

Romans L24 – Lessons 17-23 Study Summary

Lesson 17 – Romans 7:13-25

Christian Carnality Struggles

- Q1 – Christian living can be a tough struggle. Failure --- to do what's right or to avoid doing what's wrong --- can lead to inner conflict and despair, even to the point of self-loathing!
- Q2 – God's Law shows what's right, leading to life. Sin, however, uses God's standards to bring us under condemnation (due to our failures), which leads to death. All have sinned. Everyone's "flesh" is infected by this curse.
- Q3 – The dynamic is simple: we **grow** and expand in our knowledge and relationship with *God through the Holy Spirit's renewal of our minds* (inner beings), while *physically we gradually weaken* to the point of dying (i.e., the body wears out).
- Q4 – Paul declares that he serves the Law of God with his mind, but with his flesh he (regretfully) serves the Law of Sin. What can we say? With every opportunity to do or say the right thing, there will also always be a "wrong" way to do or say it...!
- Q5, 6 – With Paul's confession of his struggle, many believe he is describing himself in the early years of his faith. In the end, he declares that his deliverance and triumph can only be found in Jesus!

Lesson 18 – Romans 8:1-17

Christians Are No Longer Condemned

- Q1, 2 – Christians accept that they are sinners --- saved by faith in Jesus alone --- and no longer subject to God's wrath and condemnation.
- Q3 – What God's Holy Law could not do --- because of our sinful flesh --- God accomplished by Jesus!
- Q4 – Mankind's sinfulness is based on a mindset that refuses to SUBMIT to God, bringing us a hostility towards Him, the inability to please Him, and, ultimately, an eternal death.
- Q5-7 – Truly saved Christians know that as Jesus was "God with us," the Holy Spirit is "God within us." When we are reborn, the Holy Spirit's presence within is our seal and guarantee of eternal life. As God's children, we are privileged to approach Him as 'Abba', Daddy, as well as Father.

Lesson 19 – Romans 8:18-30

Our Future Glory and The Holy Spirit's help

- Q1 – Christians will share both in the sufferings and glories of Jesus. In America, we don't really suffer much for being Christians, but others around the world can lose families, jobs and even lives! On the glory side, NO ONE can imagine the glories yet to be revealed and provided by the Father.
- Q2 – Adam's "fall" recorded in Genesis subjected ALL creation to sin's curse and penalty. Born-again, we can't wait for our 'bodily redemption' to live eternally. All creation patiently waits with us!
- Q4 – The Holy Spirit understands all our fleshly weaknesses. He prays for us when we don't know how!
- Q5-7 – God's "predestined" ones will --- in the end --- be justified and glorified. Christian theology is divided on defining who is 'predestined.' Calvinists says God chooses in advance whom He will and won't save --- and we cannot change His decision. Wesleyan-Arminians say that God has predestined that those who believe in Jesus --- a 'free-will' decision on an individual's part --- will be saved. Depending on one's position, folks who used to be part of our faith community and are not any longer, either were never truly saved (Calvin) or have left the faith (Wesley).

Lesson 20 – Romans 8:31-39

Conquerors --- Inseparable from Christ!

- Q1 – Christians are comforted to understand that God is on their side. "If God be for us, who can be against us?"!
- Q2, 4 – Satan is the Christian's adversary. He schemes and stalks people to trip up with sin! Revelation describes him as the 'accuser of the brethren,' and, in a courtroom environment, we would see him as the prosecutor...with Jesus as our defender. We ARE guilty of sin, but, by faith in Jesus, we are free from conviction, judgment, and condemnation.
- Q7 – God's love for us found in Christ Jesus can never be severed, cut-off or removed!

Lesson 21 – Romans 9:1-13

God's Sovereignty Over the Jews

- Q1, 2 – Paul lamented the truth that God's Chosen people --- the Jews --- rejected Jesus and were (then) outside His saving grace. They had had every advantage in life: miraculous signs and wonders coming out of Egypt into Canaan; God's Laws (10 Commandments); the patriarchs and prophets across the years; instruction in worship; eternal truths; and the human lineage of Jesus Himself.
- Q3 – American Christians today also have many privileges and freedoms compared to believers around the world: Bibles, including simple language ones; Christian universities, TV, radio, and podcasts. Do we face the same expectations God had for His Chosen People, the Jews? Likely...yes!
- Q4-6 – Abraham had many sons and is the father of both the Jews and Arabs. This lesson points out that --- in God's sight --- NOT even all Jews are Israel. The true "descendants" of Abraham are people who share the faith that he had, not those who can physically trace their lineage back to him.
- Q7 – Knowing the end of their lives from the beginning, God's quote: "Jacob I loved, and Esau I hated," fits a Wesleyan theology well. God knew in advance who would and wouldn't follow His ways, so He stated --- before they were born --- Jacob would be saved, and Esau would be condemned.

Lesson 22 – Romans 9:14-24

Is God's Sovereignty Unjust?

- Q1-3 – "Does God have the right to do anything He wants with His creation and created beings? Isn't God being unjust (in condemning us)?" Paul's reply is that people DO NOT have the right to question God (v. 20), any more than a piece of pottery should question the potter who made it. Academically, it makes sense that God DOES have this right. But factoring in God's gift of free will to men, how do our decisions or faith factor into He "will have mercy on whom He will have mercy"?
- Q4 – God has put in place all governing authorities --- local, state, national and international --- for His purposes. Christians are guided to submit to governing leaders so that they may live upright lives without fear of punishment or accusation of wrongdoing.
- Q5 – The proper attitude of saved people is gratitude towards God and life, and it should lead them to reach out to unsaved loved ones, friends, and other people in general.
- Q6, 7 – God patiently puts up with people whose lives will fall under wrath, condemnation and death in order to show mercy to others. Paul cautions us NOT to argue with God about this!

Lesson 23 – Romans 9:25-33

Who Really Are God's People?

- Q1 – While the Jews viewed life with an "us vs. them" mentality, with Gentiles outside of God's interest or purview, God actually covenanted with Abraham to be a blessing to the WHOLE world.
- Q2 – Paul's quotes from Hosea appear to have two meanings: 1) because the Jews were repeatedly unfaithful to Him, He would open the door of relationship to the Gentiles; and 2) though the Gentiles were not viewed as His people, He would welcome them as "Sons of the Living God."
- Q3 – Only Abraham's descendants through Isaac, the son of 'promise', were considered true offspring to receive God's promises and covenant. Romans 11 alludes to a 'partial hardening' of Israel's heart leading to a 'fullness of the Gentiles' being added --- by faith --- into Abraham's offspring. For the phrase, "ALL Israel shall be saved" we now understand two things: 1) a true descendant of Abraham must believe in the one, true God; and 2) ALL Israel encompasses both Jews and Gentiles of faith!
- Q4, 5 – Only a remnant of physical Jews will be saved, and, had it not been for "true descendants of faith" in their lineage, they would have been dealt with as God did with Sodom and Gomorrah!
- Q6, 7 – Faith in Jesus --- which brought salvation to the Gentiles --- is a stumbling block to the Jews. They pursue their salvation by works (personal righteousness), rejecting Jesus (a stumbling block to them), and falling woefully short. Their aim was to '*achieve*' salvation, not '*receive*' it. Jesus, whom they rejected, God the Father has made the Chief Cornerstone. Peter asserts that they stumble in this way because they "disobey the Word, as they were destined to do" (1 Peter 2:8).