

Romans 9-16

Theology Applied



February 2022

Day 1

When you think about the average American who is not a Christian, what are your thoughts or emotions about them being lost?

Do you have a passion to reach the lost and tell them about Jesus? Explain.

Many Christians in our county have gotten comfortable in their Christian bubbles of churches, Christian schools, Christian play groups, etc. Many do not even think of the lost. If anything it is an attitude of, "Oh, them over there." I remember a time in our youth group many years ago when we had some students coming to youth group who were unchurched. They did not know the lingo and they were not shy in sharing their views. I can remember a student from a prominent Christian family one day saying, "Why are they even here?" Sadly this is the attitude of many Christians today when it comes to the lost. The next couple days we are going to get a picture of Paul's passion for his people, the Jews, who were lost and dying in their sin. Ask God to ignite a passion for the lost in your own life as you read His word.

Read Romans 9:1-5

What does Paul wish he could do in verses 2 and 3 to see his fellow Jews come to faith in Jesus Christ?

Paul is not wishing to lose his hope in Christ, but what is he communicating by making a statement like this about the Jews?

Look at verses 4 and 5. Paul reflects on the Old Testament and who the Jews were supposed to be. What belonged to them originally? List it all.

What nation was Jesus born into?

Jesus was born a Jew. How could the Jews not believe in Him? Yet many did not. In fact they had him crucified.

Why is hard for you to have a passion to reach lost people in your school, neighborhood or family?

List 5 people you know who are not Christians, and one thing about them.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

PRAYER – Pray for the 5; ask God to open a door to share your faith with them.

Day 2

Are people born Christians? How do you know? Use verses you may know.

Nobody is born a Christian. John 1 talks about how we are not children of God because somebody said we were, or because we were born a child of God. We are only children of God when God makes us His children. He gives us that right. There are many who believe they are going to heaven because they were born into a Christian family or go to church or because their parents say they are a Christian. Many are heading straight to hell because they believe this. This is the same problem the Jews faced. Many thought, and continue to think they are good because they are Jews. They are God's people. This means they are good. Yet they reject Jesus and do not have a relationship with Him. Let us look at the next part of Romans 9. Ask God to instruct your heart today.

Read Romans 9:6-13

How does Paul say to us that just because somebody is a Jew does not mean they are a "real" Jew in verses 6 to 8?

How would you describe a "real" Jew according to what Paul is trying to get at in these verses?

A Jew is one inwardly, who has made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ and not just because of things they have done outwardly. Who does Paul then reference in verses 9 and 10?

What was Rebekah told about her twins in verses 11 and 12?

So looking at these verses does this mean God chooses people who are “good” people and who are doing “good” things?

No! According to these verses when does God choose us?

Now we come to a pretty hard verse. What does Paul say in verse 13?

What does that mean?

What struggles have you had, or do you have when you read this verse?

PRAYER – Ask God to help you trust His plan and purposes.

Day 3

What is the hardest thing that you have heard or learned about God from the Bible?

Why is that hard for you?

The hardest thing I have heard about God is that Jesus did not come to die for all people and that his blood was not shed for all people. This was only for his chosen people. That teaching surprised me because I was taught that Jesus died for every single person. I knew if I was to believe this “new” teaching then it would impact how I looked at people who were not Christians. I struggled because I have a sister who is not a Christian. That would mean if she never comes to Christ, that Christ’s blood was not shed for her. I struggled with that teaching. In time I came to grips with it as something that is true and found throughout scripture. Today we come to some hard teaching. Ask God to help you wrestle with and understand His truths.

Read Romans 9:14-18

Yesterday we ended with Jacob I loved, and Esau I hated. How does Paul follow up with that statement in verse 14? What does he tell us about God?

What two people does Paul then reference in verses 15 and 17?

What do we need to see about how people come to faith in God according to verses 15 and 16?

So can men save themselves?

Look at verse 17; did Pharaoh ever have a chance of coming to faith in God? What was Pharaoh's purpose then?

What does it mean that God hardens whom he wills in verse 18? How did he harden Pharaoh?

When we read verses 15 and 18 and think about how God made it so Pharaoh would never repent, what are we quick to say to God?

"It is not fair!" That is what most are quick to say. Why do we wrestle with fairness here?

PRAYER – Ask God to soften the hearts of specific non-Christians in your life.

Day 4

What is a situation when you got in trouble and you cried out, “It’s not my fault!”?

There are many times when we get in trouble and cry, “It’s not my fault!” This is an excuse that goes back to the beginning. When Adam and Eve ate the fruit God said not to eat the blame game started. Adam said it was Eve’s fault. Eve said it was the serpent’s fault. Nobody wanted to own up to the wrong they committed. We all have said that. What is at the heart of the issue? We do not want to admit that we sin and do what is wrong. We want to be right and have people think of us as good people. It is about image. It is about me. Yesterday we talked about the difficult topic of God hardening hearts that would have no opportunity to repent and softening other hearts who would come to trust and love Jesus. In light of that teaching it leaves some of us to say, “it is not fair”, or “it is not their fault they sinned.” Today we look at how to handle those objections using the Word of God. Ask God to teach you today.

Read Romans 9:19-29

What objection does Paul state in verse 19? What is the person who says this really trying to say?

How does Paul answer the person who says this in verses 20 and 21? What is he saying about God? What is he saying about man?

God CHOOSES some people for destruction. In other words they will not come to faith in Jesus Christ. For what purpose in verses 22 to 23?

What does this show us about the power of God?

What does this show us about the power of man?

Paul quotes from Hosea and Isaiah in verses 25-29. What point is he making about God choosing and saving a people to himself in these verses?

After reading this difficult chapter of Romans, what questions remain when you think about God, his plan and salvation? Ask somebody those questions.

PRAYER – Pray about your questions and for boldness to ask them to an adult.

Day 5

What are wrong ways in which people think that they are getting to heaven?

Sum up in one or two sentences how a person gets to heaven. Use a verse if one comes to mind.

We live in a culture that embraces universalism. It means all ways lead to heaven whatever way that is. Many people would say it is narrow-minded to think that only one way can lead to heaven. As Christians, we are narrow-minded in that we believe what John 14:6 says, that Jesus is the only way, truth and life and we cannot get to heaven but through Him. There it is, one way. The Bible is full of verses that address this truth. We either believe the Bible or we do not. Ask God to open your eyes to see His truths as you study them today.

Read Romans 9:30-10:4

How does Paul compare the Jews and Gentiles in verses 30-31?

Look at all the verses you read today. List down all the ways in which the Jews thought that they could get eternal life.

How does Paul say a person can get eternal life? (See 30, 32, and 4)

How do you see Paul's passion for his people?

How did the Jews miss the mark according to verses 1 to 3?

If these verses are true, and they are, then how does this change how you share your faith with people God places in your life?

PRAYER – Ask God to give you a heart for people who don't know Jesus.

Day 6

What do you think a person needs to believe in order to go to heaven? Think about this and write down what comes to your mind.

If you went out in the street you would get a whole range of answers from being baptized, going to church, reading your Bible, praying, helping people, becoming a member of the church and the list goes on. If you think about a lot of the answers people give, they have one thing in common, it is about the works that man does. It is not about the work that God does. We have become very man centered in our culture when it comes to salvation. We need to get away from this and get back to the heart of what it means to be saved. It is God working faith in us, not us doing enough to get saved. Today and tomorrow we will see what is most important when it comes to salvation. Ask God to teach you and grow you in your faith today.

Read Romans 10:5-13

What two parts of the body are important when it comes to faith according to verse 8?

What is each one's role in the salvation process as seen in verses 9 and 10?

Look at verses 11 to 13; what do we need to do to be saved?

What is the purpose of saying there is no distinction between Jew and Greek when it comes to salvation?

How do we call on the name of the Lord? What do we say?

When you call on the name of the Lord, what are you saying about your own power to save yourself?

Why did you call on the name of the Lord? If you have not, why not?

PRAYER – Thank God for giving you a believing heart; or help you to believe.

Day 7

What would you say is the most important thing, after the Holy Spirit of course, that God uses in bringing us to faith in Jesus Christ? Why do you think that?

What Bible verse did God use to show you what it means to be a Christian?

God used the story of Peter to bring me to faith in Jesus Christ. I saw the life of this man who followed Jesus, saw miracles, heard teaching and experienced crowds wanting to just get a glimpse of Jesus. Then I saw his betrayal of Jesus by denying he knew Him. He was a broken man who thought his life was over in a lot of ways. Then Jesus after rising from the dead comes back to Peter and reinstates him. Jesus wanted to use Peter in furthering His kingdom. It was a great story of redemption and grace. I wanted to know Jesus. That was the scriptures that God used in my life. Yesterday we saw that faith is confessing with our mouths and believing with our hearts. That is a key part of coming to faith. Today we look at the other key element. Ask God to give you an understanding heart today.

Read Romans 10:14-17

After reading these verses what is the other important element when it comes to salvation?

I do hope you said the Word of God or Bible or scriptures. How does verse 17 show that we cannot be saved apart from the Bible?

Who does God want to use in sharing the Word of God?

What does Paul say about people who share God's Word with lost people?

God wants to use us to share the Gospel with people. He chooses to use us. How should reading these verses encourage and challenge you when it comes to sharing your faith?

Who is someone you can bring the Good News to today? What can you share with them?

PRAYER – Pray for the person you just listed.

Day 8

When is a time when somebody would not listen to something important you had to say?

How did you react to them?

What reasons do people not listen when somebody tries to tell them something?

I can think of many times when people would not listen to me. There are many times when my children do not listen to me. There have been times when my wife has not listened to me. I can also remember times when people I was sharing God's Word with did not want to listen to what I had to say. All of them had different reasons for not listening. But they did hear what I had to say even if they did not follow what I was saying. Paul continues to talk about the Jews and how they would not believe the truth that he was sharing with them. Pray God would challenge you to listen to God and his word and that you would apply the truths of his word to your life today.

Read Romans 10:18-21

What does Paul say about whether the Jews heard the truth in verse 18?

The Jews rejected the truth. What did Paul do according to verse 19?

What do we see about the Jews and Gentiles when it comes to hearing the truth of God's Word in verses 20 and 21?

How would the Gentiles coming to faith serve as a motivation for Jews to later come to faith?

Why do you think Paul kept sharing with the Jews when they kept rejecting the message he was sharing with them?

Who are a two people you know who keep rejecting Jesus Christ?

PRAYER – Pray for the people you just listed.

Day 9

When is a time when you felt like you were the only person who was doing or not doing something? Describe that time.

What was or would have been encouraging to find out that you were not the only person?

It was very lonely to be a Christian in high school. I felt like I was the only Christian in my school. It made me quiet regarding my faith and I even compromised my faith in some of the things I would do or say. Just before my senior year God challenged me to step up and be vocal about my faith. I obeyed Him. In my senior year many Christians from my school came forward ready to help lead a Bible club and get involved with Campus Life. It was an exciting year. I was not alone. I was encouraged in my faith. Today we look at how we can be encouraged by the promise that we are not alone when it comes to living out our faith. Ask God to teach you some important truths today.

Read Romans 11:1-10

How is Paul an example that God has not rejected his people, the Jews in verses 1 and 2?

What Old Testament example does Paul use to show that we can have hope that God will still work in a people that seem to be rejecting God?

How was Elijah encouraged in a dark time in his life?

What promise does God give us in verse 5?

Look at verses 7 to 10, what do we see about God in relation to people coming to faith in Christ? What specific things does Paul tell us?

Do ever feel alone when it comes to living out your faith? Explain why you feel that way and the questions that go through your mind.

PRAYER – Ask God to put Christians in your life who will encourage you.

Day 10

What is something that you have been jealous about in your life? How did that impact your actions and thoughts?

What are things that make people jealous?

We all get jealous at some point in our lives. We are jealous because people have more money than us. We are jealous that our friend's parents let them date, but our parents won't let us date. We get jealous because others in our youth group can watch certain movies that your parents won't let you watch. Sometimes we even get jealous because we wish we were more like other people. Today we are going to look at the issue of jealousy but as it pertains to salvation. Ask God to teach you His truths today.

Read Romans 11:11-16

The Jews rejected Jesus. The Jews rejected the message Paul shared with them about hope in Jesus Christ. What was the result of their rejection according to verses 11 and 12?

What hope is left for the Jews at the end of verse 12?

What is Paul's goal for his people, the Jews, by making them jealous?

What words in verses 15 and 16 does Paul use to show the future hope he has for his people?

Why is this attitude that Paul has to his people come to faith, one that is missing for a lot of Christians?

Take one minute and list all the non-Christians that you have interaction with in your life.

PRAYER – Pray for all the people you just listed.

Day 11

What are some of the thoughts or feelings a person has after they have been cut from a group or organization?

Have you ever been accepted into a group that you were not originally a part of? How did that feel?

I can remember trying out for a play that I really wanted to be in and getting cut. It was discouraging. I really wanted it but could not have it. It makes you doubt your ability. It makes you doubt your self-worth. On the flip side I can remember making the national honor society. There was a ceremony and you got a pin and certain sash at graduation. I was part of a group. I had earned it through hard work but ultimately, I did not choose to be part of that group. I had to be invited. That was a pretty cool experience. It made me feel worthy. Our faith is like being accepted into National Honor Society. It is something we must be invited to be a part of. We cannot invite ourselves. Paul is going to use the picture of farming to share this point with us today. Ask God to teach you today.

Read Romans 11:17-24

Paul says we need to be humble about our faith as Christians and not proud. What are his reasons in verses 17 to 21?

The Jews were cut off. They had the prophets. They had the covenant. They were God's people. Yet they rejected God. How should this be something that keeps us humble in our faith?

Think about this passage today, how do we see God as judge?

How do we see that God is kind?

Look at verses 23 and 24, how do we see God is in control of ALL things?

Thinking about all this, what are you thankful to God for? List 8 to 10 things.

PRAYER – Pray through your list of what you are thankful for.

Day 12

What are things we cannot control as humans?

Why do we not like the feeling of not being in control?

I want to be in control of my life. I want to know that everything will turn out perfectly for my children. I want to know every detail is going to go well at youth group, retreats and other related events. I want to make sure everything in my life is orderly and going well. But what happens when fleas infest my house? What happens when a parent dies suddenly? What happens when an ankle breaks playing basketball? Things are all out of whack and I realize how much I am not in control no matter how much time and effort I put into things. I realize that God is in control and I am not. It is humbling. Ask God to show you who He is as you read his word today.

Read Romans 11:25-32

We have talked about the Jews being rejected by God. What hope do the Jews have according to verses 25 to 27? How is that our hope too?

What do we see about God's call to His people in verse 29?

What does it mean that God's call is irrevocable? Why is that encouraging when you really stop to think about it?

What does Paul want to remind the Christians about in verse 30?

What are ways in which we forget about God's mercy in our lives?

Take time and really think about this question: how has God shown you mercy in your life? Write down 8 to 10 things that come to mind.

PRAYER – Thank God for his mercy as you wrote in the last question.

Day 13

When you think about God, what are 3 attributes that mean the most to you?
Next to each one write down why you wrote that attribute.

1.

2.

3.

When it comes to who God is, what are 3 things that most non-Christians would say about God?

1.

2.

3.

The characteristic of God that impacts us the most is a lot of times dependent on our life experiences, our upbringing and church experiences. It is always good to step back and think, "Who is God?" There are many attributes in scripture that describe God. Today Paul takes a break in his letter to give us a mini hymn that focuses on the character of God. Ask God to grow you in your faith today.

Read Romans 11:33-36

List all the things that we are told about who God is in these verses.

Through seeing who God is, we also see who man is in these verses. What do we learn about the character of man?

How is it humbling to think about who we are compared to God?

Think about all that happens in this world: murders, terrorism, death, divorce, and the list goes on. How do these verses help us to see that all those bad things, as well as all the good things are not pointless but serve a purpose?

What are two things you can do in your life to show that you believe what these verses say about who God is?

1.

2.

PRAYER – Use these verses to thank God for who He is.

Day 14

What are some things that you really like that are not spiritual things but worldly things? Take time and be honest and list those things.

Now circle the things you just listed that if you thought about it, probably do not bring honor to God. What are the biggest struggles for you in not living like the world and trying to get what the world has to offer?

It is hard to be in the world but to not be of the world. It is hard because we see all the world has to offer. We see money. We see cars. We see nice big houses. We see people. God, we do not see. It becomes a struggle to live for God when we cannot see him or talk to Him face to face. Paul knew that as he wrote his letter to the Romans. God knew that would be a struggle we continue to have today. Ask God to teach you his truths as it pertains to this issue today.

Read Romans 12:1-2

Summarize these two verses in your own words.

Write down what you think the most important words or phrases are and next to each one, why that word or phrase is important.

If we are Christians, we have experienced God's mercy in that he will not destroy us but give us eternal life. Because of that mercy we are to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice to God. What does it mean your life is a living sacrifice?

What is God's command that we are not to do in verse 2?

What is his command of what we are to do?

What is the result of not being conformed to the world but being renewed in our mind according to verse 2? What does that mean?

What are practical ways in which we can be transformed in our minds to be able to do what God wants us to do? List 3 things.

1.

2.

3.

PRAYER – Ask God to help you in your prayer, Bible readings, youth group, etc.

Day 15

What are ways in which you are selfish?

What are ways in which you think you are selfless (thinking of others first)?

Since the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, we are all selfish, prideful people who only live for themselves. We start to deal with this struggle when we come to faith in Jesus Christ. But the struggle never ends. As long as we are in our human bodies on earth, we will struggle with pride and selfishness. We will want to be first. Why when you announce food at a youth event do the junior high guys sprint to the front of the line? Why do a group of junior or senior high girls talk only with each other and not anybody else? Why does a person decide they only want to do fun events and not service projects or mission's trips? At the heart of all these issues is selfishness and not thinking of others first. Ask God to challenge that attitude in you as you read today's scriptures.

Read Romans 12:3-8

What is the challenge from Paul in verse 3? How can we think of others first?

What picture does Paul want to give us in verses 4 and 5?

How does this picture of the body help us in not thinking about only ourselves, but the other Christians God has placed in our lives?

What gifts does Paul give us in verses 6 to 8? Next to each gift write down what he says about that gift.

By listing these gifts, what is Paul saying about the Body of Christ?

When you think of the gifts listed, which gift is yours? How have you used your spiritual gift to serve the Lord and not yourself?

PRAYER – Thank God for His spiritual gifts; ask him to help you to use your gifts to serve him and not yourself.

Day 16

If you were to describe somebody who is a true Christian, what would you say? Take 2 or 3 minutes and write all the characteristics that come to mind.

This can be a big list. There is a lot we can say. Then as we look at the list, we think to ourselves, “Does that describe me? Am I really a Christian if I am not doing those things?” That is the good and bad thing about making lists. But this is what Paul does in our verses for study today. He makes a list of the marks of a true Christian. Ask God to help you see these attributes in your own life as you strive to live for Him.

Read Romans 12:9-21

Write down all the marks of a true Christian that Paul lists for us in these verses.

What are some observations as you look at this list?

Pick 3 marks of a Christian you feel you show in your life and next to it write down how you show it.

1.

2.

3.

Now pick 2 marks that you feel you struggle with as a Christian. Next to that mark write down how you struggle.

1.

2.

In writing a list like this do you think Paul is saying we have to be “perfect” to be Christians? What is he saying to us?

PRAYER – Ask God to help you live for Him in all areas of your life. Pray through the marks that are listed in this passage.

Day 17

When you think of our governing authorities (President, governor, senators, etc.) what are some words or phrases that pop immediately into your head?

What are the reasons it is hard for us as Christians to submit to our government and its officials?

We struggle as Christians with the attitude of submission to the governing officials who are over us. Why? We do not agree with the things they believe regarding abortion, same sex rights, health care, illegal aliens, etc. What do we usually do when we do not agree with these officials? We often put them down, say we will never listen to them, call them horrible people, wonder why inept people have been put in positions of authority and of course there are many other negative comments. What would you say if I said when you say these things and think these things that you are sinning as a Christian? You would argue with me and rationalize why you are right in saying and believing what you are saying and believing. I know. I have had those discussions with Christians in my life. Ask God to make clear to you His truths.

Read Romans 13:1-7

What does Paul say about ALL governing officials in these seven verses?

What is our role as Christians in how we relate to government officials?

In what cases would we be allowed to go against what the governing officials say we must do or believe?

Our governing officials are sinners like us. Many in our world are corrupt and persecute Christians for meeting together. Many say we must adopt certain beliefs and practices that are against the Bible. These are times when we respectfully decline to listen to and follow what they say.

Look at verse 5. How serious does God take our subjection to our governing authorities?

What are some things that you can pray for specifically for our president, governor, senators, etc.?

PRAYER – Take time and pray for those officials who rule over us. Specifically!!

Day 18

What are ways you show another person that you love them?

What are ways you show God that you love Him?

Love is not about assumptions. We should never just assume somebody knows we love them. That is not enough. Love must be seen. Love must be heard. You show love through your actions. You show love through saying, "I love you." What if the only time I told my wife I loved her was on the altar when we got married? What would that do to our relationship? It would not be very good. "But I told her I loved her 15 years ago when we got married." That is not enough. She needs to hear it regularly. She needs to see it regularly. A good relationship needs that. Let us see what Paul has to say regarding this issue today in Romans. Ask God to teach you His word.

Read Romans 13:8-14

What is the "greatest" commandment according to verse 9?

How does that sum up all the other commandments?

What does Paul say we need to cast off in verse 12?

What are some of those things according to Paul?

What are we to put on? What words or phrases does he use to describe this?

How do we put those things on?

Look at the small list of sins that Paul mentions. What is one you struggle with? How do you struggle with it? What can you start to do to deal with that sin struggle?

PRAYER – Ask God to help you in dealing with your sin struggles and to help you in loving Him and others with all your heart.

Day 19

What are ways in which you judge other Christians, especially those who are from other churches and believe and do things differently? Be honest.

Why do we pass judgments on the things that other Christians believe and do?

We all want to believe that we have the market on truth. We think our churches beliefs and practices are the only right ones. Those who believe differently than us we think of as “lesser” Christians, disobedient or sinful. We can be harsh in how we treat our brothers and sisters in Christ. In the Reformation Zwingli died in battle because Luther would not send support to him. Why? They differed over their views on the Lord’s Supper. Now it is important to stand up for what we believe and to have passion in that belief. But that should not be something that keeps us from loving our brothers and sisters in Christ. We need to love each other. Let’s look at that today. Ask God to apply His word to your heart.

Read Romans 14:1-9

What were the issues that were creating an unloving atmosphere in the church in Rome? List them below.

Does Paul say we cannot believe what we want to believe?

What does he want us to do with our beliefs and convictions?

How are verses 8 and 9 important verses to remember during disagreements with brothers and sisters in Christ?

What are some of those issues in the church today?

Are you disagreeing with other Christians? Who? Over what? How can you love them during that disagreement?

PRAYER – Pray for that relationship you just wrote about.

Day 20

How has someone caused you to sin in your life?

How have you caused someone else to sin?

Yesterday we looked at how we should not quarrel over our opinions but that in all we do we are to live for the Lord with all our lives. That is not easy, especially when we think we are right. Today we are going to take that thought a little further. In what ways do we need to watch what we do so we do not cause other people to sin or go against their own consciences? Ask God to teach you and grow you in your faith today.

Read Romans 14:10-16

How does Paul caution us in how we judge others in verses 10-12?

How should these verses help in keeping us humble before God?

How does Paul describe our relationship with other Christians in the second part of this passage?

How does Paul want to see unity in the church?

If somebody believes that watching television, listening to secular music, or going to public school is wrong, should you stop doing those things? Explain this considering what Paul is talking about in this section. This might take some thought.

How can you work with somebody who differs from you in some of their beliefs?

PRAYER – Pray for unity in your church; in your youth group.

Day 21

If somebody were to ask you, "What do Christians do?" what would you say to them?

Is being a Christian about what we do or about what we believe or is there some combination of the two? Explain your answer.

We often make being a Christian about a list of what we do and what we do not do. There are more and more students going off to college and "losing" their faith. Why? They get to a point of realizing they do not feel like doing anymore. They have been living a lie and never believed what they were doing in the first place. The emphasis has been on the outward actions and not about the changed heart. If the heart is changed the actions will be done out of faith and will be long lasting. Ask God to teach you from the Bible today.

Read Romans 14:17-23

Right off the bat, what does Paul say the kingdom is about in verse 17?

According to verse 19, what do we need to pursue in the church as Christians?

What are ways in which we build the church up using our gifts and talents?

In verses 20-23 what happens when we make the church about what we do and what we do not do and not about faith in Christ?

How important is faith according to verse 23?

Are you living by faith or by works? Explain.

PRAYER – Pray about that last question you just answered.

Day 22

When you think of the word humble, what are some words or pictures that come to your mind?

How is humbleness a key to unity in the church?

If we all are honest, we want to see unity in the church. Unity is hard to achieve. It means we need to be willing to give up things we want to do or see happen to let others do the things they want to do. This is hard for so many people who see themselves as the center of everything. This is a key to unity though. I learned this lesson early in ministry. In the beginning I would decide what we were going to study and what events we would do, and I often was frustrated by the lack of participation in the studies and our events. Then I let my teen leadership and adult team decide what we would study for the year and what we would do. It was amazing to see almost everybody get into youth group. I had to set aside my desires and put the team first. It was a hard but good lesson for me. Pray God will reveal his truths to you today.

Read Romans 15:1-7

What challenge does Paul give us in verses 1 and 2?

Who is our example in verse 3? How is he an example to us?

If we serve others first and not ourselves what will be the results that are listed for us in verses 4 to 6?

How does Paul end this challenge in verse 7?

Think about your church and youth group. How do they do in living out the principles listed for us in this section of scripture?

How do you do in living out these principles? What challenges you most?

PRAYER – Pray for unity in your church and youth group and your role in it.

Day 23

What are some things that you take hope in?

Why do people want hope?

I step back and think of all the things that I take hope in. I hope that my children will grow up and serve the Lord no matter where He places them. I hope that I will grow old with my wife and that we will stay faithful to each other. I hope that God uses me in wonderful ways in the work of the ministry. I place my hope in the work that Christ did for me on the cross, securing my salvation by his work and not by anything I do. As you do this devotion today, ask yourself, "Is my hope in Jesus Christ?" Pray God will instruct your heart today.

Read Romans 15:8-13

What are 3 reasons Christ become a servant according to verses 8 and 9?

1.

2.

3.

We are Gentiles as Americans. God has shown you mercy. Write down the different ways God has shown you mercy.

How would you summarize what Paul is saying using the Old Testament in verses 9 to 12?

What does the Holy Spirit give us according to verse 13? Why is it important to remember that the Holy Spirit gives it to us?

Do you have joy? Describe your joy?

Do you have peace? Describe your peace?

PRAYER – I hope you saw that we can only have hope, joy and peace through Jesus Christ. Pray and either give thanks for or ask for hope, joy and peace.

Day 24

Think about where God has placed you in your community, school, etc. Can you think of people or groups of people who no Christian is reaching out to? List them in the space below.

Why do you think people are not reaching out to those people or groups?

In Matthew 28 we are told to make disciples to all nations. That means we are to seek to take the Gospel to all the people God places in our lives. That means the people who are friendly and open to conversation but also to people who are cold and hostile to the Gospel. They all need to hear about Jesus. For all of them, and for us, our only hope is Jesus Christ and Him forgiving us of our sins and making us into new creations.

Read Romans 15:14-21

How does Paul encourage this church in verse 14?

Why would that be a huge encouragement coming from the Apostle Paul?

What does Paul say about his ministry in verses 15 to 19?

How do we see that Paul's ministry is totally dependent upon the Lord Jesus Christ? What words or phrases does he use to show this dependence?

In verse 20 what do we see that Paul wants to do and not do in his ministry?

In verse 21 we see the hope that we can have that people WILL come to faith in Christ. They will see Jesus. They will understand who He is. What can you do specifically to disciple and teach people that God has placed in your life?

PRAYER – Pray for those ministry opportunities you just wrote down.

Day 25

Where is a place you most desire to visit in your lifetime and why?

What has hindered you from going to that place?

I really want to go to Jerusalem and see all the Biblical places and sights found in the Bible. In a lot of ways it would help the Bible come alive. What an awesome experience that would be. Here is the problem. It is very expensive trip to make. It is in a part of the world that is unstable and violent. These are a couple of big reasons why I cannot make that trip. I still hope to one day. Paul has written a great letter to the Roman church. As the letter ends, he tells them that he really wants to go to them and see them and spend time with them. It is on his "bucket list." That is what we come to today in Romans. Ask God to give you a heart to understand His word today.

Read Romans 15:22-33

How do you see that Paul loved the Roman Christians in verses 22 to 24? What words and phrases does he use to show this?

What do we see about the generosity of the churches in meeting the need that was in Jerusalem?

What ways have you or could you help meet physical needs of people in your town or city? Take time to think about where God has placed you as you answer this question.

What prayer requests does Paul make of the Roman church in verses 30 to 33?

What prayer requests do you have for your “personal” ministry where God has placed you? Share these requests with someone.

PRAYER – Pray for those prayer requests you just listed.

Day 26

I want you to take a moment and write down 5 people that God has used in your life to encourage and challenge you in your faith. Next to their name write down one way in which God has used them in your life.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

It is neat to think about all the people God has used in our lives. He has used parents, teachers, youth leaders, pastors, friends, authors of books and the list goes on. The problem is that we often do not think about all those people God has placed in our lives. We take those people for granted. Before you even read the scripture today, take some time and give thanks to God for the people you listed above and pray for them. Ask God to teach and instruct you today.

Read Romans 16:1-23

In verses 1 to 16 Paul gives us a list of people who have been helpful and encouraging in his ministry. What are two encouraging things you read about people in these verses?

- 1.
- 2.

Was Paul a “Lone Ranger” or was he someone who valued the idea of team?

What was Paul concerned about in verses 17 to 20?

What kinds of things does Paul say about those false teachers in these verses?

What is Paul's command to the church at the end of verse 17? What are ways in which they can do this?

What do you think Paul means by saying that he wants them to, "be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil."?

If someone was to teach a "truth" that was wrong and not found in the Bible, do you think you would be able to see that false truth? Explain why you answered the way you did?

PRAYER – Ask God to help you know His truths and to desire to grow in the knowledge of the scriptures.

Day 27

What is the best ending of a movie or book?

What made that ending so good?

I really liked the movie *The Sixth Sense*. It was a movie about a child psychiatrist who is shot in the beginning of the movie by a boy that he was not able to help. We then see him meet another young boy who is deeply troubled. He really wants to help this boy through his struggles with friends, family, school and of course the fact that he sees dead people. By the end of the movie the twist happens, you realize that the psychiatrist was dead, and the boy had to learn he had a gift to help dead people deal with their death. Woah! The whole movie you thought it was the other way around and you did not know he was dead. That made the move great. Paul has written a book to the Romans that challenged the churches theology, their outreach, and their everyday living. And now he concludes the book of Romans. Ask God to impress upon you His word today.

Read Romans 16:25-27

After reading this doxology, what do you sense Paul wanted to communicate to the Roman church?

How do we see that God is the one in control of revealing His truths to people?

What is the end goal according to the end of verse 26?

What does an obedient faith look like?

Would you say you have an obedient faith in God? Explain.

Write down 3 things that God has taught you about your faith through this study of Romans.

1.

2.

3.

PRAYER – Thank God for the book of Romans and all that you have learned.