

Romans 5-8

Review:

Summary Chapter 1

In Chapter 1, Paul introduces himself as a servant of the gospel. Further he announces that this gospel has the power to make people righteous before God through the faith that it (God) bestows on people. (v17) Then Paul attacks Gentile practices in an ever widening circle (v18-32). Those who are idolators are guilty and have received God's wrath, likewise those who are immoral are guilty and have received God's wrath, in the same way everyone (gentiles) who ___ (see list in 1:29-31) ___ this leaves all guilty and under God's wrath.

Summary Chapter 2

Paul uses this chapter to lay out how Jews are also guilty (you are doing the very same things, v1). Jews have not kept the law which also make them guilty. Paul then goes on to argue that circumcision while still of value for helping Jews keep the law, does not make them right with God. "Real circumcision is spiritual and not literal." (v29)

Summary Chapter 3

Paul wants to assure his Jewish audience that they are still the chosen people but also asserts that this chosen-ness does not free them from God's judgment (make them righteous). Righteousness is not made known in an action we do (following the law of God) but in a person (Jesus Christ) and an action of God (giving people faith). Key verses: 3:21-25

Summary Chapter 4

Paul uses this chapter to reveal that even the great Abraham was made righteous with God through faith before he was a strict adherent of the laws of God. Paul anticipates that some might ask whether the Jewish faith is a sham- are God's promises long ago (Genesis 12) voided by Jesus? No, Paul says, rather Jesus fulfills the promises by making Abraham the "father of many nations" through the faith in Jesus Christ given to many nations. This means that YOU are children of Abraham, through faith. Key verses: 4:18 and 22

Read Romans 4:18-25

What does it mean that faith is RECKONED to us as righteousness?

Read Romans 5:1-11

What does salvation mean to you?

The three tenses of salvation (as they are sometimes called) are thus unveiled. Paul presupposes and builds on his exposition of justification by faith in 3:21-4:25, though in 5:9-10 he will reveal its further depths: "being justified by (Christ's) blood" is functionally equivalent to being "reconciled to God through Jesus' death". This is the past tense of God's action in the Messiah. The future tense is supplied by the word "Salvation" (5:9-10); this means "rescue from the coming wrath" (5:9) through Jesus life. The present tense, held between these two, consist of peace, celebration, suffering hope, love, reconciliation and (once more) celebration. (NT Wright, NIB Volume 10, pg 514)

Note the personal compassionate nature of this God – "While we were still weak...".

Summary Chapter 5:12-21

Paul makes the argument that since sin entered the world in one man (Adam) and this thing that was not of God has afflicted all of us - how much more will the Grace that enters the world in one man (Jesus Christ) come upon each of us. No matter how dominant Sin has become even using the good law of God to convict people and resulting in death... God's grace is more dominant through justifying sinners and giving us eternal life.

Read Romans 6:1-14

Discuss:

“Verse 1 is primarily about STATUS, not behavior, as is apparent from the argument about status that follows.”
(Wright, NIB Volume 10, pg 533)

NT Wright suggest that Baptism be seen through the lens of a “New Exodus” – What elements/themes from the Exodus translate into our Baptismal life?

Read Romans 6:15-23

Discuss:

Paul develops the theme of slavery here (and later). This is likely capitalizing on a common theme from Israel’s history in the Exodus. There the question is: will the people be slaves of Pharaoh or slaves of God? God says “Let my people go”. How does this connect to our new life in Christ?

For Jews, to come out from the sphere of Torah meant that one was joining the “sinners”, the lesser breeds without the law. “Shall we then be sinners?”

This chapter shines a bright spotlight on the dangerous half-truth, currently fashionable, that “God accepts us as we are.” Indeed, the question of 6:1 could be read as raising exactly this question: “Will God’s acceptance” do as a complete grounding of Christian ethics? Emphatically not. Grace reaches where humans are, and accepts them as they are, because anything less would result in nobody’s being saved. Justification is by grace alone, through faith alone. But grace is always transformative. God accepts us where we are, but God does not intend to leave us where we are. That would be precisely to “continue in sin, that grace may abound.” Unless we are simply to write Romans 6 out of the cannon, the radical inclusivity of the gospel must be matched by the radical exclusivity of Christian holiness. (NT Wright, NIB Volume 10, pg. 548)

Summary Chapter 7

Paul uses the analogy of Marriage to illustrate that we are so united to Christ (in baptism) that what happens(ed) to him happens to us. This unification so frees us from the power of sin that we are no longer convicted by the law of God. Paul argues that sin has twisted the law to make us look/feel/be guilty. So, how will we live? According to God's law, which sin has used to make us guilty before God and others? Or, according to our unification with Christ which is over and above the law? Paul wants to take seriously the power of sin even acknowledging its effects in his own life. However, Paul wants to take more seriously the power of salvation made known in Jesus. Further Paul uses the imagery of slavery - slave to law, slave to sin, slave to God.

Read Romans 8: 1-11

Discuss: What is the role of Sin? What does God do about Sin? Is the Law still good?

Read Romans 8:12-17

Discuss: What is the role of the Spirit? What does the presence of the Spirit mean for us?

Read Romans 8: 18-30

Discuss: What is God’s intention for the whole of creation? How do you explain verse 28 to others?

Read Romans 8:31-39

Discuss: If God is for us, who is against us? Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect? Who shall condemn us? Who shall separate us from God’s love? - Nothing and No one – Thanks be to God!