraham having a son had perished, then how could nations rise out of a childless home? This was no difficulty with Abraham: "he believed God, who quickeneth the dead and calleth those things which be not as though they were." How could the promise fail when He who promised was such a God. What did it matter that impossibilities presented themselves, faith trusts God. Abraham did not as yet have a son but he had the God who promised and that was enough. His faith was in the omnipotent eternal God.

Questions

1. What is God's picture book?
2. Why is it that faith, promise and law cannot be linked together?
3. What three things form a line that can never be broken?
4. Does the expression "Seed of Abraham" refer only to the nation of Israel?

Lesson 18—Romans 4:13-25

Faith Illustrated

Before we bid Abraham farewell, we will linger awhile and learn about justifying faith. He is the pattern man of faith, and his record has been written for our sakes.

Abraham's Faith Overcame All Obstacles, vs.....

There were dark clouds that might have obscured Abraham's faith, but he looked beyond them. Faith's horizon is beyond all seeming difficulties. Against hope he believed in hope, for he had the word of God and that was quite enough.

Abraham's Faith Was Strong in God, vs.....

How strong Abraham's faith was. Weak faith would have taken into consideration a "dead body" and a "barren womb." Abraham believed God was greater than all circumstances. What mattered it that the fulfillment of God's promise seemed impossible—with faith there are no impossibilities.

Abraham's Faith Needed No Props to Lean On,
vs.....

Unlike the unstable doubter, James tells us of in his epistle, Abraham "staggered not" at the promise of God thru unbelief. His mind was stayed upon Jehovah and he was kept in perfect peace. When Dr. Paton was translating the New Testament into an island language, he found great difficulty in finding native words for "believe" and "faith." While at work in his study one day, one of the native teachers came in, hot and tired from a long walk. He threw himself down on a cane chair, and

putting his feet on another, used a word which meant “I am resting my whole weight here.” Instantly Dr. Paton had his word. To the natives of that island faith means the whole weight of the mind and heart resting on the Word of God.

Abraham’s faith glorified God, vs.....

Unbelief dishonors God; it casts a doubt upon His word; it calls into question His power. On the other hand, faith glorifies God, acknowledging Him to be what He is—the Almighty and Faithful God.

Abraham’s Faith Was Unwavering, vs.

He was “fully persuaded” and his persuasion rested on the faithful word of God and His all sufficiency. These are faith’s strongholds—What God is and what He says. Abraham allowed nothing to come between him and God.

Abraham’s Faith Is Recorded For Our Sakes, vs.....

We have stood beside Abraham, we have looked, we have listened to the story of his faith. But all this is not merely that we might know something concerning Abraham but that we might be encouraged to have like faith and receive a like blessing with Abraham.

Abraham’s faith was in the God of resurrection and so is ours; for what Abraham believed God would do, we know He has done. Abraham believed God could raise the dead, “we believe that He raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.”

Our Faith Rests In The Finished Work Of Christ
vs.....

Death is the penalty of sin. Jesus was delivered as our Substitute.

But He who died as my Substitute, God has raised again from the dead. The Father delivered up His Son —that was to pay my debt. Then He raised Him from the dead —and that is our receipt. In the hands and side of the Lord Jesus are the wounds that tell us all is finished: payment has been made; the atoning work is done. God is satisfied and we are justified.

Mr. X was sent to prison with the alternative of a fine. His loving wife had no rest till she had secured the needed amount. Off to jail she went, laid the money on the sheriff's desk, and very soon walked off with her husband, once more a free man. Suddenly she turned back and said to the officer, "You have forgotten the receipt, sir. I must have a receipt." "There is your husband" said he, "he is your receipt."

A living Saviour is the proof that full payment has been made for us. A risen Christ is the assurance that our sins are gone.

Questions

Why was it that Abraham against hope believed in hope?

What kind of a man in "James" is in contrast with Abraham? (Find the reference)

Find a promise in the first part of Isa. 26 that was true of Abraham.

What is faith? Give a simple answer in your own words.

Fill in blank references.

Lesson 19—Romans 5:1-2

The Three Looks

On his journey from the city of destruction to the Celestial City, Bunyan's Pilgrim in his progress was received and entertained in a place called "The Palace Beautiful." There he rested in a large upper room whose window opened toward the sun-rising; the name of the chamber was "Peace." At break of day Christian awoke from his peaceful rest and sang.

"Where am I now? Is this the love and care Of Jesus for the men who pilgrims are Thus to provide! That I should be forgiven And dwell already the next door to heaven?" We enter the fifth chapter of Romans and find that we like Bunyan's Pilgrim are in a palace beautiful. With the justified we dwell within the light of heaven, in the chamber of peace, with hope's window cheering our hearts with its sunbeams of glory.

You remember how we entered this beautiful place. Approaching the doorstep of faith, the blood we saw sprinkled there, told us that we were welcome. We entered, glad to escape the storm that threatened outside, but having crossed the threshold, we discovered that we had not only entered a refuge but a home. Everything delighted us as we viewed the place and sat down to enjoy the blessings vouchsafed to us there. You remember David said, "He hath brought me forth into a large place." He could not say that before he was forgiven, for sin is bondage, but grace is freedom. It not only snaps sin's chains and sets us free; it also brings us

into the full enjoyment of all the rich and manifold blessings of God.

Crossing the threshold, let us not remain there, but let us view the place—looking backward, looking round and also forward.

1. The Look Behind, vs. 1

“Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The backward look is outside, it removes all fear for everything is behind us that once we feared and we have peace with God.

Outside were our sins, like a mighty army marching on to capture our souls. But not one of them can reach us here. Our Lord Jesus Christ has met and conquered them, destroying the host of them. We are saved from our sins.

Outside it was night, the sky was overcast, the clouds gathered, the storm lowered but we have escaped the storm. The perfect peace we enjoy is the calm after the storm has spent its fury. Our Lord Jesus Christ was the storm center, the tempest swept at Calvary and now it is calm.

The storm that bowed His blessed head

Is hushed forever now—

And rest divine is ours instead.

Whilst glory crowns His brow.

2. The Look Round, vs. 2

This is the look within. Within the blessed walls of salvation we look round and discover that our position is one of grace. We find ourselves in the bright sunshine of the love of God. His face beams upon us. We have access into His presence for He the Lord of the house holds out to us the golden sceptre of grace. How different our former condition! When we were in our sins we had no standing. Then we were under condemnation, but now we have “permanently taken up our position” for that is really the force of Paul’s words here. We stand before the Judge, not a word of condemnation does He utter, for we are in His favour.

3. The Look Ahead, vs. 2

“And rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.”

“The window opened toward the sunrising,” said John Bunyan and so does Paul. The window is hope and the sunrising the glory of God. We step to the window, how bright the prospect is. The glory flashes upon us and it makes us happy, we rejoice in it. Christ is coming soon to take us into it. This hope brightens with heavenly light the road that leads home. We shall travel the road together in our next lesson.

Questions

1. In what three directions do we look in our lesson?
2. Write the phrase from Rom. 5 referring to each.
3. Who in the O. T. prayed with his window open toward Jerusalem?
4. What did Bunyan call the place the believer has been brought to?

5. What did David call it?

Lesson 20—Romans 5:3-5

The Way of the Justified—The Wilderness Journey

We have been looking at the blessings of the justified. We have been together in the “Palace Beautiful,” we have joined in the song of the redeemed rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God. Now we turn to the pathway that leads to the glories yonder.

Although rough and rugged it is a bright shining pathway. “The path of the just is as a shining light that shineth MORE and MORE unto the perfect day.” We are brought suddenly from the heights of blessing in vs. 1 and 2 to the depths of tribulation in vs. 3. But we can glory in tribulations as well as in the prospect of glory; the trials of the road need not take from us the song with which we began our journey.

Israel sang on the banks of the Red Sea. All was glorious there. Later on they reached Marah on their way to the land of their song. There the waters were bitter but the bitter waters were made sweet. We experience the same. There is joy in every trial if we travel with God.

I journey through a desert drear and wild,
Yet is my heart by such sweet thoughts beguiled
Of Him on whom I lean, my strength, my stay,
I can forget the sorrows of the day.

We can glory in tribulation because of its blessed results. “Tribulation worketh patience.” We learn to wait on God, we learn endurance through the trials. Down

here in the trouble we learn to raise the song we shall sing up there in the glory, only we can sing here as we cannot up there for there is no sorrow there. Listen to the duet in the Philippian jail. Paul and Silas are singing at midnight. No sweeter song was ever sung in the courts of heaven than that song in the night in the dark dismal dungeon. Heirs of glory they could "rejoice in tribulation." Their harps were well tuned and the sorrow gave sweetness to the tone. Tribulation in itself is not pleasant. Sorrow is sorrow and God knows it, but He is with us in the sorrow. Mary and Martha never would have known the depths of the Saviour's love had they not walked in the path of sorrow to the grave of their brother Lazarus. Angels in heaven beheld His glory but the sisters knew His tears and His tender sympathy.

Perhaps we would want fair weather all the time. God knows better. Calm seas all the while make poor sailors. All of our trials come from our blessed Father's hand and what experiences we have of His dealings with us when we exercise patience in the trial. Naturally we wish to be free from trouble but how many a precious lesson we would lose if we were able to take ourselves out of God's hand.

In the desert God will teach thee
What the God that thou hast found—
Patient, gracious, powerful, holy,
All His grace shall there abound.

And then these experiences of God's ways with us strengthen our hope. Each step of our onward way brings us nearer the goal and the difficulties make us long the more to reach it. At the end of the way we see

the golden street of the City of God where the narrow trail loses itself and those who tread it now will rest their weary feet. All the trials of the way will seem nothing when we get to the end of the road.

Many a traveler has failed to reach the desired road. Some within sight of home have been lost but we are sure of reaching that blest place. Our “hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” What a blessed assurance this is. The Holy Ghost is leading us home to Jesus, even as Rebekah was led to Isaac by the servant who came to win her. And all the way home we enjoy the love of God and the blessed companionship of the indwelling Spirit who has “poured out in our hearts the love of God.”

Of this wonderful love of God we hope to learn more in lesson twenty-one.

Questions

1. What characterizes the path of the believer?
2. What gives the Christian joy in every trial?
3. What does tribulation do for the believer?
4. Whose experience in the Old Testament illustrates the pathway of the believer?
5. What has the believer on the way home?

Lesson 21—Romans 5:6-11

The Wonderful Love of God Enjoyed by those Who Believe.

We are journeying home to heaven. The road is rough but our hearts are light for the Holy Ghost makes real to us the love of God and occupies us with it all the way. This is the sunlight that brightens the way.

We cannot always trace the way

Where Thou, our gracious Lord dost move,

But we can always surely say

That God is love.

We must not make the mistake of looking within our own hearts to discover the love of God there. Indeed it is there, poured forth by the Holy Spirit. But when the spirit of God would occupy us with the love of God He points away to Calvary. It was at the Cross of Christ that God's love was seen in all its fulness. We will never lose sight of that cross. When our feet stand on the golden street of heaven's fair city we will remember that Jesus died to open to us the floodgates of the love of God.

We will notice a few things concerning the love of God as they are brought before us in these verses in Romans 5.

1. The Proof of God's Love, vs. 6

We have already seen that the death of Christ is the great and outstanding evidence of God's love to us. It was when all was lost on our side that God in mercy sent His Son. We were "ungodly," out of harmony with God,

refusing to love Him. We were “without strength,” quite unable to do anything for ourselves. Our extremity was God’s opportunity” in due time Christ died for us.”

2. The Measure of His Love, vs. 7, 8

God commends His love to us as a love that surpasses all others. There are limits to human love, there is no limit to God’s love. Man’s love needs an object to draw it out. It was when we were good for nothing at all that God loved us.

“My child,” said a dying mother as she gave a last embrace to her daughter, “I have loved you because of what you are; my heavenly Father, to whom I go, has loved me in spite of what I am.”

3. The Continuance of His Love. vs. 9. 10

His love in times past forbids us to think

He will leave us at last...

These verses assure us that God’s love will never cease. For if when all our sins were between us and God, He loved us then: now that we are justified by the blood of Christ we will not be forsaken by Him.

If the Father could embrace the prodigal when he was “in rags and in ruin within and without” and kiss him then, think you he would cease to love when the best robe was on him and the joy of the home was his.

Our guarantee of a full and perfect salvation is a living, loving Saviour at God’s right hand. He is there for us. We are kept safe in His life having been saved by His death. We are saved every step of our path down here by His life up there for we are one with Him.

A babe was found lifeless clasped in its dead mother's arms, its life was dependent upon the life of its mother. The arms that encircle us will never lose their power, our Christ ever lives, and because He lives, we live.

4. The Satisfaction of His Love, vs. 11

Our hearts have been won by the power of God's own love displayed in the death of His Son. His arms have been thrown around us and we are joined in life to the Risen Son of God. Should we not rejoice in such a God who has done all this. God Himself is our joy. Three times we have read of joy in these verses. Here our cup runs over.

"We rejoice in hope of the glory of God"

"We glory (or rejoice) in tribulations"

"We joy (or rejoice) in God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Once we were enemies but we have now received the reconciliation" R. V. God presses us to His heart of love and we are satisfied.

Questions

1. What is the greatest evidence of God's love to us?
2. What three words describe the unconverted in these verses?
3. In what way is God's love different than man's love?
4. Find the references to the three times we read of joy.

Lesson 22—Romans 5:12-21

From Condemnation to Justification of Life. In Adam or In Christ

In our last lesson we learned of the rich blessings that are ours in Christ. Once we were far from God by nature and by practise. Now we are reconciled and brought near to Him through our Lord Jesus Christ and God Himself is the source of our joy (vs. 11). We are going to look back now to the fountain from whence all these blessings come to us. We trace sin to its source and grace to its source, and we find that two men stand, one at the beginning of history, and the other at its close, and everything is headed up in them. The one man Adam is the head of one race, he is the father of all the condemned, the stream of sin and death and judgment begins with him.

The other man, of Whom Adam is a figure, (vs. 14) is Christ. He is the Head of a new race, the living ones, the justified ones.

When Christian entered Interpreter's house he saw the picture of a man hanging up against the wall. This man had his eyes lifted up to heaven, the best of books was in his hand, the world behind his back and a crown of gold on his head. When Christian saw this picture he said "What meaneth this?" Interpreter answered and said "The man whose picture this is, is one of a thousand."

This can be said of the two men in our lesson today. We gaze upon the portraits of two men, Adam and Christ. We ask our Interpreter, who in this case is Paul, "What meaneth this?" He answers "These are the two great

Leaders of the two families. Many thousands follow in their train.”

We look then at the first man and notice the world before him, clouds overcasting the sky overhead, and gloom following wherever he goes. We notice beneath this portrait the name,

Adam, The First.

We behold no beauty in this picture although as we gaze we trace a glory that has faded away. One word sums up all we see here and that word is Sin. We trace the development of sin and notice it is given to us in four panels, vs. 12-18.

Panel no. 1—The Entrance of Sin

“By one man sin entered into the world.” vs. 12.

In the foreground we have a world of sinners standing before a one way gate called “death.” In the background far distant we discover a world beautiful and fair, bright in the glory of its Creator. Through an opened gate flows a dark stream that covers the entire scene bringing misery and gloom wherever it flows. At the gate stands a man, his hand flung open. The name of the gate is “disobedience,” the name of the river “sin” and the man is “Adam the first.”

Panel no. 2—The Rule of Death, vs. 14

“By one man’s offence death reigned.” vs. 17

In this picture a grim monarch sits enthroned. Beneath his scepter, at his feet is trembling humanity. One man is there, he is responsible for the slavery of his children. He handed over the sceptre. He involved all his subjects

in his one act of surrendering to the enemy. His name is “Adam the first.”

Panel no. 3—The Fruit of Sin, vs. 15

“Through the offence of one many be dead.”—vs. 15. In the background of this picture we have “Paradise,” man’s happy home of long ago. In the foreground we have a vast cemetery, over its gateway these words, “Where the dead bury their dead.” We ask ourselves the question, “How did this mighty transformation come about?” The answer is, “A man led the way.” That man is “Adam the first.”

Panel no 4.—The End of Sin, vs. 16

“The judgment was by one man to condemnation.” vs. 16
We shudder as we look at this picture. Dark clouds loom, the sky is heavy, a storm is brewing, the voice of the heavens will soon be heard in thunder as its flaming, flashing sword strikes terror into every heart. It is the Day of Doom approaching and all who stand trembling under that judgment cloud have inscribed in their foreheads this name “Adam the first.”

In our next lesson we shall look at the other portrait.

Questions

1. Where do believers find their joy?
2. Who are the leaders of the two families in the world?
3. Why is death called a “one way” gate.
4. Give two words that characterize Adam the first.

Lesson 23—Romans 5:12-21

From Condemnation to Justification of Life.

We have been standing before the picture of our first parent Adam. What a sad story of sin and sorrow we read there. That story is a continued one, it is told anew in the life of every child of Adam.

We will turn from this picture to gaze upon the other. What a contrast! Here is a man, another man. Unlike the first man, He is shrouded in glory, and “grace abounds” wherever He goes. There are those who follow Him as He leads the way out of the dim shadows surrounding “Adam the first” into the region of life and light and blessing. The scene is flooded with the glory that radiates from His face and on His brow we read the Name of all names most precious

“Jesus Christ our Lord.”

As He stands before us thus in brightest glory, we notice that He has passed through the judgment of the first Adam. Those who surround Him triumph with Him; they all are victors over the tomb; they “reign in life by one, Jesus Christ” vs. 17. The longer we gaze on this portrait the more we long to linger there for the view is infinite. But we must content ourselves by singling out four of the manifold glories, and contrast them with what was before us in our previous study. The four times we read “of one” or “by one” as referring to Christ suggest the four panels:

Panel No 1—The Grace of God Brought to Man vs. 15

“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.”

In contrast to the dark reality of sin’s entrance into the world there is GRACE.

The scene in this picture is a world ruined by the entrance of sin and myriads of Adam’s children sinking beneath its terrible weight utterly unable to deliver themselves.

Into this scene comes GRACE; the marvelous abounding grace of God. Like a great river it flows through the desolate wilderness world, spreading blessing everywhere. It reaches man wherever he is and justifies him just as he is. If we trace this river of God’s justifying grace we reach a place called Calvary and there upon an uplifted cross behold the bleeding form of the One through whom alone God’s grace reaches us, Jesus Christ.

Panel No. 2—The Reign of Grace

“By the obedience of one ... grace reigns through righteousness.” vs. 19-21.

Sin enthroned death and gave it the power it wields over man. Righteousness has enthroned grace and given it its sceptre and sway. Dark Calvary looms before us in this picture. Amid heartless jeers and cruel taunts, forsaken by all, alone in its dread darkness, Jesus dies. There “sin abounds” for nothing could exceed the guilt of that act. The Son of God crucified and slain, is carried into the darkness and silence of the tomb. But “where sin

abounded grace did much more abound." Behold! The Man Who died on Calvary has left the grave, heaven receives him to its throne and beside Him is a trophy of grace, a sinner cleansed by His precious blood. From that throne, light streams into the dark world and the word of welcome greets every penitent sinner, for "grace reigns."

Panel No. 3—The Gift of Life

"By the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life" vs. 18.

Eternal life is God's answer to the graves that dot the earth and the death that surrounds us.

One man led a vast army of followers in the grim march of death. This Man leads the way out of death into life, He has conquered death.

We all join in one glad burst of Hallelujahs as we gaze upon the Victor and hail Him our blessed Lord Jesus Christ.

Panel No. 4—The Consummation of Grace

"Shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ,"

The dark clouds are rolled away in this picture. Death and judgment are behind us. The glory shines before us and we have the hope of being in it with Christ.

Questions

1. Find in John 4 and in Rev. 22 verses that show that the water of life is the Gift of God.
2. Find three places in Romans where the full title Lord Jesus Christ is found.

3. Find the first verse in the Bible containing the word grace?
4. Where is the first and where is the last mention of grace in Romans?

Lesson 24—Romans 6-8

Deliverance Rom. 6:1-5

When Israel was in Egypt, God placed them safe beyond the reach of judgment by the blood of the lamb, but their salvation was not complete until they had crossed the Red Sea and were delivered forever from the dominion of Pharaoh. Standing on the other side of the Sea they could look back to the scene of their former bondage. They were out of Egypt and slaves no longer. The waters of death rolled between them and their former masters. They were in a new position as well as in a new condition.

Israel's deliverance out of Egypt is an illustration of our deliverance from the power of indwelling sin. It helps us to understand the teaching of Rom. 6, which we are about to consider together.

We have reached the third main division of the epistle. The subject of Chap. 6-8 is Deliverance.

In Chap. 1:1-3:20 we were in the house of bondage. There our mouths were closed, and we stood condemned before our Judge. In Chap. 3:21-5:21 we were in the house of salvation behind blood-stained doors with our ears open to hear the story of love. In Chap. 6:1-8:38 we enjoy full deliverance and our mouths are opened in testimony in response to the grace of God.

As we approach our lesson we find at the very threshold this arresting question regarding our life after we are saved. "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" "Is grace a license to sin?" The answer is an

emphatic and decisive “NO.” We are delivered from sin and out of its domain altogether.

Four wonderful facts are presented in vs. 1-5, to declare our freedom from sin.

1. Our Condition—We have died to sin, vs. 2

How can we live in that to which we have died? A dead merchant is out of business. Israel could not live in Egypt after they had crossed the Red Sea. We have died to sin and our life is no longer therein.

2. Our Confession—We are buried with Christ in baptism, vs. 3, 4.

One who is dead and buried has disappeared entirely from the scene in which he once lived. We bade farewell to the world when we submitted to baptism.

Nellie had been quite popular in her unconverted days. The grace of God had reached her and desiring to witness a good confession, the day of her baptism was set. A large number of her former friends were present at the river side to witness, standing some little distance from the Christians gathered there. After an impressive service Nellie stepped out into the water and as she disappeared for a brief moment, from that outer circle came the farewell words, “Good-bye Nellie, Goodbye Nellie.”

3. Our Conduct—We are to walk in newness of life, vs. 4

If I have died to the old life, the life I now live must be very different from the old. The old life was one that led to the grave. Its grim portals closed upon all down here

and eternal gloom marked the end of that pathway. The new life begins at the grave of Jesus and the glory is its goal. Christ died in shame but the “glory of the Father” raised Him up out of death. God could not allow His Son to remain in death. A Father’s arms reached down into the tomb and robbed death of its prey and now He lives Who once was dead. He lives in the glory and our lives are to be a reflection down here of that glory.

4. Our Consummation—We are to be like Christ in Resurrection, vs. 5.

You have seen the ivy growing up with and attaching itself to the oak tree; if that tree falls, the ivy comes down too; so we have grown up with Christ in the likeness of His death. He died here, and was buried, but He rose again. We have died with Him; we have been buried with Him, and we expect to be like Him in that day when He comes again.

Grace begun shall end in glory

Jesus, He the victory won In His own triumphant story
Is the record of our own.

Questions

1. What are the three great divisions of the first eight chapters of Romans?
2. What are the subjects of these divisions?
3. What difference do you see between sin in Romans 3 and sin in Romans 6?
4. What is the signification of the words “buried” and “planted” in connection with baptism?

Lesson 25—Romans 6:6-13

The Threefold Secret Of A Separated Life

“How many were crucified on Calvary when Jesus died?” asked a child of its mother.

“Why, three my son,” she answered.

“But mother, I heard father say that the old man was the lad. crucified with Christ, then that makes four,” replied The secret of a holy, happy life is not in seeking the death of the flesh, nor in trying to feel dead but in knowing that the old man was put to death over 1900 years ago.

Knowing (vs. 6)

is the first of three keywords in this chapter and the first secret to the enjoyment of victory in Christ.

When the children of Israel looked back to the Red Sea they saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. They knew that Pharaoh’s rule was ended as far as they were concerned. They were his slaves no longer.

When we look back to the cross we see that sin has been defeated there and we are freed from its rule. vs. 7. It has no claim on us, we need serve it no longer for it is not our master. Christ’s death has freed us from its tyranny and as death has no more dominion over Him (vs. 9) we believe that we shall also live with Him (vs. 8). I know I am going to live with Christ forever-more, this glorious prospect should be an incentive to live with Him now. “He liveth unto God” vs. 10. Let us ask ourselves the question, “To whom am I living?”

Reckon (vs. 11)

is the second word that reveals to us the joys of Christian life. It simply means to “count as true.” If I learn that a certain sum of money is mine I “count it true” by signing the check and cashing it. I cannot use the money without reckoning it mine. It is not a matter of feeling but of fact and faith. I did not see the old man die when Christ died, neither do I feel dead, but the fact is I died then and faith counts it true. Now this is very practical. If I am invited to some worldly affair and I answer “I would like to go but cannot,” I am not counting myself dead. But if I answer, “I do not go to theatres, I go where the Lord’s people meet with their Risen Lord” then I am counting myself to be indeed dead to sin but alive unto God.

Verse 12 tells us not to let sin reign in our bodies. It would like to but we must veto all its bills and cancel all its engagements. Sin is enthroned in the world but Christ is in our hearts and our bodies are His territory to be kept for God. Therefore we are not to yield them as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield ourselves unto God. Thus we have the third word,

Yield (vs. 13)

and this yielding opens up every avenue of our lives to the service of God. I am to be unreservedly at His disposal like the clay in the hands of the potter or like the soldier who gives over the members of his body in the service of his country.

The old man would like to use that important member “the eye” for the movies and the novel or to behold the vanities of this world. God would have us behold

wondrous things in His word or to behold the fields white for harvest or scan His wondrous works and praise Him as we view them. The old man desires that we lend our ear to worldly programs over the air. God would have us hear Him Who speaks from heaven. Yielding my members to God, my feet will run His errands, my hands will be busy in His service, my heart filled with His love and my entire being at His command. "O blissful self-surrender," one has exclaimed as he thus yielded to the sweet influences of grace.

1. To humble, glad surrender now
Thou hast my will inclined;
O Master, Lord, about my heart
Thy love-wrought fetters bind.
For ever and for ever Thine,
Eternally allied
To Him who brought me by His blood,
To Jesus crucified.

Questions

1. What are the three descriptive words of the happy life in this portion?
2. What verse in Galatians 2 describes what we have here?
3. What is the foundation of our Knowing?
4. Does the word "Reckon" mean this is not true?

Lesson 26—Romans 6:14-23

Deliverance Illustrated

In Rom. 6 and 7 the theme is as we have seen Deliverance. We have had the truth presented to us and now it is illustrated. Two illustrations are used, the one is taken from slavery and the other from marriage. We will look at the first one here.

The Illustration From Slavery, ch. 6:14-23

In the days of slavery many a poor slave tried to cross the river between the States and Canada. If he crossed that river he would no longer be under the dominion of his former master, he would be free. Think of the joy of liberty for those who could see their pursuers on the other side of the river and fear them no more.

The bloodhounds of hell were on our trail, but now we are out of sin's territory. "Sin shall not have dominion over you," writes Paul, "for ye are not under the law, but under grace." vs. 14. Calvary's Cross and the empty tomb mark the boundary line for us. We who have trusted in the Saviour Who died and rose again, are in the land of the free. Since this is true, we are to enjoy our freedom. That is the force of what we have in vs. 15.

"What then? Shall we sin?"

"God forbid" or "far be the thought," says the apostle. We cannot think of a slave having reached Canada and saying, "Now that I am at liberty to do as I please, I will live as I formerly did, I will take up with the old slavery again." And shall we who have been delivered from sin and are free from its dominion, return to its bondage?

Serve Your Liberator, not the Tyrant vs. 16.

A youth was being sold at auction in northern Africa. An Englishman present at the time was impressed by his appearance and bid for him. He secured the boy, and to his amazement set him free. "What! am I free?" asked the negro. "Here are the papers." The boy looked at his liberator, flung himself at his feet and said "I will serve you forever." Shall we do less for our Master?

We Thank God We Are Free vs. 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." This is the true outcome of deliverance. In the story of God's salvation in Exodus we notice seven links in the chain of grace and the last one is the glad song of freedom.

"Happy art thou, O Israel,

Who is like unto thee

O people saved by the Lord."

In the closing verse of our chapter the contrast is seen between

What we once were and what we now are vs. 17-23

It is good for us to remember our former estate now that we have been freed from the chains that bound us. The contrast is threefold.

I. "We were the servants of sin" vs. 17. Sin was our master and a cruel master he was.

We are now the slaves of love (vs. 17) we obey from the heart. Dr. A. T. Schofield tells of his dog Jock. When first

he was given the freedom of the streets without collar or chain, he bounded away in fancied unrestraint. But lo! He had scarcely gone a block when he halted, turned back and walked beside his master.

2. We were servants to uncleanness, vs. 19. That was the character of our service. We are ashamed now of the things we lived in then vs. 21.

We now are servants to righteousness unto holiness, vs. 18, 19.

3. We were in the employ of Satan working for his wages—death. We are now the servants of God vs. 22, and we have our fruit unto holiness and we enjoy His gift eternal life.

Other lords have long held sway;

Now, Thy name alone to bear,

Thy dear voice alone obey,

Is my daily, hourly prayer.

Questions

1. What people in the Old Testament illustrate salvation from slavery?

2. Why was the Lord given the name “Jesus” at His birth?

3. Write a short paragraph on “What I was and what I am.”

Lesson 27—Romans 7:1-6

Deliverance From the Law

The Illustration from Marriage, vs. 1-6.

In Chap. 6 deliverance was illustrated from slavery, here in Chap. 7 the subject is the same but the picture changes. There it was a slave set free from his master to serve another, here it is a wife set free from her husband to be joined to another.

The Marriage Law, vs. 1-3.

There is a law that binds husband and wife together. It is the marriage law. So long as the husband lives that law is in force. If a woman marries another man while her husband lives “she shall be an adulteress” says the Word of God. But if the husband is dead the way is clear, she is freed from that law and at liberty to marry another. Death has cancelled the law that bound her to her first husband.

The Application to Us, vs. 4.

Having given us the illustration Paul applies it to the believer. Death has delivered us from our first husband. In the picture it is the husband that dies and the wife is free. But the picture is reversed. It is we who have died and the law our first husband though living has no claim on us. “We are become dead to the law by the body of Christ that we should be married to another.”

This second Husband is the One “Who is raised from the dead.” What a picture we have here.

The law was our first husband. He was stern and exacting. There was no love on either side—only commands on his part and insubjection on ours. All that the law could do was to condemn us and, like the injured Roman husband sentence the unfaithful wife to death. This the law has done. But it is another Who dies in our stead. One Who takes our guilt upon Himself, wraps Himself around us as it were and shields us from the vengeance of the law. He dies and we die with Him. He is buried and His grave is ours. But He lives again and in rising He carries us with Him clasping to His bosom the one for whom He died. And now both the law's righteous claims and Christ's love for us are eternally satisfied and thus we have been delivered from legal bondage and brought into the joy of a union that is fruitful unto God.

The Change this Union has Wrought, vs. 5, 6.

Our lives are transformed by this union with the Risen Son of God. Our former life is contrasted with our present condition in these verses.

1. Our former state—"we were in the flesh."
2. Our former activities—self life, evil deeds and thoughts and habits were put into action by the law.
3. Our former goal—"death. "

But now

1. Our present state—delivered from the law, separated by death from our former husband.
2. 2. Our present activity—we serve our new bridegroom not in legal bondage but in the liberty of love as a bride who serves her living bridegroom.

Questions

1. In what does Paul's second illustration of deliverance differ from the first?
2. What dissolves the marriage tie?
3. How are we delivered from the law?
4. Can we live as we please because we are not under law?

Lesson 28—Romans 7:7-13

The Experience Of Paul

We have looked at the illustrations of deliverance. Now we will listen to Paul as he gives us his experience. He tells us how he was delivered from the bondage of sin and the law. He draws the veil aside from his own inmost life and discloses its secrets. It is a great help to us, for as we listen we know that our experience is quite similar to his. We know that we are united to Christ, we are one with Him and ought to be happy in the experience of it and yet for a long time we were unhappy simply because we were occupied with ourselves instead of Himself.

The story is told in two parts. In verses 7-13 Paul tells of his experience before he knew Christ, and he uses the past tense in these verses. But in vs. 14-25 he uses the present tense for he is talking about his experience after he was saved. We will listen to v/hat he has to say about his unconverted days.

Paul's experience with the law, vs. 7-13.

What a struggle Paul had with the law before he was delivered from it. We notice several things here.

I. The law revealed his sin to him. vs. 7.

He does not say "sins" but sin. Sins, the evil things we do, are hard to hide, but sin that evil nature within we forgot about. Like a sleeping viper it lay coiled within his bosom until it was roused by the voice of the law. The law awakened sin but the law is not sin as Paul says. The

mirror that shows up my dirty face is not black. It is my face that is black.

2. The law stirred up the evil desires within, vs. 8

“The commandment wrought all manner of lust in me,” says Paul. The stream flows smoothly along in its course when nothing opposes, but see it bubble and boil when the rocks oppose its progress. And so it is with our evil natures. The thing we are not allowed to do is the very thing we want to do. Very often there is no desire until there is prohibition. When Paul says “Without the law sin was dead” he means it was dormant.

3. The law promised life but brought death, vs. 9, 10,11.

There was a time when Paul lived in his sin. He was not conscious of his true condition before God. But the “commandment came” and Paul’s conscience was reached. The law said, “Do this and live” but it never gave the power to do. It said, “Thou shalt not covet” but it could not curb the evil desires within. Paul felt himself helpless and hopeless. He saw himself as a dead man, doomed by the law to die. In this way sin deceived him. Sin is like the pickpocket nestling up close to you in a friendly way and then leaving you stranded. There is no real enjoyment in sin for it is sure to get us in the end.

4. The law that was good made sin exceeding sinful, vs. 12, 13.

A perfect law and a sinful self, so entirely different, are brought together.

The fault was not in the law it was in the sinner but we readily see how the union could never be a happy one. How much better to be “married to Him who is raised

from the dead.” We will close this study with an outline on what the law is, taken from Bancroft.

- The Law is a standard to measure man’s shortness—Rom. 7:12.
- The Law is a scale to make known his deficiencies—Jas. 2:10.
- The Law is a mirror to shew his sinfulness —Rom. 7:7.
- The Law is a stethoscope to discover his disease—Matt. 5:27-37.
- The Law is a rule to evidence his crookedness —Rom. 7:14.
- The Law is an officer to demand his condemnation—Gal. 3:10.
- The Law is a judge to condemn the offender—Rom. 7:10.
- The Law is an executioner to slay the sinner—Rom. 7:11.

Questions

1. What two things is sin likened to in our lesson?
2. What, according to our lesson, awakens desire to sin?
3. What is true of people who live in their sin?

Lesson 29—Romans 7:14-25

The Experience of Paul after Conversion

How disappointed we often are to find that sin still dwells within us after we have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ. What a riddle we are to ourselves and what a struggle we have seeking to get the victory over our old nature.

Paul is here telling us of his experience after conversion and you notice how often he refers to himself. There are about forty “me’s” and “I’s” in this chapter and it is no wonder the story is one of defeat and closes with a deep groan.

We learn in these verses that the believer is made up of two persons, two individuals, the old man and the new man, one absolutely evil and the other absolutely good. It is no wonder that a new convert exclaimed, “I have two beings living in this body house of mine, one a devil and the other an angel, and they both want the control of the place.” Paul tells the story of this

Struggle with Self

in these verses.

As a believer I am identified with the “new man”; that is, the “I” that desires God’s will is myself and the “I” that opposes the will of God is not myself although he dwells in me. There are three distinct “I’s” in these verses and I am sure it will be a great help to us just to read these verses and put in the different words “That which I (the old man) do, I (the new man) allow not, for what I (the new man) would that do I not, but what I (the new man)

hate that do I (myself). If then I (myself) do that which I (the new man) would not, I (myself) consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I (myself) that do it but sin that dwelleth in me." (vs. 15-17).

Here then we have the apostle occupied with himself and discovering that the old man is too strong for him. He finds himself unable to do the right thing.

In vs. 15-17, it is a question of what he does.

In vs. 18-20, it is a question of what he is.

In vs. 21-23, it is a question of what he finds.

In vs. 24-25, it is a question of what he needs.

We have already seen that Paul was not subject to the will of God, not because he would not be but because he could not be. He was like a captive compelled to do what he would not.

This leads to the discovery of what he is and in vs. 18 he says, "I know that in me that is in my flesh dwelleth no good thing." What a humiliating discovery this is, and he is compelled in vs. 21-23 to admit defeat in this conflict between the old and the new natures. "The inward man" delighting in the law of God but another law holding him a captive. Listen to the groan of despair, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

What does the apostle discover that he needs? Why it is deliverance and for this we need a Deliverer. We will consider this deliverance more in detail in our next lesson.

Questions

1. How many times does the apostle use the personal pronoun I, me, and my, in our portion?
2. Some Scripture references to the “heart” are like the references to “I” in our chapter. Read Jer. 17:9, Ps. 51:10 and Acts 15:9 and tell which refers to the old man, the new man and myself.
3. What humiliating discovery does the apostle make in vs. 14-18?

Lesson 30—Romans 8:1-5

The Deliverance of the Wretched Man

Within the body of the caterpillar one can discover by means of a microscope a distinct but undeveloped butterfly. As the butterfly nature develops the caterpillar body must be put off. The crawling earthly nature must give place to the new and higher life within.

We have listened to the cry of the wretched man, “Who shall deliver me out of this body of death” Rom. 7:24, then we heard his shout of triumph as he looked away from self to his Deliverer “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Rom. 7:25.

This note of victory is carried on in Chap. 8 until as we reach the close of the chapter we fling out the challenge to all opposition as we ride in the chariot of grace, more than conquerors thru Him that loved us.

We have left the land of bondage in ch. 3, we enter the land of Beulah in ch. 8 “where the sun shineth night and day, where the orchards and vineyards all belong to the King of the Celestial country and we are licensed to make bold with any of His things. Our ears are now filled with heavenly noises, and our eyes delighted with celestial visions” (Pilgrim’s Progress).

As we journey together through this chapter we will notice three exceedingly precious facts.

1st—We are in Christ.

2nd—The Holy Spirit is in us.

3rd—God is for us.

The first four verses give us a sort of summing up of all we have had in the previous chapters and also form an introduction to the whole chapter. Notice—

1. Our Position in Christ, vs. 1.

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.”

When we are in Christ Jesus we are outside the range of condemnation, it can never reach us there for Christ has already been in it and passed through it and is now beyond its power.

There was no condemnation to Noah and those with him in the ark. The waters of judgment piled up outside and the ark passed through the mighty flood but not a drop was felt within. Noah was beyond its reach there.

2. The Power of a New Life, vs. 2

In Christ Jesus we are not only safe from judgment, but we have by the Holy Spirit of God a new life that sets us free from the law of sin and death. The butterfly life (to use our illustration) has power to soar in the sky and delivers from crawling in the dust—the only thing the caterpillar life was capable of doing.

3. The Powerlessness of the Law, vs. 3

The law was a good workman but he had very poor material to work with. It could never make bad sinners good. But the gift of God’s own Son and His death for us on the cross did what the law never could do. It placed us beyond condemnation for Christ stood condemned in our stead. Sin was judged at the cross in the incarnate manhood of the Son of God and now we can sing,

“Settled forever sin’s tremendous claim Glory to Jesus, yea, blessed be His Name.”

4. Practical Righteousness, vs. 4

As sinners we had no righteousness but now in Christ we have the righteousness of the law fulfilled in us as we follow the leading of the Holy Spirit of God for Love is the fulfilling of the law.

1. How does Noah’s position in the ark illustrate our position in Christ?
2. What that the law could not do has Christ done?
3. What is the fulfilling of the law.

Lesson 31—Romans 8:5-13

The Conflict of the Spirit with the Flesh

In Chap. 7 we witnessed the struggle between the two “I’s” the old “I” and the new “I.” The new “I” gave up in despair, for the old “I” was far too strong for him. Now we see another combatant enter the scene. The Spirit of God displaces self in the struggle and gains the victory for us over the flesh.

At Calvary the Lord Jesus gained the victory for us. The Holy Spirit wins the victory in us. “Thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle,” David’s elder brother said to him. That is exactly what we will do. We will look at

1. The Combatants, vs. 5

They are two. The one “The Flesh,” a veteran in the struggle, the victor in many a battle, Satan’s mightiest general.

The other “The Spirit” the Holy Spirit of God “mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” 2 Cor. 10.....

2. The Armies, vs. 5.

Following the leadership of these two generals are the two armies. “The things of the flesh” and “the things of the Spirit.”

In the things of the flesh are included money, pleasures, power, influences, the lusts of the eye, the lusts of the flesh and a mighty host of other such like things.

The “things of the Spirit” on the other hand are all from above, “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance,” Gal. 5:..... and all “the things above where Christ is.” Col 3:.....

3. The Background, vs. 6.

The battlefield on which the conflict rages is the mind. Each general seeking to gain control. Under the dominion of the Spirit the mind is the scene of joy and peace; the affections are at rest in Christ. But under the rule of the flesh the issue is death.

4. The Struggle, vs. 7-11

In verses 7, 8, it is self life. In verses 9-11 it is Christ life.

“Ere whiles I dwelt within myself

A straitened, drear abode

And found no liberty to walk God’s road.

Bound down by what I saw, or thought or felt

God broke me down, and left a ruined place,

But ere I sought the fulness of His grace

I tried with tears to build it up again

I failed, and then God’s message came so plain,

‘Come forth from all thou art, and dwell in Me.’

And I in thee.”

5. The Outcome, vs. 12, 13.

The Holy Spirit gains the victory in us. It is powerful, when submitted to, to “make dead” all that would raise its head against God. The flesh in us is defeated and we are free to live in the full enjoyment of this victory gained.

Questions

1. Fill in blank references.
2. Who are the two “Generals” in the conflict referred to in this lesson?
3. Name the two armies.

Lesson 32—Romans 8:14-21

Our Position as Sons and Heirs of God

When David captured Rabbah, the royal city of the children of Ammon, he brought forth the people that were therein and made slaves of them. They laboured in the forests and in the brickkiln. 2 Sam. 12:30, 31.

How different was his dealing with Mephibosheth, the grandson of Saul. The poor lame lad might well have dreaded being found by the king, but his fears were all gone when seated at the king's table as one of his sons. David shewed "the kindness of God to him" 2 Sam. 9.

We too have experienced the kindness of God. We were prisoners at the bar, guilty and condemned to die. We deserved to die. Rom. 1:32. Like the prodigal son in Lk. 15 we would have welcomed servitude, "Let me go into the kitchen and live with the servants," said he. "Make me as one of thy hired servants."

But the Father would not hear a word of it. The best robe, the ring, the shoes, and the feast in the Father's house told the story of a Father's love that could be satisfied with nothing less than a full measure of blessing for his son.

We have already noticed that Chap. 1-3:20 describe the "far country." Then we saw the grace of God abounding over sin.

Though clothed in rags, by sin denied

The Father did embrace His child

And I am pardon'd reconciled.

Now we are amazed at the full results of the gospel. We learn that the love that sought and found us brings us into a place of nearness and nearer we could not be for In the fulness of His grace God puts me in the children's place Where I may gaze upon His face Two distinct words are used in these verses concerning our position and privileges as children of God.

In vs. 16, 17 and 21 it is the word "children"; a very tender word, literally "a born one" like the word "bairn." We have been born into the family of God and are His dear children, the objects of His Fatherly love and care.

But in vs. 14 and 19 the word is "sons" speaking rather of our place, character and dignity as members of God's household.

Then also we notice in vs. 15 that both the Hebrew and Greek word for "father" is used. Having received the Spirit of adoption we cry, "Abba, Father." Thus both Jew and Gentile are one in the family of God and even the tiniest babe amongst the children can say "Abba."

Someone has said it is a word especially for baby lips whereas the Greek word translated "Father" is for the more advanced.

In our next lesson we will study more fully this subject of Sonship in its sevenfold aspect but meanwhile let us cherish in our hearts the love of our Father. For not only is there the joy of my being able to call the God I once feared my Father but by the Holy Spirit the answer comes from God Himself "my child." He Who found all His pleasure in His beloved Son has brought us into that same circle of love. We are accepted in the Beloved.

Questions

1. Give an Old Testament and a New Testament example of the kindness of God.
2. Why is God spoken of as “Abba Father?”
3. Find the other verses using the Hebrew word for
4. Father in Mark 14 and Galatians 4.

Lesson 33—Romans 8:14-21

The Sons and Heirs of God

In this lesson we continue the subject of sonship and consider together the blessings that belong to us as the children of God. We will notice seven of them here.

1. The Leading of the Spirit of God, vs. 14

The mark of sonship is Guidance. The sons of God travel a different road than the children of this world.

When Israel left Egypt and went through “all that great and terrible wilderness” God bore them as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that they went (Deut. 1:19, 31).

We are on our way up to our Father’s house and the Holy Spirit is our Leader and Guide.

2. The Spirit of Adoption, vs. 15

The privilege of sonship is adoption.

Adoption in Scripture is the placing of sons. When a man takes another’s son and places him as his own giving him all the rights of the children we call that adoption. God gives to us the very place that His own dear Son has in His heart and home. We are His sons but because we have been born into the family we are His children as well. And as sons we enjoy the liberty of the home. We are not slaves under bondage but sons looking up into our Father’s face and in sheer delight exclaiming, “Abba Father.” Nothing can exceed this joy that is ours.

3. The Witness of the Holy Spirit, vs. 16

The witness is the evidence of sonship.

We know that we are the children of God for the Holy Spirit dwells within us. This heavenly Guest came to dwell in us the moment we trusted Christ and when we receive His witness to us as given in the Word of God (Heb. 10:15) we can enjoy all the things our Father gives us and feel at home in His presence because of His witness in us. (1 John 5:10). Then there will also be the witnessing with us. We will not be ashamed of our Father but be glad to confess Him before men.

4. The Inheritance of the Children of God, vs. 17. The Resources of Sonship

In Jer. 3:19 we read of God asking, "How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage?" God has put us among the children and if we are children then we are heirs also and we have a goodly heritage for we are the heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ. What a portion is ours! To possess all that God possesses all that Christ has. What earthly inheritance can compare with this? This exceeds our wildest fancies. To think that lost sinners of Adam's race should become the heirs of God!

We know that Christ is God's appointed Heir of all things. He is going to come into the possession of all things. But the wonder of it all is that we are His joint-heirs. We know a "Love that gives not as the world but shares All it possesses with its loved co-heirs."

But there are two sides to this possessing with Him. Suffering comes before the glory. We are to suffer with Him now, we shall be glorified together soon. And the

thought of the coming glory encourages us to endure the sufferings of this little while.

Questions

1. Why are there so few verses in the Old Testament that speak of God as a Father?
2. What does the Scriptural expression “adoption” mean?

Lesson 34—Romans 8:14-21

Sonship and Future Glory

We have seen that the sons of God are the heirs of God; we will now look at the entrance of the sons into their inheritance; the glorious climax of God's dealings with us in grace.

You have seen a sculptor at work with his hammer and chisel. The block before him looks shapeless to us but in the mind of the artist is the finished design, and he is working out in the stone. He may work for years before it is completed. Then comes the day when it is publicly unveiled that all may see it and give honour to the one whose patient skill has brought about such a masterpiece. Thus it will be in regard to the ways of God. For centuries He has been at work in view of a future day of glory. The pattern is His own dear Son. He is going to have many sons like Christ and with Him. The manifestation of the sons of God will be the masterpiece of God's wisdom and power, and the climax of His ways in grace with us.

Our present study will take us into God's work-shop where we watch Him at work. Then we will scan the future and see the glory that shall be revealed, when the final results of His work and the full blessing that accompanies it shall be seen. "The present time" (vs. 18) is God's workshop, and one word sums up His dealings now; that word is

Suffering vs. 17, 18

The suffering is the discipline of sonship.

God is bringing many sons to glory and the way by which He brings them is the avenue of suffering, In view of the glory that shall be revealed the sufferings of “this present time” are not worth mentioning. The sons of God are in training now: “suffering” is God’s school for all who shall be in His house. In this we follow in the steps of His Beloved Son. The prophets, long before, told of the “sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. If we are co-heirs with Christ we inherit both. There can be no glory for us apart from suffering. Let us endure with patience the suffering, for “A Father’s hand will never cause His child a needless tear.”

The blows of the sculptor’s hammer would not be welcomed by the granite, but the result justifies all. The day of glory will explain all of God’s dealings with us.

Glory, vs. 17, 18

Coming glory is the reward of sonship. In the very land of Egypt where Joseph suffered as a slave, he received glory. Where he bowed his neck to serve they cried before him “bow the knee.”

Our Lord Jesus will be glorified where He once suffered. His throne will stand where His cross once stood. If we suffer with Him, we shall also be glorified together. We share in the suffering and in the joy and dignity of His eternal kingdom for as sons we are His co-heirs.

Manifestation vs. 19.

The unveiling of the sons of God.

At the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ the sons of God will be revealed with Him. Joseph’s exaltation to the throne of Egypt was for the salvation of the world. The

coming glory of the sons of God will be for the deliverance of all creation.

At the present time our inheritance is in the thralldom of sin and sorrow. When we take possession of it with Christ, when we, the heirs enter our inheritance, it will be delivered from its bondage and enjoy the "glorious liberty of the sons of God."

"The whole Creation groans and waits to hear that Voice, That shall restore her comeliness, and make her wastes rejoice. Come, Lord, and wipe away the curse, the sin, the stain, And make this blighted world of ours, Thine own fair world again."

Questions

1. What is God doing at the present time?
2. When will that work be finished?
3. What effect will the manifestation of the children of God have on creation?

Lesson 35—Romans 8:19-27

The Coming Deliverance of Creation

Thy sympathies and hopes are ours:

We long, O Lord, to see

Creation, all below, above,

Redeemed and blest by Thee.

Thus we sing and thus we long for a deliverance that will soon be realized. We have glowing pictures of this coming redeemed creation in the book of Isaiah. One of the most beautiful we find in Isa. 11. Isaiah dips his brush in heaven and paints creation with all the bright colors of glory.

It is another picture Paul paints in vs. 19. The word he uses here suggests it. That word is “expectation.” It means “waiting with outstretched head.” Creation’s head is raised, her eye is fixed upon the horizon, she waits expectantly looking for a deliverance from a bondage to which she has been made subject by her former master, man. And through man will come her deliverance. That point on the horizon from which help comes is the “manifestation of the sons of God.” Then the joy of the new creation will be accompanied by the entrance of the heirs into their inheritance and the “old groans” will be hushed forever. Meanwhile creation groans.

We listen to the “groanings” in our lesson, and it finds an echo in our hearts. We read of a groaning creation, of the groaning saints and of the Holy Spirit groaning within us.

1. The Groaning Creation vs. 22

All creation groans. Without her consent she has been brought into bondage (vs. 20) and creation maintains a protest to the monster who wronged her, as she sends forth noxious weeds and sharp thorns. The moans of the tempests and the shrieks of the storms and the cold blasts of winter all tell the story of the fall while even the songs of the birds are all in the minor key, and the fairest flowers bloom where we have buried our loved ones. "Until now" earth weeps, but the birth pangs precede a glorious deliverance (vs 21). The night of sorrow will be followed by the day of glory.

2. The Groaning Saints vs. 23-25

All children of God belong to the new creation. We have within us the Holy Spirit. He is the firstfruits of the new creation. He brings into our hearts its blessings and makes them real to faith. But our bodies are of this earth and link us with this groaning creation; we are in sympathy with it and we groan. This groaning is not for our sins. Thank God they are gone. It is for earth's sorrow and for the redemption of our bodies. Think of all the suffering of this present time, and then think of having bodies free from all pain and sorrow. This is what we hope for, vs. 24. When Jesus comes it will be enjoyed. He'll give these bodies vile.

A fashion like His own:

He'll bid the whole creation smile

And hush its groan.

3. The Groaning Spirit, vs. 26.

When we think of the Divine Visitor Who has taken His abode within these bodies of ours, we are not surprised that He longs for the time of deliverance as well as we. The Holy Spirit is here in this groaning creation and He lives in a body of humiliation and He longs for the fulfillment of God's purpose. He enters into all our sorrows and prays for us. All the sorrow round us drives us to prayer but we don't know how to pray as we ought. The Holy Spirit prays within us.

Questions

1. Find a picture of the redeemed creation in Isaiah (not chapter 11).
2. Why does the whole creation groan?
3. Why do believers groan?
4. Find a verse in John 11 speaking of a groaning Saviour.

Lesson 36—Romans 8:28-39

God's Eternal Purpose

We have been listening to a sorrowing creation and we have caught the strains of its moaning. Our own hearts respond to its sorrow and yearn for full and final deliverance, vs. 23. We look beyond the long, dark night and hail the coming day. vs. 24, 25. Meanwhile, the Holy Spirit dwelling within us is a true Friend to us helping our weaknesses, and enabling us to pray as we ought, and interceding for us, vs. 26.

Now the minor cords are dropped and we join in the singing of a magnificent song of triumph. Our journey takes us through the region of our circumstances, vs. 28, then into the realm of God's Purpose, vs. 29, 30. We look backward into a past eternity and then onward to the completion of all God's plans. We see the glad company of the many brethren and God's own Son the Center of that throng, God's Purpose like a golden chain stretches across the ocean of time from shore to shore. Five wonderful links are in this chain reaching from eternity to eternity.

The first link is Foreknowledge

We were in the mind of God from all eternity. He knew what He would do for us long before He created the worlds.

The second link is Predestination

That is, He marked us out beforehand. God had one Beloved Son from all eternity; He is going to have many sons just like His own Dear Son with Him forevermore.

Just to think that He has marked us out for that, how wonderful.

The third link is Calling

Here is where the golden chain dips into the sea of sin and reaches you and me.

He called me long before I heard

Before my sinful heart was stirred

But when I took Him at His word

Forgiven He lifted me.

The fourth link is Justification.

That takes us out of our sin and puts us in Christ with not a single charge against us.

The fifth link is Glorification.

This carries us far into the distant reaches of a coming eternity. But it takes us in right now as well. We are surprised to find it reads in the past tense. It says "Them He also glorified." He has done it. God sees His purposes complete. Time is a mere incident to Him. In the mind of God we are already glorified so we can be as sure of heaven as if we were already there. No wonder then that we can shout, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."

Poor Jacob little knew that all was working together for his good when he wailed, "All these things are against me." Gen. 42:36. He thought only of the loss of Joseph, his beloved son, of Simeon in prison in Egypt and then the thought of losing Benjamin too, it was just too much

for the aged father. But “The clouds he so much dreaded were big with mercy” and were about to drop in blessings on his head. When his life’s sun was setting Jacob could look back upon the road by which God had led him, rough and rugged though it had been, and own the faithfulness of the God who planned all to His glory.

Sometimes we may question God’s ways with us when everything seems against us but if “God be for us who can be against us.” The dying words of St. Chrysostom were “Glory be to God for all things.” In the hands of the Great Worker all things are simply links in a vast chain of blessing and so we can sing;

Precious thought my Father knoweth

In His will I rest

For whate’er my Father doeth

Must be always best.

Well I know the heart that planneth

Naught but good for me,

Joy and sorrow interwoven,

Love in all I see.

Questions

1. Do our circumstances hinder God in the carrying out of His purpose?
2. What are the five links in the golden chain of God’s purpose?
3. Can any creature power break that chain?

Lesson 37—Romans 8:31-39

The Challenge and Triumph of Faith

The doctrinal part of our chapter closes with verse 30. In this golden chain of doctrine we have reached a glorious consummation, beyond which it is impossible to go. Now we have the application of the truths we have learned and also our response to all the marvelous grace of God. Far beneath us in the eternal depths are all our sins, bright above us shines the hope of eternal glory, and round about us is flung the mighty guerdon of God's providence. In view of all this the apostle asks the question, "What shall we then say to these things?" The answer to this is a series of questions in which heaven, earth and hell are challenged. There is no answer to the challenge and the believer is seen in the chariot of grace "more than conqueror."

No Opposition, vs. 31

Question 1.—"Who can be against us?"

If all the world should oppose us, God is greater than all our foes. He is for us and "If God be for us who can be against us?" Are we sure God is on our side? How can we doubt it? Look at what He has done. He could not do better for us, He gave His own Son, delivering Him over to all the anguish of the cross for us.

He spared not His Son.

'Tis this that silences the rising fear:

'Tis this that makes the hard thought disappear:

He spared not His Son.

That Son was the Father's ALL. So we are assured of "all things" when we have Him. All that is needed until we reach the Father's house above we have in and with Christ.

No Accusation, vs. 33.

Question 2.—"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?"

We know there are hosts of accusers. Can any one of them lodge a charge against God's chosen ones? Satan leads them all, he is the great accuser of the brethren, can he? No, the blood of the Lamb is the effective answer to every charge. God is the only One who has a right to accuse us and He is on our side, He justifies us.

No Condemnation, vs. 34

Question 3.—"Who is he that condemneth?"

Will Christ? Oh no, He is the blessed answer to every question of condemnation. The four great facts in vs. 34 stand out like the horns of the brazen altar ready to be gripped by any trembling soul. No one can condemn us because Christ died for us. Christ arose for us, Christ is at the right hand of God for us, Christ intercedes for us.

No Separation, vs. 35-39.

Question 4.—"Who shall separate us?"

There is One Who loves us, He is in heaven. But His love reaches us here, His arms encircle us in a tender embrace. Are we safe in the arms of Jesus? Will they ever tire of holding us? Is there no power that can loosen their grip and snatch us out? Look at the great and mighty forces of separation gathered together in

these closing verses. We find two hosts. First in vs. 35 we see the seven great leaders—the outward trials of our pilgrim way. Like angry personalities they stand before us, Tribulation, Distress, Persecution, Famine, Nakedness, Peril and Sword. But they are all defeated in their attempt to sunder us from the love of Christ.

Then follows the martyr's song from Psa. 44. If our blessed Lord was led as a lamb to the slaughter, to suffer for His sake can only cause His love to be stronger and sweeter. In all these things we are more than conquerors for not only are all our foes discomfitted but we are the gainers.

The chapter closes with every conceivable foe and force tugging away at the bond of love that unites Christ and His own. But it holds in spite of all.

“And round my heart still closely twine,
Those ties which naught can sever.”

Questions

1. Name the four great “Who’s” of these verses.
2. These questions settle our unbroken peace. What question suggests God’s bountiful provision?
3. The righteousness of God gives me peace. What attribute of God in these last verses is the believer’s confidence and joy?
4. When will this great victory be fully realized by the people of God?

Lesson 38—Romans 9-11

Israel and Election

We have travelled together through the three great divisions of Romans. We enter the fourth in these chapters and we find ourselves in

The School Room

The lesson we are to study together is The Sovereignty of God. We are to learn of the marvelous ways in which God works to His glory in the fulfilling of His divine counsels. Three wonderful chapters tell the story. We notice that God's earthly people Israel have a very special place in all these purposes and plans. In Chap. 9 we see Israel in the light of her past glory. In Chap. 10 we see Israel during the present dispensation of grace. In Chap. 11 we see Israel in the light of her glorious Future.

As we enter the school, first of all we listen to Lamentation, Chap. 9:1-5, and our hearts are touched by the sight of Israel's ruin. Then we listen to a Discussion in vs. 6-33 where the great question of election is raised and considered. In Chap. 10 we receive Instruction. The light of the gospel shines in that chapter. In Chap. 11:1-32 we have Prophecy. The future is unveiled to us and all God's plans unfolded as we gaze and wonder. Then in vs. 32-36 we close with a Doxology.

Do we think it strange that the apostle should begin this section with

A Lamentation? Chap. 9:1-5

He is thinking of his beloved people Israel away from God. No nation was so favored as Israel. What a list of privileges and honors we have in these verses. As all their former glories pass before Paul's vision he weeps. With all their advantages they were rejectors of Him whom Paul loved most and best, the Lord Jesus Christ, He was Israel's true glory, God over all blessed forever. How could they refuse Him, Paul groans at the thought of it. But of one thing he is sure, God's purposes have not failed. He tells us more about this in the second part of the chapter.

The Discussion, vs. 6-33

The knotty problem of Election is taken up. We are not going to try to unlock the closed door of God's eternal choice. There are mysteries there that none can unravel. But there are some very simple and precious truths here for our learning. Paul lets us know that all the unbelief and failure of Israel can in no wise change the purpose of God, and, but for the sovereign mercy of God no one would be saved. Think of the river Nile—but for its flow all the land of Egypt would be like the great Sahara desert. No one knew where the river came from but they did know that wherever it flowed it brought blessing. But for the election of God, Israel would never be saved, the whole nation would be just like Sodom and Gomorrah, all under the judgment of God without a green spot anywhere, vs. 29.

Ishmael (vs 7); Esau (vs. 13); Pharaoh (vs. 17,), and unbelieving Israel (vs. 31) were like the desert. When God leaves a man to his own choice he just fits himself as a vessel of wrath for destruction (vs 22). It is God

Who prepares the vessels of mercy for glory. The river of His grace flows through the desert of man's unbelief and wherever it flows it brings salvation. Those who never drink of its life giving stream can never charge God with injustice (vs. 14) for their sins deserve eternal death.

Our chapter closes with a lovely picture of the Lord Jesus as the Rock of Ages. In Him the believing sinner finds refuge and rest. Israel stumbled over Him and fell. They would not trust Him, they rejected their Saviour, but Whosoever—what a grand word that is, it takes us all in—whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed.

Questions

1. What is the great lesson of the 4th division of Romans?
2. What does a man do when God leaves him to his own choice?
3. Give five examples.

Lesson 39—Romans 10

Israel and the Gospel

We are to look at Israel and their attitude towards the gospel in this lesson for that is the subject of Rom., Chapter 10. The chapter opens with

1. Paul Longing That Israel Might Believe the Gospel, vv 1-4

The apostle's heart yearns as he beholds his beloved people struggling on in a way that led ever farther from the goal they sought after. They were earnest and sincere in their efforts but they were on the wrong track. They were climbing in the way of Mount Sinai instead of looking away to Calvary. They were seeking to establish their own righteousness which is by the law instead of submitting to God's Righteousness which is Christ.

2. The Testimony of Moses to the Gospel, vs. 5-7

Whenever one pleaded for the law they would refer to Moses. So Paul calls him to the witness stand. What has he to say concerning the righteousness which is by the law and that which is of faith? In one word he sums up legal righteousness; that word is DO. (vs. 5.) But then he contrasts the righteousness of faith; it rests upon a work that is finished, (vs. 6, 7.) I need not climb up into heaven to be saved, Christ is there for me. Nor need I descend into the depths for Christ was there for me and suffered the pangs of death. I need not work for the

work is finished, I can rest in a work that is done; that gives peace.

3. The Simplicity of the Gospel, vs. 8-15.

How very simple is God's Salvation. Israel was out on the search for it and missed it because they sought it afar off when it was so near. You have heard of the man searching for his spectacles when all the while they were on his face. God says "I will bring my salvation near." "The word is near thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart."

You see God puts the very words in our mouths, the word of faith that if we confess Jesus as Lord believing that the work is done for God has raised Him from the dead, we shall be saved. How simple the summing up in vs. 11 There we have:

- The grand word of the Gospel—WHOSOEVER.
- The grand method of the Gospel—BELIEVETH.
- The grand result of the Gospel—ASSURANCE.

Like the sun that floods the entire world with its light God's salvation is for all. The wealth of the sun might be exhausted but God's mercy never for He is "rich in mercy." We call upon Him when we discover how poor we are and how very rich He is. And therefore God sends His messengers into all the world that all might know of His wealth and avail themselves of it by calling upon His Name. (vs. 13-15). The simple way in which God's Salvation works is described for us in these verses. We will reverse the order in which the seven steps are given.

1. God has good news for the sinner, vs. 15.

2. God sends a messenger with these good tidings.
3. The messenger tells the story.
4. The sinner hears the good news. vs. 14.
5. The sinner believes the message.
6. The sinner calls upon the name of the Lord.
7. The sinner is saved, vs. 13.

4. Israel Refused the Gospel, vv. 16-21

Listen to the sad refrains that close this chapter. First ISAIAH laments the little response that there is to the wonderful message that works faith in the hearts of those who hear.

Then DAVID in his sunrise hymn (Psa. 19) sings of the wide range of the gospel message, the sound has gone into all the world.

And MOSES in his swan song (vs. 19. Deut. 32:21) sings of the bringing in of the Gentiles to provoke Israel to jealousy.

ISAIAH'S sad words close the chapter. Listen to Israel's rejected Lover. How lovely His attitude pleading with outstretched hands. Israel nailed those hands to the cross. All the day long Jesus holds them out in grace, but Israel turns away, do you?

Questions

1. What was Paul's prayer to God for Israel?
2. What proves the simplicity of the gospel?
3. Why did Israel refuse God's salvation?

Lesson 40—Romans 11

Israel's Glorious Future

History is the story of God's past dealings with the children of men. Prophecy is history written beforehand. Only God can tell all about the future, He knows the end from the beginning. A large part of the Bible is prophecy. Romans 11 has been called the "Key Chapter of Prophecy." That is because it tells us of God's dealings with the Jews, His earthly people, and all God's plans for the world center round them. We will notice seven parts in the story.

1. God Has Not Cast Away His People, vs 1-6.

He has set them aside but they are still in His mind and purpose. They have forsaken Him but He remembers them.

Elijah thought all was lost in his day. He said he was the only one left and he would be gone soon. God answered his plea against Israel with the statement that there were 7,000 men reserved in Israel by God, not one of whom had bowed the knee to Baal. Elijah was not alone.

Paul says "I am not alone." There are others who like myself have received the Christ our nation rejected. They at the present time represent Israel before God.

2. Israel Is In The Night of Her Sorrow vs. 7-10.

It was a dark and dreary night that settled on the Jewish nation after Calvary. Rejecting God's gift of love in Christ they received the dreadful alternative of sinful

slumber, (vs. 8). Oh what a nightmare it has been down thru the centuries. With eyes blinded, ears closed and “backs bowed down always” the Jews have tasted the bitter fruit of their sin. And the darkest period of their long night is before them.

3. There Is Hope Amid The Gloom, vs. 11-15.

The night is not starless. The clouds of doom are tinted with the rosy glow of a coming morning of Israel’s restoration when she shall enjoy a glory surpassing her ancient splendor. Weeping may endure for a night but joy cometh in the morning. God’s earthly people have fallen but they will rise again. When they fell salvation came to the Gentiles. When they refused mercy’s stream it found other channels to flow in. When they return to the Lord again it will be a day of Glory. All the world will be present at their reception and enter with them into that spring-time of resurrection life and beauty. Meanwhile Paul longs for their salvation and hopes that the blessing enjoyed by the Gentiles might provoke them to jealousy.

4. The Olive Tree Illustrates The History of Israel, vs. 16-24.

Jeremiah long ago said concerning Israel, “The Lord hath called thy name a green olive tree.” (Jer. 11:16). The olive tree speaks of blessing and in this parable it is used as an object lesson for us. It illustrates God’s way of bringing blessing to the world. Abraham was the “root” of this olive tree. He was “holy”; that is, he was separated from all the nations of the world. “The branches” are Israel, the chosen people of God. They too are holy having been set apart by God for blessing in the

earth. But some of the branches were cut off. It was because of their unbelief. The Gentiles were a “wild olive tree.” God never made a covenant with them. But when unbelieving Israel was cut off the Gentiles were grafted in. Thus they enjoyed the blessings God had promised to Abraham. But the place of privilege is one of responsibility as well and the Gentiles are not to boast. Also they should remember that the tree into which they have been grafted is not their own. The stock is of Israel and Israel will come into her own place of blessing again if the Gentiles continue not in faith and in the goodness of God. The apostacy of the professing Church and the revival in Israel remind us that the day of Christendom’s doom may be not far distant.

Questions

1. How does Paul prove that God has not cast Israel away?
2. When will the dark night of Israel’s sorrow end?
3. What will happen to the world when Israel is restored?

Lesson 41—Romans 11

Israel's Future

The story of Jonah illustrates the history of Israel, and the teaching of the chapter we have been studying together. Jonah, like Israel, was called by God to be a witness for Him to the Gentiles. He was disobedient to the divine call and sought to run away from God. In the trouble that resulted he was tossed into the sea and was lost for a time. His fall brought salvation to the mariners and God preserved him by preparing a fish to swallow him. Jonah repented in the belly of the whale, and when he acknowledged that salvation was of the Lord, he was resurrected out of his dreary tomb, and, at his preaching, all Nineveh repented.

Israel, though dead nationally, is preserved by God; through their fall, salvation has come to the Gentiles. When they repent and God restores them, they will fulfill their mission, and all nations will be blessed.

5. Israel's Salvation Awaits The Completion Of The Church. vs. 25-27.

Here is something Paul wants us all to know. True it is a secret, for that is the meaning of the word "mystery," but it is an open secret. The secret is twofold.

1. Israel's blindness is limited.
2. The fulness, that is, "the full number," of the Gentiles will come in. Then the Deliverer shall come out of Sion.

In vs. 25 we have the "coming in" of the redeemed. In vs. 26 we have the "coming out" of the Redeemer. The

one is the rapture of the saints when the last one has been added to complete the number. What a “coming in” that will be through the open door of heaven. The other is the return of the Lord Jesus in glory. We will be with Him then, when He removes the vail from Israel’s eyes and they behold Him and own Him as their Messiah.

While the gospel train is speeding on to glory Israel is sidetracked. When we reach the station, they will move on with all the twelve tribes aboard, (for all Israel will be saved), into their haven of rest—the blessings of the kingdom.

6. The Mercy Of God Triumphs Over Israel’s Sin. Vs. 28-32.

When the chaplain of Frederick the Great was asked by the Emperor for a proof that the Bible was the Word of God he gave answer in one word—“Israel.” God chose that nation for the display of His wondrous works. “Of Israel it shall be said, What hath God wrought.” They have fallen into unbelief, but God has not given them up. He is shewing mercy to the Gentiles now and has allowed Israel to stand by so that He might shew mercy to them as well. It is like in the story of the Prodigal, in Luke 15. While the Father shewed mercy to the wayward son, the elder son stood aloof. Think of that Father going out in mercy to him and saying “Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.” He did not deserve that.

7. The Glory Of God Is The Climax Of All His Ways. Vs. 33-36.

What a magnificent burst of praise closes the chapter. As we view all the ways of God in grace, we wonder with

amazement at the wisdom that planned all, the power that wrought all, and the glory that crowns all. To Him be glory forever. Amen.

Many things may seem strange to us now. We cannot understand all His ways for they are past finding out, that is, “they cannot be tracked by footsteps,” but all will be in full view some day and then we shall know as we are known.

In the Capitol at Washington there is a large painting called “Westward Ho!” The first view one gets of it as you reach one of the platforms on the stairs ascending from the rotunda, is disappointing. It appears to be a miserable blur and you wonder why ever such a painting was allowed to find a place in the Capitol. But we climb higher and reach a station on a level with the painting and some distance from it. Here we linger and are entranced with the beauty of the picture as its harmonious blendings stand bright and clear before our vision. So what seems a blur to us now will be seen in the brightness of heaven’s glory beauteous indeed.

Questions

1. How does Jonah’s fall illustrate Israel’s?
2. What is the secret Paul would have us know?
3. When will the hope of Israel be realized?
4. What is the goal of all God’s ways and works?

Lesson 42—Romans 12

Service

We have been in the “School Room” together and have received divine instruction. We enter the last division of Romans now and find ourselves in the Serving and Waiting Room.

Israel was detained at Sinai for some time after their deliverance from bondage. There they “sat down” at the feet of Jehovah and “received of His words.” They were the servants of Jehovah as well as His saints and they received the instructions for the building of the tabernacle and all its service while waiting there.

We learn that we too are servants. We notice there are seven circles of service in ch. 12-15. The first is the tiny all-important circle of our own life and then the spheres expand until in ch. 15 we have the world circle. The whole world is to feel the warmth of Christian service.

1. Self Sacrificial Service, Ch. 12:1, 2.

Our service begins with the presenting of ourselves to God. The Israelite was to bring different materials—gold, silver and precious stones linen etc. to God for the building of the tabernacle. (Ex. 25:1-9). But the house of God is not being built thus. We are to bring our bodies to be at His disposal. We learn in this chapter that we are one body in Christ. Being gathered together by the Holy Ghost we are the house of God. Two things are to mark us, devotedness and separation. In vs. 1 we have devotion. We were the slaves of sin now we are slaves of love. The “mercies of God” like a golden chain bind our

hearts to God. Gladly we render to Him all we have and are.

In vs. 2 we have separation. If Christ has won our hearts we turn our backs upon this world. Abiding in the sunlight of His presence we are transfigured into His own likeness. We are not to pattern after the world and its ways we are to live to please God in all things.

2. Service In The Assembly, Vs. 3-8.

The will of God is that all who believe should be in assembly fellowship. We are not only Christ's but we are also "members one of the other." Our bodies illustrate the truth. We have many members in our bodies, feet, hands, ears, eyes and so on; but the body is one. Each of these members has a different office and each is necessary to the good of the whole body. So it is in the Church. We are one in Christ, yet each of us have a place to fill, a duty to perform and a grace to dispose. In our service there are three things necessary for acceptable service.

1. I must have low thoughts of self. vs. 3 They tell of an old boat on the Mississippi that had a whistle so large it took all the steam. Every time it blew the engines stopped. Self-importance must be dealt a death blow. None of us have any occasion for boasting for all is the gift of God.

2. I must recognize the truth of the one body. vs. 4, 5. "Many are one" says the apostle. There would be no jealousy in our service if we really believed this. We are one in Christ. True there is diversity but there is harmony. Union is different from unity. A boy has a bundle of sticks. They are held together by a cord, but

the many are not one. The branches of a tree all differ but the tree is one tree though the branches are many.

Like the notes in music each believer differs from the other, but what strains of sweet music are produced by the master hand of the musician.

3. I must be exercised before God as to my service. vs. 6-8.

The various gifts are mentioned here. There are seven in all.

1. Prophecy, the telling forth of the mind of God.
2. Ministry or service. We are to give ourselves wholly to it.
3. Teaching that is explaining the Word of God.
4. Exhorting, that is applying the Word of God in a practical way.
5. Giving, “imparting” our goods: a divine investment.
6. Ruling, “presiding” in home, Sunday School or assembly.
7. Shewing mercy. This takes us all in. We can all be kind one to another. With hearts aglow and faces radiant we can bring heaven’s cheer to dark hearts and lonely.

Questions

1. What must precede service for God?
2. What is the great incentive for service?
3. Where does service begin?
4. How can one serve in the assembly?

Lesson 43—Romans 12:9-21

Service in the Christian Circle

There are two vast fields for Christian service the one “within” and the other “without.” The one sphere includes all who love the Lord Jesus Christ and the other all those who are outside the circle of Christian fellowship. We learn that we have responsibilities towards both those who are “within” and towards those who are “without.” Peter writes about “the brotherhood” our “brethren that are in the world.” (1 Pet. 2:17, 5:9). He tells us we are to love one another as brethren. In our lesson today we see what should mark us as brethren in Christ.

What a magnificent cluster of Christian graces we find here. Our chapter is a very garden filled with fair and fragrant flowers. How beautiful our lives will be if these flowers are seen in them. LOVE is the first and it is the root out of which all the others grow. Indeed all the flowers belong to the same family, they are all exotic growing in a heavenly soil, and each one is Christ’s love blossoming in our lives. We will take a little journey through the garden together and examine the flowers. We notice they are found in groups of three.

The first triplet is in verses 9-10. Here we have love’s full bloom. Love that is real, not merely in word but in deed; then love that is pure—untainted with sin. The third flower in this group is “brotherly love” the fair flower that sweetens all our intercourse one with the other.

The second three are in verse 11. They are “Christian diligence” for love is not slack; “Christian fervor” for love is not cold; “Christian service” for love is not idle.

The next group is a rare and lovely cluster. Vs. 12. Joy is the first in this triplet, joy that blooms in the sunlight of the blessed hope of Christ’s return. Patience is along side for if the eye is on Christ we can wait. Prayer completes this set, constant steadfast prayer that thrives in the secret place but sheds its fragrance along life’s weary way.

The fourth is also a lovely group. We have three lovely flowers here. Love that sympathizes, love that binds and love that surrenders self. This is very important for self is the greatest hindrance to the growth of all these graces. Only as we keep in the sunlight of Christ’s love will self be surrendered and others enjoy the fragrance of our life of service for our Lord.

Service In The Circle Of The Unsaved Vs. 17-21.

Here we have the Christian and those without. Our conduct towards them should be marked by grace. The grace of God should temper all our dealings with the unsaved.

We should never pay back evil for evil. vs. 17. The evil in this world is to be met by a holy and beautiful life.

We must be sure our conduct is beyond reproach, vs. 17. Stepping out of an elevator one hears these words “Watch your step.” We need to watch our steps because the world does. We must meet its sceptical gaze by honourable conduct.

We must be at peace with all. vs. 18. We are to meet the strife in this troubled world as messengers of peace. If peace is broken it must never be from our side.

We must never avenge ourselves (vs. 19) but leave all things in God's hand. What a touching appeal is made in this verse. We are entreated by the voice of love to walk in love.

We are to gain our enemies by shewing grace to them. vs. 20. Like the acytelene flame that wraps itself round the steel bar and melts it, love breaks down all opposition.

We are to overcome evil with good. vs. 21.

Good for good is man like

Evil for evil is beast like

Evil for good is devil like

Good for evil is God like.

Questions

1. What should be our attitude towards all Christians?
2. What is the secret of a beautiful Christlike life?
3. Why should we be careful in our walk in this world?
4. Why are we not to avenge evil?

Lesson 44—Romans 13

The Christian and the Government

Although the Christian is not of the world he is still in it. Our service begins with heart consecration to God, and the circle widens from the local assembly reaching out to all believers and to the unsaved round about. Now we are to view the believer's attitude towards the political world. We notice the chapter is summed up under three words SUBJECTION, LOVE and SALVATION.

1. Subjection vs. 1-7 The Believer's Attitude

A Christian is a pilgrim and a stranger here. He is a pilgrim because he is passing through this world to another. He is a stranger for he is a citizen of the country to which he is going. But as such he must obey the laws of the land thru which he journeys. He may not always be pleased with the laws passed but his business is to obey knowing that all authority is of God.

An American traveling through Canada has no part in the forming of her laws but while there is subject to them. There is a tendency in some parts today to do away with government. The Christian can have no sympathy with any such socialistic, communistic, tendencies. Neither should he be grumbling about the taxes or trying to change the laws. The simple rule for the Christian is given in verse 7. We render to all their dues, and there our responsibility ends.

2. The Law of Love vs. 8-10. The Believer's Walk.

The Christian is above the world and therefore should be indebted to it in nothing. However there is one debt that will never be paid in full. Every one of us will always be in debt in this respect. "Owe no man anything but to love one another." Above the law of the land is this law of love. There will be no danger of transgressing the laws of the land if we have the love of Christ dwelling in our hearts. "Love is the fulfilling of the law."

3. The Present Outlook vs. 11-14. The Believer's Hope.

In Israel long ago there were men who had understanding of the times, they knew what Israel had to do. 1 Chron. 12:32. We need such men today. The outlook is dark in the world, the uplook for the Christian is bright. We know the time that it is no time for sleeping, the night is far spent and we need to be watching. The Morning Star will soon appear and end the night of Christ's absence and our sorrow. That will be our salvation when He comes and it is much nearer now than when we first believed. Our souls are saved but we wait for the salvation of our bodies and full deliverance at the coming of Christ.

All signs point to the breaking of the day. As children of the day we are not to be like the children of the night. Our chapter closes with what we are to do as those who know that the time is near. First we have a threefold injunction.

1. Let us cast off the works of darkness. Vs. 12:
Separation.

2. Let us put on the armour of light. Vs. 12: Warfare
 3. Let us walk honestly as in the day. Vs. 13: Conduct
- Then we have three negatives in vs. 13.

1. Not in rioting and drunkenness. The reveling crowd.
2. Not in chambering and wantonness. The slaves of passion.
3. Not in strife and envyings. The warring world.

The safeguard against all this we have in the last verse of the chapter "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof."

The Lord Jesus is in us. He came to dwell in our hearts when we first believed. We are to put Him on so that He may be seen ON us. Just as we recognize a mailman, policeman, or soldier by the uniform they wear, so a Christian should be known by the wearing of Christ's Character. But for this the flesh within us must be kept on starvation rations. Some one has said we are to feed him from "Mother Hubbard's cupboard," which was bare. If we do not, Christ will not be seen in our lives.

Questions

1. What is our standing nationally?
2. Do you think a Christian should take part in politics? Give reason.
3. What debt will we never be able to pay?
4. How do we know Christ's coming is near?

Lesson 45—Romans 14; 15:1-3

Christian Service in View of the Judgment Seat of Christ.

We have reached the great chapter on Christian forbearance. The entire chapter centers round a “weak brother” who is introduced to us in the first verse. What are we going to do with him?

1. “Receive Him”

is the word of Paul, vs 1-9. Let him in with a welcome, wrap round him all the warmth of brotherly love, give him every consideration as one who belongs to Christ. Seven excellent reasons are given why we should not refuse him.

1. He is the object of love. “God hath received him” vs. 3. How dare we refuse him?
2. He is responsible to God. “Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant?” vs. 4. Servants in a home have no authority one over the other, each is responsible to the master.
3. He will be kept. God is faithful. Unable to stand in himself “he shall be holden up for God is able to make him stand.” vs. 4.
4. We must not force our own thoughts on others. “Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.” vs. 5. It is possible for us to differ as to minor matters and still each be true to Christ.
5. We are to cultivate a thankful and not a critical spirit, vs. 6. The very thing which I judge in my brother he may

be doing as unto the Lord. If God is receiving thanks through it we must not spoil the ointment by stirring up strife.

6. None of us live to ourselves, vs. 7, 8. Christ and His will must be the rule of our lives.

7. We are not our own, we belong to Christ, vs. 9. Whether we live or die we are the Lord's, His possession. He entered into the realm of death that He might obtain us. He is Lord of all and a thought of the Lordship of Christ will keep us from judging one another.

2. It Is Too Early Now To Judge.

vs. 10-13. "We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." What a scene that will be when each of us confesses to God. All our life's story will be repeated in glory and we will not be sorry we refrained from judging one another then. How incompetent we are to judge anyhow and nothing is more withering to the soul than a censorious spirit.

"He is coming, Oh how solemn, when the Judge's voice is heard. And in His own light He shows us every thought and deed and word. Deeds of merit as we thought them, we'll discover were but sin. Little acts we had forgotten He will tell us were for Him. Oh what joy for He imputeth righteousness instead of sin. Sweet to take the linen garments, all a gift and all from Him." Walking in the light of that day I will not stumble a weaker brother.

3. We Are To Walk In Love.

Vs. 14-23. The believer in Christ enjoys liberty, but love is greater. If by sacrificing my own liberty I can help a brother “for whom Christ died” I am serving Christ acceptably. Eating and drinking are not the most important things. Character and conduct are far more important. In verse 17 we have a summing up of the great truths of the epistle.

1. **RIGHTEOUSNESS**—the subject of chaps. 1-4. We are justified.

2. **PEACE**—the subject of chap. 5. We are reconciled to God.

3. **JOY**—The subject of chaps. 5-8. We are a happy people.

Satan’s crowning work is to sow discord amongst God’s people. “Let us therefore follow after the things that make for peace and things wherewith one may edify another.”

4. We Are Not To Please Our Selves.

Ch. 15:1-3. Christ pleased not Himself and we are to follow Him. “Cripple Tom” was lying- sick in an attic in London. A kind visitor offered to remove him to a comfortable “Home.” But since his conversion Tom had found a way to serve his Lord. He would drop written portions of the Word of God from his window to the pavement below where passers by picked them up and read them. Leaving the attic would mean separation from this service so dear to his heart. Choosing rather to serve than to please himself, he answered “I’m not anxious to die easy when He died hard.”

“The sweetest life we can know below
Is that of selfless living.”

Questions

1. How should a weak believer be dealt with?
2. What will take place at the judgment seat of Christ?
3. Will believers accuse one another at the judgment seat of Christ?
4. Give an example of Christ not pleasing Himself.

Lesson 46—Romans 15:4-33

Christian Service in Relation to the Whole World

We come to the widest circle of Christian service in this chapter. The hope set before us in the Scriptures, the goal before Christ in His earthly ministry, and the ambition of Paul have in view the whole world. One day the whole world will be aglow in the light of the glory of our triumphant Christ. The glory of God is the goal of all true service. Glory will crown every work of God. What a high honor is ours to have part in this divine program.

1. The Ministry Of The Word Of God. Vs. 4-7.

There is a bright golden thread that runs thru the entire Old Testament Scriptures. From Gen. 3, where first God addressed sinful man, on thru the ages He told of the glorious prospect of the triumph of His grace and the defeat of the powers of darkness. In picture, by precept and prophecy the Divine Author was writing for our learning and all pointed on to that bright and blessed hope of Christ's return. The same word that sets forth this hope also imparts "patience and comfort." We need patience, for the road to the goal is long and rough; we need comfort for a dreary and dark night precedes that glorious dawn. The Word of God is the light that reveals the scenes of glory toward which we journey; it is also the lamp that brightens the way as we journey.

And since God speaks to us through His word we know He is with us as the God of patience and consolation, uniting our hearts as one in Christ Jesus so that we may

“with one mouth glorify God even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” This is the effect Godward, and the result manward will be that we “receive one another as Christ also received us to the glory of God.” So we see that the purpose of revelation, the goal of the Scriptures is THE GLORY OF GOD. God glorified in His saints now and in the whole world by and by.

2. The Ministry Of Jesus Christ vs. 8-13.

In fulfillment of the Old Testament Scriptures the Lord Jesus Christ came to Israel. His earthly ministry was in a large measure limited to God’s earthly people, nevertheless it had the whole world in view for “God so loved the world.”

Christ came to “confirm the promises made unto the fathers” vs. 8, but He also came “that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy.” This fact is verified by a wonderful array of quotations from the Old Testament. From each of the three divisions of the Hebrew Scriptures a message of hope reaches us that embraces the whole world. We begin with THE PSALMS. David tells of Christ going down into death and coming up out of it in resurrection and singing among the Gentiles. This quotation is found in vs. 9 and is from Psalm 18:49.

Christ will be joined in this singing by a mighty chorus from both Jew and Gentile; this we learn from MOSES. He calls on the nations to rejoice along with God’s earthly people, (vs 10) from Deut. 32:43. Then again from the Psalms (117:1) we hear the echo of that Hallelujah chorus that shall fill the earth, vs. 11.

Finally from THE PROPHETS we learn the cause of this world wide praise. Christ although Israel’s Messiah will

reign over the Gentiles and in Him they shall trust, vs. 12 from Isa. 11:10.

What a bursting forth of praise that will be! There in the highest heavens Jesus sings, and we join the singing that He leads but what will it be when all creation swells with the mighty chorus and all nations join in glorifying the God of all grace.

This section closes with a “Benediction of Hope.” What a blessed hope is ours. God is the God of that Hope. He will bring all to pass. But He desires us to enjoy in our hearts the foretaste of it now. “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.” vs. 13.

Questions

1. What is the blessed hope of the Believer?
2. What must take place before all the world praises God?
3. Was the earthly mission of Christ only to the Jews?
4. In what way does a knowledge of God’s purpose help in service for God?

Lesson 47—Romans 15:14-17

Paul Speaks of His Ministry and of His Coming Journey.

Reading this portion of our chapter is like attending a “Missionary Meeting.” We are listening to Paul speaking of his labours in the gospel. He was the greatest of all missionaries, excepting of course the Lord Jesus. After he saw the Saviour in the glory it was his one ambition to make Him known throughout all the world. What a mission was his! In a most beautiful poem one has put these words in Paul’s lips “From the glory and the brightness, From His secret place;

From the rapture of His presence

From the radiance of His Face—

Christ the Son of God hath sent me

Through the midnight lands;

Mine the mighty ordination

Of the pierced Hands.

The power of the gospel had been seen in the lives of the Christians at Rome. What a lovely picture is given us in vs. 14. It is such a contrast to the ugly one in chap. 3.

Only the grace of God could have wrought such a transformation. There not a bit of goodness can be seen in them; here addressing them by that endearing term, “brethren,” he tells them that they are “FULL OF GOODNESS, filled with all knowledge and able also to admonish one another.” The word he uses means “brimful” even to overflowing. Their cup was running

over, and the overflow was being enjoyed by each other. That is the thought in “admonition.” What we know we can impart to others that the truth of God may regulate our lives. We must be channels of blessing, what we have is for others. God’s thought in imparting to us His goodness and the knowledge of His truth is to put it in circulation. Idle money does no good, the talent kept in the napkin gained nothing. We gain more by investing what we possess.

In vs. 15 Paul tells them why he wrote the letter to them. “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.” His written ministry to the Romans was an example of what he meant by “admonition.” He was not writing to them because they did not know. He was well aware of the fact that they knew all he was telling them. He puts them in mind of what they already knew in order that the power of the truth might be effective in their lives. When we think of how easily the truth slips from our minds and how quickly our hearts cool we realize the great need of “admonition.”

Then Paul speaks of HIS OWN MINISTRY according to the grace given him. He was the minister of Christ Jesus to the nations, in ministering the gospel of God. All the wealth of God’s grace is in the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul was dispensing those riches in preaching the Gospel, he was presenting Christ to poor and lost sinners and in Christ they received all that God could possibly give. But the result of this service was that God was receiving His offering. Paul brought the gospel to the Gentiles and he

brought the Gentiles to God as an acceptable offering, sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

There is an Old Testament scene that illustrates this. We find it in Numbers 8:5-15.

Aaron the High Priest was to take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse them. Then an offering was made to God upon the altar and in the savour of the sacrifice the Levites were presented to God for His service.

Paul is doing with the Gentiles what Aaron did with the Levites. He is glad to have part in that happy service of bringing and presenting to God a company of people who are His very own for His service. The Levites were a united band and yet each one had a distinctive work to perform. They were “to go in to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation” and so their work was all in connection with the testimony of the Lord, but each Levite had his own bit to do. And so have we. The testimony of the Lord is with His people today and God give us grace to live “sacrificial lives” as those who have been presented to Him in the savour of Christ’s death and in the power of the Holy Ghost.

Questions

1. What is the true missionary spirit?
2. What is the thought in the word admonition?
3. What should be the fruit of the gospel in our lives?

Lesson 48—Romans 15:17-33

Paul's Program

Before Paul was saved he had a large program before him. In his mighty energy, he had undertaken a task that never was surpassed in purpose by another. He had determined to wipe out the Name of Jesus from the earth "as a man wipes a dish and turns it upside down."

In the carrying out of that program he journeyed to Damascus and on the way was arrested by the very One he thought was living only in the mind of the hated Nazarenes. What a discovery to find that Man the Lord of Glory. He never got over it. From that moment his program changed. His purpose was now to fill the earth with the sweet savour of the precious name of Jesus. We have a brief account of his labours for Christ in the verses before us. We will divide them into three sections.

The Preaching of the Gospel vs. 17-25.

In telling of the triumphs of the gospel Paul is careful to take no credit to himself. He will tell "of those things which Christ has wrought by me." In very few words he takes us over the entire area where he had made known the grace of God in Christ.

He begins at Jerusalem. That was where Jesus died and rose again and where the light first shone. From there it shone out reaching the regions "round about" even unto Illyricum. It was left for Luke to give us in detail the story of how Paul "fully preached the gospel of Christ" in Judea and Syria reaching even into Europe.

Illyricum was the highland seaboard which looked across the Adriatic to the long eastern side of Italy. Thus far Paul had gone and then he had looked longingly out beyond that sea. Oh, to reach the souls out yonder where the rays of the gospel had not yet penetrated.

Paul had the true missionary spirit. The spirit that has led many thousands since to leave hearth and home, and “launch out into the deep” with the gospel net. How much overlapping of gospel effort there is at home. It would be good for some of us to take Paul’s motto for our own. “Yea so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man’s foundation.”

Indeed this very thing had kept Paul from coming to Rome, for the gospel had been preached there. But beyond Rome lay the vast untouched fields of Central and Eastern Europe. Paul looks off to the distant land of Spain and says “When I go there I will pay you a visit on my way. But first I go to Jerusalem.”

The Providing for the Poor, vs 25-29

While Paul’s perspective took in the “regions beyond,” his heart was with the saints and he eagerly seized the opportunity of visiting the Jewish believers that was afforded him by the offering taken up in the Gentile assemblies. He would take this loving token of Christian fellowship to the poor saints in Judea. He makes no appeal to the saints at Rome to help in this. He simply tells how other Gentile assemblies had been pleased to make this contribution and it was only right that they should. The Gentiles had been enriched spiritually as having become partakers of their spiritual things, hence

it was their duty to minister to the Jewish believers of their carnal things.

The Petition for Prayer, vs. 30-33.

We have likened this portion to a “missionary meeting.” Paul has given an account of his labour and impressed the saints with their responsibility. Now he closes with a request for prayer. He asks for fellowship in prayer that he may be delivered from the unbelieving Jews; may be welcomed by the saints, may be enabled to reach them in Rome and be refreshed together with them when he came.

All these requests were granted, Paul was welcomed by the saints, and delivered from the rage of the unbelieving nation. He reached Rome and the Christians there, but in a way very different from what he expected. Two long years lay between him and his goal, during which the stirring events recorded in the Acts followed in rapid succession, after which came the long weary wait in a prison in Caesarea followed by a stormy passage thru raging seas and finally “his own hired lodgings” in Rome.

Questions

1. State briefly the purpose of Paul’s life.
2. What was Paul’s mission to Jerusalem?
3. Which chapters in Acts give the story of Paul’s journey to Rome?
4. Where did Paul purpose going from Rome?

Lesson 49—Romans 16:1-16

The Outflow of Christian Love

If chapter 15 can be likened to a great missionary-meeting, chapter 16 can be likened to the greetings that follow when the saints remain for hearty handshakes and greetings. Paul reaches as it were clear across from Corinth and grips the hands of the saints to whom he has been speaking in his letter.

First of all he commends to them Phebe, the SISTER and SERVANT of the Church at Cenchrea, the port of Corinth. In the vast city of Rome she must find a homecoming and no doubt gives us a little picture of the judgment seat of Christ where “All the saints of every clime shall meet, And each with all shall all the ransomed greet.”

There will be a review of our service here and every saint will receive some word of praise. Some like Tryphena and Tryphosa have laboured in the Lord; some like the beloved Persis have laboured MUCH in the Lord. All this will be taken into account in that day.

It would be delightful to be introduced to all these Christians in Rome but we will have to be content with noticing just a few of them.

There is a good representation from the sisters. At least nine of them are mentioned. Priscilla is well known, she with her husband Aquilla heads the list. And then Mary who has been called “the forgotten Mary” since reference is so seldom made to her when speaking of the other Marys in Scripture. But she must not be forgotten for she is the seventh and thus completes the

list. She may have been a slave girl, she certainly was a slave of love for so Paul tells us. She “slaved for me” he says. He uses the strongest word in the Greek language for pains and effort.

Then there is that “mother in Israel.” Her name is not given but what a dear saint she must have been, and what a comfort to the homeless servant of God. She was the mother of Rufus and mine says Paul. The sister of Nereus and Julia are mentioned only, but what an honour is theirs to be in this portrait gallery. When we meet them up in heaven we will learn more about them.

As we pass from the sisters to the brethren we meet the “well beloved Epaenetus the firstfruits in Achaia unto Christ.” It is always an honour to be the first in any place to trust Christ, and what a joy it must be to lead that first soul to Christ.

And there are kinsmen of the apostle mentioned. Andronicus and Junia senior saints, with whom Paul had shared a prison experience at one time. Since they were in Christ before Paul we wonder if they prayed for him during those years when he was pursuing his mad course of opposition to Christ. It may be that the thought of his praying relatives helped to “goad” the conscience of the persecutor. (Acts 26:14).

Appelles, we learn, was approved in Christ. That is, he was one who had been tested and was found true as a member of Christ. What the special tests were we do not know. There are others but we will have to bid them farewell now and as we close our lesson this time the lovely picture of Paul’s friends in Rome lingers with us. Some were “of note” others most obscure but all the aristocracy of heaven.

We would like to follow the history of these saints. We wonder if any went home to heaven from the arena torn by the wild beasts or from the fiery stake. Surely most of them suffered during that time of persecution under the monster Nero. But they all will be there where the saints meet yonder and our interest in them will be increased by our having been introduced to them through Paul's letter to Rome.

Questions

1. What is chapter 16 a picture of?
2. Where was Paul when he wrote this letter?
3. In whose home did the Church in Rome meet?
4. Who did Paul call "dearly beloved" in our chapter?

Lesson 50—Romans 16:17-27

Exhortation

Our journey through the book of “Romans” is drawing to a close. We listen to the closing words of the apostle as with a true shepherd heart he sounds the alarm. In our former lesson we were in the midst of a happy group of believers, a precious circle of fellowship. It is just that that Satan seeks to destroy, so Paul warns against

The Work of the Enemy, vs. 17-18.

They were to mark those who caused divisions. Scattering the sheep and causing them to stumble is not a shepherd’s work, it is always the work of the enemy. These false teachers might try to deceive with “good words” and “fair speeches” but they were not the servants of Jesus Christ, they were seeking a place for SELF.

The Safeguard for the Saints, vs. 19.

Simple obedience to the word of God keeps the soul from every snare. A child, nearing the precipice, lured on by a beautiful butterfly it was seeking to catch, heard the mother’s voice calling. Instant obedience to the mother’s call saved the child from possible death. Where there is this obedience we need not to be informed regarding the various forms of evil. “I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil” writes the apostle. Whilst guiding a vessel through a dangerous bit of sea the captain was asked by a rather uneasy passenger if he knew every rock in that region so as to be able to avoid them. “No,” answered he, “I do

not, but I know the safe channel." It is enough to know that we are in God's way.

The Triumph of the Saints, vs. 20.

The picture of final victory is presented to us in this verse. The crushed serpent under our heels is the symbol used. It is the God of peace who will accomplish this. Satan is the disturber of the peace. His crowning work is to sow discord amongst the brethren. Too often he succeeds in creeping into the assemblies of God's saints and working havoc there, but thank God his career will be ended soon. War against him was declared in Eden; conflict was waged down thru the ages; his head was bruised at Calvary, and ere long the battle in the skies will be fought and Satan hurled over the ramparts of heaven and eventually cast into the lake of fire. Meanwhile the battle is on but we need not fear for "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is with us."

The Salutations of Paul's Friends, vs 21-24.

We can picture that little group of friends surrounding Paul as he dictates this letter to Tertius in the house of Gaius in Corinth. Timothy is there, his child in the faith, dear to the heart of Paul. Lucius, Jason and Sosipater are there, his kinsmen bound to him by nature's ties as well as spiritual. Gaius himself is there as he writes. No doubt he was a wealthy man for he entertained the entire Church of God in his house. Erastus, the treasurer of Corinth was there and Quartus, known only as "a brother."

Each of these friends desired to send greetings to the saints at Rome and thus the final page of Paul's letter is warm with Christian love.

Questions

1. What are we to avoid in our fellowship with saints?
2. Who is the real instigator of trouble in the church?
3. What is the simple path for the believer?

Lesson 51—Romans 16:25-27

The Final Doxology

In the closing verses of Romans we have a mighty ascription of Glory to God for the gift and manifestation of salvation. It is a great summing up of the truths which we have learned in the letter.

Establishment.

God is able to establish us according to the gospel Paul taught and according to the preaching of Jesus Christ. The Gospel has been before us in our study of Romans—the gospel of the wondrous grace of God. The Preaching of Jesus Christ may refer to the preaching which speaks of Him or to the preaching which He Himself delivers. Surely both are true. The Gospel is concerning our Lord Jesus Christ but more—in the Gospel He still speaks from Heaven. He thus addresses the sinner, preaching peace through the blood of His cross. Now Paul would not only have us to believe that Gospel, but be established in it. And he would leave upon our hearts the serious, yet encouraging thought that it is only the power of God that can accomplish that. This reminds us of what we read in Philippians 2:13, “It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.”

The Mystery.

Not only are we to be established according to the gospel and the preaching, but “according to the revelation of the mystery.” Mystery means “secret.” It is something here that was not known in the ages past.

The curtain of silence was over it then, but it has been removed now.

This great secret has been revealed, and we learn that salvation in Christ is not only for the Jewish nation but that it is being made known to all nations for the obedience of faith. God has made known the fulness of His love and the unbounded wealth of His purpose in Christ. He has revealed all His mind and heart to us. Knowing all these wondrous truths, that are distinctive to the dispensation in which we live we might well listen to the words found elsewhere in the New Testament, "What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness." We should be established not only in the gospel but in the truths concerning our acceptance in Christ and our relationships to one another as members of His body.

How touching it is to see the great apostle, with an overflowing heart, amid glowing words of adoration and praise to God, commend the saints to God. And notice how he speaks of God. He is

The Everlasting God.

The word is "ages" and refers both to the ages past and those to come. The gospel that reaches us was in the heart of God before the ages began and it reveals to us a God whose ways during the ages are all in accordance with His divine purpose, and will be to His eternal glory. To this God Paul commits the saints. He is of power to establish them. And then He is

God Only Wise.

What an assertion of His glory this is. He is the eternal Wisdom and there is no wisdom apart from Him. The

Gospel is the expression of the wisdom of God. To them that perish the preaching of the cross is foolishness, but to us who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ crucified is both the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Glory Through Christ Jesus Forever, Amen.

As we close our studies let us watch the dear apostle finish the letter. We quote from another.

“He takes the papers and the pen. With dim eyes, and in large, laborious letters, and forgetting at the close, in the intensity of his soul to make perfect the grammatical connection he inscribes, in the twilight, this most wonderful of Doxologies. Let us watch him to its close, and then in silence leave him before His Lord, and ours.”

“But to Him who is able to establish you, according to my gospel, and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, true to the unveiling of the secret hushed in silence during the ages of times, but manifested now, and through the prophetic Scriptures, according to the edict of the God of the Ages, for faith’s obedience, published among all nations—to God Only Wise, through Jesus Christ—to Whom be the glory unto the ages of ages. Amen.”

Questions

1. According to what does the apostle desire the saints to be established?
2. What does Paul mean by “the mystery?”
3. Where is God’s wisdom seen?

4. Through Whom will God receive glory forever and ever?

Lesson 52—Review

We conclude our study of Romans with this lesson. We shall retrace our steps and journey once more through this marvellous epistle. We have noticed in our studies the similarity of the teaching of Romans and that of the Tabernacle in the wilderness as recorded in the book of Exodus. In both we have the story of God's salvation. Beginning with the separation caused by sin we travel the blood-stained way until we reach the goal —the glory of God. The wilderness in which the tabernacle was pitched represents the world in which we find ourselves.

1. The Wilderness

Our condition in the outside place is described in Romans one to three—guilty and undone, outside the holy place. We look towards the house of God—the tabernacle. What do we see? Just a vast expanse of white linen; a wall of spotless white that surrounds God's holy habitation. What a contrast it is to our sinful hearts and lives. It tells us one thing and that is that if we are to live with God we must meet His requirements. What does He demand? Perfect righteousness. We measure ourselves by what He requires and discover that we all come short. If it is a question of our merit we must forever be shut out from the presence of God and the joy and blessings of His home.

2. The Court

Inside the wall of linen was an enclosure called the court. In it were the brazen altar, the brazen laver and

the house of God. It signified salvation. There was a gate that opened into it, a beautiful gate of linen—blue and purple and scarlet. Christ said when on earth “I am the door” and the gate points to Christ. If God demands righteousness, He provides it in Christ and every believer possesses it. In Romans 3:22 we enter this gate, it is “the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.”

Once inside the enclosure, the first object seen is the brazen altar. Here we see the blood of the sacrifice and the fire that consumes it. It speaks of the Cross of Calvary where God settled the sin question. There He meets our need according to His own holy requirements and there we receive a welcome to all the gladness of God’s house for He accepts us in all the value of the sacrifice. The brazen laver speaks of that continual cleansing that we need if we are to enjoy fellowship with God through washing with water by the Word of God.

3. The House

If we were in the outside place in ch. 1-3 and we enter the gate in ch. 3:21 and find ourselves inside in ch. 4 we are brought near in chap. 5-8. We enter the house provided for the justified ones—the house beautiful—and pass from blessing to blessing until we reach the Holiest of all in the close of the 8th chapter. Thus we have travelled from Guilt to Glory and find ourselves in the loving embrace of the arms of God.

The table and the candlestick, the golden altar and the ark and their teachings are known to most of our readers. May God enable us by His grace to enjoy sweet and happy fellowship with himself.

In chaps. 9 and 10 we have what corresponds to Israel's High Priest within the veil of heaven, hidden from their view, but soon to appear in glory as we learned in ch. 11. In the light of that glory we serve now and praise God that unto Him shall be the glory among all nations and throughout all ages, yea for ever and ever. Amen.

Questions On Review

1. What was the first object seen as one approached the tabernacle?
2. Describe the similarity between the teaching of Romans and that of the Tabernacle.
3. How is it possible for God to welcome a guilty sinner into His holy presence?