

**DISCOVERING** **ROMANS  
& JAMES**

**BIBLE STUDY AND QUIZZING FOR YOUTH**

**By Jim Wilcox**



**DISCOVERING**

Romans

&

James



# Discovering Romans & James

**Bible Study for Youth and a Leader's Guide**  
**By Jim Wilcox**

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# USER'S GUIDE

## FOR DISCOVERING ROMANS & JAMES

**Discovering Romans and James** is best used in a “Discovery Group” setting. A Discovery Group is a group of youth committed to growing in God’s Word, meeting regularly for a set period of time to study and share. The use of Discovery Groups is described in more detail in the next section of this guide. It also serves as a great group study workbook for youth involved in Bible quizzing.

Here are some guidelines to help facilitate your use of *Discovering Romans and James*:

- This study is divided into 13 Study sessions, and then the Bible quizzing. Each Group Study lesson is written to take approximately 45-60 minutes. This Bible study is meant to be only a part of a total session that includes you and your youth sharing insights from your personal study plus events and activities of the week and ending with prayer. A meeting of an hour to an hour and a half will provide adequate time for these components.
- Each Group Study session covers a specific section of Romans and James and also identifies a key verse for you and your participants to memorize.
- This leader’s guide gives you a complete session plan for the entire Bible study portion of your weekly meeting. Each session contains the following elements designed to assist you in your preparation and presentation.

**TEACHING AIMS** and **PERSPECTIVE**—these will help you gain an understanding of the “main points” of the lesson.

**BIBLE BACKGROUND**d—this extensive section will provide you with additional information that will broaden your understanding of the passage being discussed.

- The actual group study time is designed to take place through the structure of the session activities. After you’ve prepared yourself through studying the Purpose, Perspective, and BIBLE BACKGROUNDd, read through the session activities to develop an understanding of what to expect from the coming group study time. Make sure you understand exactly what is intended to happen through each activity; remember, also, that these activities are here to assist you. Feel free to adjust them as necessary to fit your group environment, resources, and/or time frame.
- Regarding the group activities, you will find specific instructions that actually say, “Say, ...” or are printed in bold italics. This does not mean that you must quote this information word for word to your students. We’ve included this material only as a guide for you regarding what we recommend to be communicated to your group.
- Each session provides you with four activities; each one intended to bring your students

into an encounter with the Scripture through a certain perspective. These activities are: Engage the Word, Explore the Word, Apply the Word, and LIVE THE WORD. The session activities are intended to give you strong teaching options without neglecting your own creativity. Adapt and tailor the sessions to meet the individual needs and personalities of your group.

- Occasionally, you will find sections entitled “Terms/People to Know.” These brief sections will give word definitions, explanations about terms or people, etc. that will help your class members better understand the passage being studied.

- Students are encouraged to keep personal notebooks as they read and study during the next several weeks. During the group sessions, they will often be asked to reflect in writing. Encouraging each youth to have a “notebook-type” journal will keep you from having to provide blank notepaper each time.

The first place to start on your journey through Romans and James is with the Word itself. Read through Romans and James entirely before you begin your Bible studies. Then look through this leader’s guide and acquaint yourself with the contents.



# GUIDE

## TO DISCOVERY GROUPS

An effective small-group Bible study ministry for youth in the local church begins with Discovery Groups. Discovery Groups are important in: communicating acceptance, teaching by example, building personal relationships, modeling discipleship in a real-life setting.

There are many ways to start a Discovery Group in your church. The best way is to invite all of your youth to be involved. Use posters and promotional announcements beginning three or four weeks in advance to spread the word about the group. Personally contact those persons whom you feel would especially benefit from the study. Also, make personal contact with those whom you think will be involved in quizzing in the coming year, encouraging them to be involved in the group.

There are at least two ways to form a Discovery Group. One is to hand-pick those already strongly committed to becoming all God wants them to be. These hand-picked, highly motivated youth will usually respond more eagerly to discipling than others would. This approach to discipling is called for when a major purpose of the discipling is training for leadership, as in Jesus' training of the Twelve.

At the same time, every Christian needs to be discipled. Every Christian needs to belong to a warm, accepting fellowship that calls out the best in him. In the loving fellowship, the half-hearted disciple can begin to catch a vision of his

potential; he can taste the excitement of growth.

In many churches, all the youth will fit into a single small group. If you need more than one group, provide different groups for those with different levels of commitment. You may want to hand-pick a group for in-depth discipling, then provide other groups for those not yet ready for the intense commitment expected of the first group. Rather than dividing the youth arbitrarily, you may want to set specific conditions for membership in the more in-depth group. These conditions might include disciplines of attendance, spiritual journaling, Bible study, accountability, and so on.

Any Discovery Group member must have some level of commitment. An obvious minimum commitment is to attend the group regularly. To build mutual trust in the group, members have to get to know each other. If one group member drops in only occasionally, he will be a relative stranger to the rest of the group, at least at the level of sharing expected in the Discovery Group. The presence of a relative stranger will immediately reduce the trust level in the group, limiting the openness of sharing. Of course, some absences are inevitable. The needed commitment here is for each group member to make group attendance a very high priority so that attendance is regular. A discussion of the priority of group attendance can be helpful in the early weeks of the group.

What's the best time for a Discovery Group? Again, it depends upon your goals and the personality of your group.

How long should we continue the Discovery Group? As long as the youth involved can stay committed. There have been groups who continued year round. Once they finished the 13-week study, they worked chapter-by-chapter on other Bible books or started on a new workbook. It is generally best to run the group for 13 weeks. After the study has finished, there may be other youth who want to be a part of the Discovery Group who did not sign up before. If so, arrange for a leader for them. Some of the youth in the original group may want to continue, while others focus more on other activities. If you cannot continue to serve as leader, be sure another adult leader is there to carry on.

How do I facilitate the Discovery Group Bible study? To facilitate means to "make easy." A small-group facilitator, then, is a person who makes it easy for the group to relate. He or she

keeps the group moving, nudges it back on track when it starts to stray, encourages participation. The leader's role is to help group members discover for themselves what the scripture means, how they can apply it to their lives, and then encourage them to follow through with obedience. The group leader's role is not to be a resident authority who tells group members what the scripture means and how they are to apply it to their lives. He must resist the temptation to lecture.

The Discovery Group leader is not authoritarian but an authority. This authority, though, is a spiritual authority, flowing out of an authentic life. Youth follow this leader, not because they are forced to, but because of the kind of person the leader is.

This book has been created with the prayer that the Word of God will find a place in the heart and mind of you and your students so that you will all be equipped to be effective disciples of Jesus Christ in the midst of the contemporary pagan culture you face each day.

# 1 WHEN IN ROME DON'T

**STUDY SCRIPTURE:** Romans 1:1-3:20

**KEY VERSE:** “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.” (Romanos 1:16).

## TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. Define for themselves the meaning of salvation and righteousness.
2. Recognize Scripture’s application to all people and not simply a select few based on race, nationality, or denomination.
3. See that redemption was initiated by God through the death and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ.

## PERSPECTIVE

Paul’s letter to the church at Rome may be one of the “thickest” books on Christian theology that we have in the entire New Testament. Its discussions and definitions of terms such as salvation, righteousness, justification, and sanctification make it a cornerstone of Wesleyan theology.

These characteristics of Romans might be a two-edged sword for use with teens: on the one hand, it provides an incredibly firm and important foundation of faith for adolescents on the verge

of independent thinking; on the other hand, it may some times become almost too heavy for many teenage minds to grasp, especially on the first reading. That is why it is imperative to approach the book in this Bible study in group fashion--for clarification, support, and encouragement.

Bible study is an active activity, something to be pursued with enthusiasm by all in the group and not simply absorbed through some kind of spiritual osmosis. It is important that each student take the initiative to study in his or her Personal Discovery time during the week, and then be facilitated to share his or her insights during the Discovery Group gathering.

This particular lesson will help your teens understand that Paul was a missionary in the strictest and most accurate sense. He himself had been saved by the grace of Jesus Christ from a life of persecuting the followers of the Messiah. It is with that heart of humility and sympathy that he approached the difficulties being experienced by the church in Rome.

## BIBLE BACKGROUND

This Bible Background and the ones that follow will cover the entire Study Scripture, although only a portion of that scripture is actually used in the Discovery Group session. This is done so that you, the leader, will understand the con-

text surrounding the passages and be prepared to help those students who are completing Personal Discoveries.

It may be important at the beginning of your meetings to establish the differences in the types or genres of writing found in the Bible, especially in the New Testament. There are the narratives (stories), the Epistles (letters), and the prophecies (revelations). Even among the Epistles, of which Romans is one, there are various genres: discourses, stories, testimonies, greetings, and so on. You might find it useful to explain the differences among these types of writing so that the students can read each passage with more purpose and understanding.

The New Testament starts with four versions of the same story: the birth, life, death, and resurrection of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, the Messiah. Those books, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, are probably quite familiar to all of your teens, but if your group includes, or is made up entirely of, students who are completely new to Christianity, you might want to spend most of the first session reviewing the highlights of those Gospels. It will be up to you to establish the credibility and teachings of Christ so that Paul's admonitions and testimonies will have some initial foundation.

After the four Gospels comes Luke's "Volume II," the Book of Acts. It is a historical-theological account of the beginnings of the Church—capital C—as the good news of Jesus is spread through Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). It describes, defends, guides, and encourages the first Church of Christ as led by the apostle Peter and the missionary Paul, who had of course been the Church's "enemy number one" as Saul of Tarsus.

We are first introduced to Saul at the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:54-8:1), then are allowed to witness his conversion on the road to Damascus in chapter 9. It was God's servant, Ananias, who went to Saul and said, "'The Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here, has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.' Immediately; something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, and after taking some food, he regained his strength" (9:17-19). It is not until 3:9, however, that Saul's other name of Paul is used. According to custom then, it was not uncommon for a man to carry both a Jewish given name and a Roman "later" name, perhaps in this case signifying Paul's new ministry to the Gentiles.

Paul probably wrote his letter to the Roman church from the city of Corinth, where he was finishing his third missionary trip in the early spring of A.D. 57. The Roman church was mostly Gentile, but Jews made up a sizable portion of the congregation as well. Paul's purpose was to show the universality of the gospel, that salvation and righteousness are for all people, no matter their origin.

He goes beyond the initial crisis of salvation, however; through the power and indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the believer is liberated from sin and, therefore, from the law and spiritual death. Paul also insists late in the letter that righteousness is the horizontal, relational outcome of the vertical relationship of holiness to God. Therefore, the life of the Christian has practical applications and visible differences from the former life of sin. Our behavior to others, no matter if they are friends or enemies, must be demonstrably different from the ways of the world: forgiveness replaces vengeance; benevolence replaces selfishness; tolerance replaces intolerance;

open-mindedness replaces closed-mindedness; sympathy and empathy replace ego and ethnocentricity.

Paul introduces himself as “a servant of Christ Jesus” —a label made more interesting in the Greek where “servant” carries both the meaning of servant and of slave, of one who serves by choice and one who serves by obligation. And then he says he has been “called to be an apostle,” or one who has been specifically and especially commissioned to carry forth the gospel. He ends the salutation by addressing the Roman Christians as “saints,” implying their call to holiness and being “set apart” to serve God.

We must understand the strength of character and resolve of personality that lie in Paul, for before his conversion, he was focused on his political purpose to eradicate Christianity. Now as a follower of the Christ, that same zeal and singularity of concentration became the cornerstones of his ministry. “I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes” (v. 16).

To utter those words in the hub of the Roman Empire was not a mark of cowardice or backseat commitment; Paul was a commissioned officer in the kingdom of God, and the world would know it. All the world.

When Paul claims later in verse 16 that the gospel is “first for the Jew, then for the Gentile,” he is referring to both chronology and privilege. John stated in his Gospel (4:22) that “salvation is from the Jews,” and of course, the Messiah himself was a Jew. All the covenants, laws, worship rules for the Temple, and prophecies came to the Jews. God chose them, not because He favored a particular race, but because He had to reveal himself somewhere and to someone who in turn would carry His message worldwide.

The balance of this opening passage outlines the need for righteousness of all people, for all have sinned: the sins of the Gentiles (1: 18-32), the sins of the Jews (2:1-3:8), and the sin of all (3:9-20). In the second section, Paul tells the Church that God judges people on three criteria: according to truth (2:20); according to deeds (2:6-11); and according to the light a person has (2:12-15). Paul reiterates this here, for the Jew tended to look down on the Gentiles for their lack of recognition of God in the Old Testament and for their immorality.

It might seem at first reading that Paul claimed in 2:6 that salvation is earned rather than given freely by God’s mercy and grace. Paul was actually using the hyperbole of the perfect life. If one could live a life of nothing but goodness and kindness and righteousness, he would earn eternal life because God judges on the basis of action. But that is impossible apart from God, so God can indeed judge a person according to what she or he does.

This passage ends with an “annotated bibliography” (3:9-20) of Old Testament quotations that reinforce the idea that no one is guiltless: all have sinned. It is interesting that these quotes are not verbatim quotations, which can be explained in one of two ways:

First, New Testament writers often revised certain phrases of the Old Testament in order to emphasize their points.

Second, the original Hebrew writing was of ten unfamiliar to the New Testament writers, so they quoted the version they knew best--the Greek translation. Furthermore, quotation marks were not used in Greek writing, so perhaps word-for-word quotations were never intended by the writer.

## ENGAGE THE WORD

### *Let the Punishment Fit the Crime*

In our society, we seem much more concerned with people's actions than we are with their attitudes. We look at their behavior more than their demeanor, their works more than their words. Notice our justice system, for instance. We call wrongdoing a "crime"--something that can be objectively witnessed, rather than wrong being a "sin"--something that can be quite hidden.

Below you will find some crimes listed in the left-hand column. They are unfortunately all too common in our world today. Some are crimes in legal terms, while others are considered crimes in relationships, perhaps. In the right-hand column, write down what you think is the sin that God sees and judges when He looks at the heart. For instance, if the "crime" were breaking curfew, the "sin" might be disobedience or deceit or lying to your parents.

### **Crime**

- Murder
- Robbery
- Slander
- Fraud
- Adultery
- Prostitution
- Pornography
- Cheating
- Lying
- Gossiping

### **Sin**

## EXPLORE THE WORD

### 1. Welcome to Romans

Try to imagine what it must have been like to get a letter from one of the two most powerful people in your world. You go out to your mailbox after school, and there is the beautifully engraved return address of the White House or the almost indecipherable script of the leader of China. Perhaps you get a fan letter from a famous movie director or a world-renowned athlete.

Now try to imagine what it would be like to write a letter that would still be read 2,000 years from now. What kinds of information and advice would you include? What events would you want your ancestors to know about? What would you consider to be the most important things to leave behind? If you're like most people, the urgent things of everyday life would easily and quickly give way to the important things of eternity.

In the Early Church, two men were leaders in the establishment and development of the Christian Movement: Peter and Paul. In fact, most of the Book of Acts, which precedes the Book of Romans in the New Testament, is made up of discourses and speeches by Peter, "The Rock," and Paul, once Saul of Tarsus. You and I can worship the one true God in our home church each Sunday largely because of these two men. They kept "it" going.

If we can call the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) the "birth of the Church" and Acts as the "infancy of the Church," then the letter to the Romans might be considered the "adolescence of the Church." And that makes it immediately identifiable with you and where you happen to be on your personal journey. It's

a letter of identity crisis. It's a letter of finding a purpose. It's a letter of admonition and hope in the midst of turmoil and persecution. It's a letter to you about you.

The letter to the church at Rome is the first of Paul's 13 Epistles that we find in the New Testament. It was most likely written during his third missionary tour in the spring of A.D. 57, probably from Corinth, the church to which he wrote the next two books of the Bible, 1 and 2 Corinthians. The people at the Roman church were mostly Gentile--not Jewish, though there were a good number of Jews there as well. What Paul wanted to get across to that baby congregation more than any thing else was that the good news of Jesus Christ was for everybody. The covenant between God and humankind was not for the Jews only, any more than it was for the Gentiles only. No, the holy promise of God was for all people of all generations. God's plan for salvation and righteousness has always been universal.

Paul had two other reasons to write. First, he was preparing the way for his visit there someday

He truly wished to go there at this time, but he had to hand-deliver an offering he had collected on his journeys to the poverty-stricken church in Jerusalem. He decided to merge a trip to Rome with a later trip he was planning to Spain.

Paul's second reason for writing was to explain the relationship between the Jew and Gentile. You see, the Jewish Christians still felt bound to the liturgies and ceremonies of their ancestry; the Gentile Christians, therefore, rejected them from the fellowship of believers there in Rome.

Before we begin our study of Paul's letter to the Romans, chapter by chapter, verse by verse, you ought to take an hour or so to review this practi-

cal guide to salvation. When you get to a favorite or familiar passage, read it carefully again. Try to picture the face of Paul and the faces of his audience. How were they dressed? How did they wear their hair or walk along the dusty paths and paved roads of what were then considered the hub of the world? What had their day been like up to that point? What kinds of foods did they eat? What sounds do you hear? Can you smell the marketplaces or their homes? Enter into the scene fully

After this overview, complete the following statements:

Sometimes today's church seems divided between...

The fact that Paul was the first apostle who had not actually seen Jesus during His earthly life-time means...

If I could sit down with Paul right now, I would ask him...

The verse from Romans that hits me hardest today is...

If I had to summarize this letter in one sentence, it would be...

## 2. Overview

The first three chapters of Romans are “rich” (to use a Bible scholars term) and “thick” (to use a young Christians term), kind of like a good barbecue sauce. What is best about the entire book, however, is that it is written by a new Christian, although a brilliant one, and is full of excitement and enthusiasm.

Keep in mind that it is a personal letter to encourage the new believers in Rome. It is full of hope and also full of concern. Take about 30 or 45 minutes to read it carefully; there's no need to stop and study a hard verse or passage, however.

After giving it your best shot, answer the following questions:

Paul mentions the word “righteousness” frequently. What do you think it means?

What is Paul's overall tone in this passage?

What do you think was his main concern? What was he worried might happen?



If you had been a member of the church at Rome, how would you have reacted to the letter?

What “sentences” (punishments) did God pass down on these disobedient people?

### **3. God Goes Wrathin’ (1:1-32)**

The first 17 verses of this chapter seem pretty typical of New Testament letter writing: the introduction of the writer in the first 5 verses, the introduction of the audience in the next 2 verses, then his reasons for writing in the next 10 verses.

Then Paul cuts to the chase. The last half of the chapter portrays a God who is angry at people who simply fail to understand what it means to be under His sovereignty, His dominion. These people were going nuts.

After you have finished looking carefully at these 32 verses, answer the following questions:

What were two or three reasons Paul was writing the Roman congregation?

Look up the word “righteousness” in your biggest and best dictionary. What does it mean? Do you notice any differences between the dictionary definition and Paul’s assumptions?

Why was God angry or wrathful?

Be honest here. How does it make you feel to read about a God who gets mad and frustrated? What are some of your own frustrations with people?

### **4. God Judges Justly (2:1-29)**

Sometimes when we think of the term ‘Justice,’ we think of other words like vengeance and punishment and jail time. But justice is not always tragic. Just as frequently, justice is related to words like release and freedom and equality.

This chapter tends to balance the last half of chapter 1 with the positive aspects of Gods justice.

With verses, such as “To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life” (v. 7); “There will be ... glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good” (vv. 9 10); and “God does not show favoritism” (v. 11), Paul shows that Gods judgment blesses the good as bountifully as it damns the evil.

When you finish reading over these verses, answer these questions:

Make a brief chart based on Gods judgment, listing the blessings to the good and the damnations to the bad.

In what ways does the Roman world define 'Jew'? How does God look at Jews?

In verses 18-24, Paul describes some of the hypocrisy of the day. What specifically does Paul refer to? Are any of those still occurring today? If so, which ones? Describe one or two instances.

This chapter deals a lot with the inward part of a person that God sees and the outward part of a person that the world views. Think of a case where you have seen this kind of thing happening at school, the marketplace, home, or church.

### **5. Sin is Universal (3:1-20)**

These verses explain that nobody is better than anybody else simply because of birthright, heritage, culture, or theology. Basically he concludes by saying that everyone is equally guilty of sin: we're all Adam's race; therefore, we're all fallen sinners.

What is Paul's single measurement for contrasting God and people?

What steps could you take in the next 30 days to let others know that they are not alone? You know, you don't have to scream from the street corner to be an evangelist; you just have to be a friend.

# 2 AGAINST ALL HOPE

**STUDY SCRIPTURE:** Romans 3:21-5:21

**KEY VERSE:** “We boast in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.” (Romanos 5:2-5).

## TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. Gain a foundation of hope and joy and peace through their faith in Jesus Christ.
2. Understand the heritage of their faith through a glance back at Old Testament personalities.
3. Appreciate that the failures of life are the bases for spiritual growth and maturation.

## PERSPECTIVE

We live in a culture that rewards work; in fact we have developed a list of virtues that include that idea: work ethic, workaholic, work-week. When we meet someone for the first time, often the initial question we ask is “What do you do for a living?” This priority system that places work at or near the top has made us feel that our worthiness is bound to our “workiness.” We get what we deserve, and we value what we have earned.

That’s in part why salvation seems so foreign in a society that works for every thing. It is the one valuable thing in life that we can neither earn nor ever deserve. Salvation (although not completely synonymous, justification and righteousness are terms used similarly by Paul) is a gift. It is free. It is provided by mercy and grace. It has nothing to do with justice or any other contractual agreement. All we have to do in exchange is believe. Have faith. Trust that Jesus Christ “came at just the right time and died for us sinners.... And ... he has declared us not guilty” (Romans 5:6, 9, TIB).

In Romans 3:21-5:21, Paul brings forth historical perspective, theological understanding, and spiritual encouragement. Not bad for a relatively short passage, is it? He makes it clear that God loves all people equally and has provided all people equally with the means for reconciliation.

In respect to His love, it matters little to God if one is a Jew or a Gentile, a Republican or a Democrat, a Nazarene or a Catholic, an educated woman or an ignorant man. “This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe” (3:22).

This lesson might provide you some opportunity to discuss tolerance and open-mindedness with your teens. Because some media personalities insist on preaching intolerance and separation, this new generation of young people is

finding life simpler when they can divide humanity rather than unite it.

The heart of Christ, revealed in the Gospels and now explained in the Epistles, never divides and separates. Jesus' purpose was to see all people, regardless of political or personal agendas and labels, enter into the kingdom of God. Your teens need to know that, without question.

## **BIBLE BACKGROUND**

One of Paul's overriding purposes in writing this letter to the Romans was to explain the relationship between Jew and Gentile in God's overall plan of redemption. Perhaps because Jewish Christians were still following their traditions and laws, particularly on diet and worship, they were alienated by the majority of Gentiles in the Roman church. Therefore, Paul sought to bind them in a sense of unity and purpose.

Paul has been admonishing the church to forget the law as a means of finding God's grace: Jesus erased that need. In verse 21, he starts off with "But now ..." Scholars have suggested that there are two meanings to this phrase. The immediate or temporal meaning is that time is always divided in half, the "then-and-now" idea.

The second meaning is logical or theological, contrasting righteousness that was supposedly earned by legalism with the righteousness given by God through grace. Other references to grace in the Old Testament can be found in Genesis 15:6; Psalm 32:1-2; and Habakkuk 2:4.

Paul uses the term "justification" throughout this letter and others. It means that we are judged "not guilty" by God's grace. Furthermore, we are judged "righteous "or" made right with God," at the same time.

Justification is impossible apart from God and our faith in Jesus Christ, the Messiah and Savior. Paul says in verses 20, 21, and 23 that the perfect life cannot be had by human hands alone.

After all, we have been united by one thing in human history: we all sin. All of us. Every one of us. (Humbling, isn't it?) That means when we judge others unworthy of God's love because of lifestyle or bias or religion or color or anything else; we are placing ourselves in an inappropriate position of superiority. And piety has never been a key to the Kingdom.

However, and that is a big **HOWEVER**, even though you and I are sinners by birthright and by declaration, we can trust in Jesus and be declared not guilty and righteous.

See, what happens is this: Jesus lived the only perfect life ever lived. That is the key, really. His perfection is His righteousness. But He put all of that on the Cross for our taking. All we have to do is walk up the Place of the Skull, climb up that vertical beam, and declare ourselves followers of this perfect life. When we do that God adopts us as His children. We also inherit Jesus' perfection, His righteousness, and His eternal life with the Father.

The word "redemption" has an interesting history in this context, for it was the word used when a slave was bought out of slavery by someone who was willing to pay the price, that is, pays a ransom that would take the person out of slavery. The buyer got nothing, and in a capitalistic society like ours, paying a lot of money and getting nothing in return is frowned upon rather severely: We want something in return when we lay down the cash. But the buyer in a redemptive exchange is willing to walk away with nothing in his or her hands. The motive is to benefit someone or something else.

The last verse of chapter 3 is Paul's defense against antinomianism, which means literally "against law." He expected to be seen as a rebel against the Jewish law and discredited, if not arrested, for his teaching. So, he contends that he is not against the law even though faith, not the law, is the basis of justification.

The fourth chapter supports this point, much as a sermon illustration gives concrete credence to a pastor's message or a parable gives meaning to Jesus' teaching. Paul brings the Jewish patriarch Abraham into the mix. The Jews believed Abraham was justified before God by his actions, that is, what he did--but Paul states that Abraham, of all men, is a primary example of justification by faith. Verse 3 implies that Abraham had kept no law and completed no service and followed no tradition in order to win favor in the eyes of the Lord; he had simply "believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness" (4:3).

The whole discussion about circumcision in the verses that follow is simply to point out that Abraham is the father of both the Jews, by his position, and the Gentiles by his being justified by faith before Jews used circumcision as a sign of God's promise.

The next section, which reveals the inherent weakness of the law, takes an interesting spin when one realizes that law, by nature, is negative. It brings wrath because it reveals sin and, according to Paul, in some cases encourages sin. Sin still occurs when there is no law, but it has neither the artificiality of transgression nor humanity's judgment. This would provide an interesting discussion with your teens about the differences between crime and sin, things that are illegal and things that are moral. You might ask them to name some things that may be legal but are immoral, and things that are illegal but

moral.

Maybe because we live in the post-'60s generation when everything was distinguished by love and peace, or the lack of either, we tend to connect peace to "peace of mind" or some sort of ethereal good feeling. That may certainly be part of Paul's intent, for he talks about contentment as a positive aspect of Christian living (Philippians 4:11). But he is also intending for the word to bring in the idea of armistice or ceasefire, as when we are reconciled to God and the hostile behavior of seeing God as a dictator of law gives way to seeing God as a Father of love. Once we were enemies; now we are allies. Once we were aliens; now we are friends.

This new relationship brings joy, despite the tribulations and sufferings that are truly a part of life. There is no escape, but we can rejoice because we know there is purpose in our trials. We build character in our failures. Little character is ever instilled when life is easy and things are successful. Paul basically tells us that the bad things in this life teach us patience, which provides us integrity, which in turn, gives us hope.

Verses 12 and 18 of Romans 5 summarize the chapter: Sin entered through one man, and all were condemned because of that; now, sin has been conquered by one man (God-man), and all can find eternal life because of that.

## ENGAGE THE WORD

### *A Friend in Need Is a Friend Indeed*

Check any of the qualities listed below that you would find in your ideal friend. .

|                            |               |
|----------------------------|---------------|
| Loyal                      | Cool parents  |
| Trustworthy                | Smart         |
| Popular                    | Christian     |
| Sense of humor             | In good shape |
| Good looks<br>Nice clothes | Communicative |
| Great car                  | Athletic      |
| Honest                     | Wise          |
| Shy                        | Sincere       |
| Confident                  | Ambitious     |
| Dependent                  | Unpopular     |
| Caring                     | Non-Christian |
| Daredevil                  | Stable        |
| Class clown                | Quiet         |
| Consistent                 | Creative      |
| Independent                | Class brain   |
| Crazy                      | Rebellious    |

Now try to pick out the 10 most important characteristics of your ideal friend. What traits must this person possess to have a chance to make it into your address book? After you've made that list, try to put them in priority order, from the most important to the 10th most important, by placing a number from 1 to 10 next to it.

Be prepared to explain to your study group why some of these traits for a friend are so important to you. Finally, and this may be the hard part, what do you think your friends say about you? Or at least, what do you hope they say about you? Of all the qualities listed above, which ones do you think apply to you as you think of yourself as a friend? Should they appear in any order?

## EXPLORE THE WORD

### 1. Overview

Hope is a tremendous asset in life; it makes dark days seem a bit brighter and long nights a little shorter. It distinguishes the life of the Christian from the life of the world because our hope of eternal life with God, the Creator, sustains us in the difficult times and uplifts us in the good times.

Paul claims that our hope is centered and founded on our faith. He says things, such as “This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe” (3:22); “It was not through law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith” (4:13); “He did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised” (4:20-21); and “Grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (5:21). Remember, Paul had seen unwavering faith in Christ’s followers when, under the name of Saul, he was their number one nemesis and chief persecutor. He had approved and witnessed the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7) and had also condemned Christians to death. So he witnessed secondhand before he knew firsthand that a person’s faith in the unknown provides undying hope. Read through these verses, focusing most of your attention on those that relate righteousness and faith and hope, then jot down some responses to the questions that follow:

How do you personally define these three recurring words?

- Righteousness—
- Faith—
- Hope—

What are some things you hope will happen to you in your lifetime? This life?

Where do you see yourself in 5 years? 10 years? 25 years?

Why does Paul focus so much attention on Abraham in these verses?

Which verse(s) cause you the most confusion or questions?

### 2. A Pure Gift

What is striking in these verses is Paul’s insistence that God’s grace is made available through His Son for all people. And for the first time in the history of religions, this gift comes with no conditions attached. It’s not based on what we do, it’s based on what God does. It’s not something we earn by works or sacrifices—it’s something, in fact, that we cannot earn.

Eugene Peterson, in his New Testament paraphrase called *The Message* says, “Our lives get in step with God and all others by letting him set the pace, not by proudly or anxiously trying to run the parade” (3:26). What that means, of course, is that this has absolutely nothing to do with our gifts or faults and, therefore, is nothing for which we can take the credit. This is God’s doing, God’s “parade.”

After reading and studying this defense by Paul, respond to the following questions:

- What are some things you hear people boast about at school? At church?
- What do you think Paul is referring to when he claims “all have fallen”?
- What is the difference between a thing earned and a thing given?
- “Faith” and “trust” are similar words. What does it mean to trust and be trusted?

### **3. If Jeremiah was a Bullfrog, Then Abraham Was a Patriarch (4:1-25)**

This chapter of Romans sounds a lot like Hebrews 11 and Genesis 12-22, so it might be a good for you to take a few extra minutes here and read those verses about Abraham (you can skim through Genesis since its rather long) to learn why the Church considers him a patriarch.

Paul was telling the Roman church that fighting over God’s interpretation of this law or that law is futile and silly. Jesus changed all of that concern. Righteousness and heaven have nothing to do with where we live or how we worship or who our parents are. Justification is not a birthright—it’s a rebirthright. In order to emphasize his point that salvation is possible for everyone who believes, Paul raises the name that is perhaps second to only Moses or David in Old Testament reverence: Abraham.

When you’ve finished reading this chapter, answer the following questions:

What do Hebrews 11 and Genesis 12-22 say about Abraham?

What do you think is the most memorable aspect of Abraham’s life?

How do you define “promise” and what does a promise mean to you?



There are two kinds of “hope” mentioned in verse 18: first the hope of human possibility, then the hope in God. How are these different?

#### **4. The Joy of Peace (5:1-11)**

You know those mornings when you wake up and “all’s right with the world,” to quote William Shakespeare? Those are great mornings, aren’t they? All your homework is finished and polished and ready to turn in for an A+; all your car problems have been repaired and paid for; your job is going fantastic; the weather outside is perfect; you’re getting along great with your parents; you’re even going out this Friday night on a date!

*Life is sweet!*

That’s the kind of joy that comes with that kind of peace. When all things are reconciled, life is pretty joyful. Paul claims that “since we have been justified through faith, we have peace .... And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God” (v. 1). Because God has ended our hostility toward Him through the death and resurrection of His Son, we are again His sons and daughters, and all is right with the world.

When you have completed your study of these verses, answer the following:

What has been the time of your life when you seemed to be the most joyful? If you can’t think of the time, maybe consider a time.

What is one thing that seems to keep you from finding that “peace of mind” we’re talking about here?

What would it take for that one thing to be reconciled—to be made right?

Study these three versions of verse 11 and by contrasting them, see if you can come up with some consensus as to what they mean. What does each bring to your understanding?

“Not only is this [salvation] so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation” (NIV).

“Now we rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God—all because of what our Lord Jesus Christ has done in dying for our sins—making us friends of God” (TLB).

“Now that we have actually received this amazing friendship with God, we are no longer content to simply say it in plodding prose. We sing and shout our praises to God through Jesus, the Messiah” (TM).

### **5. It's Matter of Life and Death (5:12-21)**

As Adam was the first man of the Old Testament, Jesus Christ is the first man of the New Testament. Just as Adam brought about death and damnation through his sin against God, Jesus Christ brings about life and salvation through His obedience to God. Just as being born of Adam is our death sentence, being reborn through Christ is our life sentence. Just as Adam brought justice, Christ brings mercy. These few verses contrast Adam and Jesus (whom some writers of literature refer to as the “second -...3m” for perhaps obvious theological reasons). They demonstrate clearly the place and power of Jesus as the Messiah. Until He came, humanity was condemned. But His gift of mercy given graciously has transformed our lives of hopelessness and despair into lives of hope and joy and peace. As you now finish chapter 5, think on the profound truth of Paul's thinking and apply that to your own life.

We all know what it means to die physically. What does it mean to be dead spiritually?

Paul seems to make a distinction between those people who lived and died between Adam and Moses and those who lived and died between Moses and Jesus. Adam sinned against a specific command from God, then Moses was given 10 more commandments (you may have heard of those) by which humanity's sins were judged. Then, of course, Jesus gave us those commandments in two nutshells—Love God, Love each other. What do you suppose happened to those people who lived between Adam and Moses? How did they define “sin”?

How do you define “sin”?

How do your friendships in this life on earth provide a parallel to your relationship with God?

# 3 MASTER AND SLAVE

**STUDY SCRIPTURE:** Romans 6:1-7:25

**KEY VERSES:** “Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.” (Romanos 6:13-14).

## TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. Understand the differences between living right with rules, and living righteously (becoming “instruments of righteousness”).
2. Commit to a holy life dedicated to the Holy Spirits cleansing.
3. Recognize their own slavery to things of this world and to take positive steps in placing these things at the foot of the Cross.

## PERSPECTIVE

One of the recent and strongest criticisms of local newscasts is the focus of so many stories on the negatives of people’s actions—the crime, the negligence, the bloodshed, the selfishness, and the conceit. Every time we turn around, it seems that somebody is stabbing somebody else in the back, both figuratively and literally.

As almost a knee-jerk reaction to this crime and civil disobedience, society calls loudly and eagerly for more laws, more police to enforce those laws, stricter punishments for those who break those laws and quicker justice to make it all happen today. Unfortunately, it seems that the more laws we pass, the worse it all gets. It scares much of society to think about what the world will be like in just two or three generations if this trend continues.

We live in a world so bound to sin and law, that even after 2,000 years, the words of Paul in these two chapters of Romans seem foreign and almost dysfunctional. Yet when we study the meaning underneath and behind the words, we discover the liberating truth of their meaning. Through the blood of Jesus Christ, we can be loosed from the tyranny of sin and the condemnation of the law. We no longer have to live in fear that death will come before we can ask God to forgive us for the law we broke 30 seconds ago. No more do we have to see God as a Judge waiting on His throne for us to mess up. We don’t have to follow meaningless rules; we simply have to follow Him.

This lesson will reflect a God of undying and unwavering love, who longs to hold us close to His great heart, who weeps at our straying and leaps at our return.

## BIBLE BACKGROUND

Chapters 6, 7, and 8 are Paul's explanation of God's hope for man's purification, what we term the doctrine of sanctification. Because chapter 6 deals with freedom from sin and chapter 7 with freedom from condemnation, we will focus on those two chapters together before moving to chapter 8, which discusses life according to the Holy Spirit.

It is important to read the last couple of verses of chapter 5 before diving into chapter 6 in order to understand the context of the opening question. Paul's explanation of salvation by faith alone might bother his Jewish Christian readers who might believe that disregard of the law would lead to utter moral chaos. Their tendency to think this is understandable: the social and religious context that Paul was addressing had existed under the thumb of the law and its traditions and disciplines for 15 centuries. They thought Jesus might indeed have been the Messiah but weren't too quick to put all their eggs in one basket. Their line of thinking was based on three ideas: "perhaps we simply misunderstood the message of Jesus"; "maybe His message was a second tier of thinking to add onto our 15-century-old first tier rather than a new foundation that starts everything all over again"; or, perish the thought, "maybe this was a trick from the very beginning. Let's not jump too soon."

In Paul's time, baptism and conversion happened almost at the same time. That confused some into thinking that baptism was itself a means to salvation rather than an outer reflection of an inner transformation. However, because salvation occurred through faith, baptism was indeed a matter of faith.

The terms "glory" and "power" are placed side by side throughout the Bible: Psalm 145:11; Colossians 1:11; 1 Peter 4:11; and Revelation 1:6; 4:11;

5:12-13; 7:12; and 19:1. So when Paul claims in Romans 6:4 that "we were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life" (*italics added*), he meant by the power of God. The glory of God is His perfect nature, and Paul reasoned that any of

His traits are a manifestation of His perfect nature, therefore, of His glory. His righteousness is His glory. His mercy is His glory. His grace is His glory.

The "old self" of verse 6 refers to our pre-saved selves, our unrenewed selves, bound to our bodies of sin and degradation. And since our bodies can be crucified, then this old nature can also be "done away with," no more our master, no longer empowered to hold us down. Therefore we are free from that bondage and free to pursue righteousness. The death of Christ symbolizes and enables our death to sin. Further more, His resurrection represents the possibility of our living a new life of moral justification here on earth. Christ broke the connection between death and sin, rendering sin impotent against a person who is regenerated by His life.

Claiming victory over sin is a threefold process. First of all, the believer must "count" himself or herself "dead to sin but alive to God" (v. 11). It is faith in this belief that becomes the foundation of the new life "in Christ." This is one of Paul's favorite phrases, used throughout his letters. One who has "died with Christ" and been "raised with Christ" now lives "in Christ."

Second, the believer must discount sin's reign, no longer living under its mastery. Sin, which Paul continually links with law because it is the law that condemns, is certainly a power to be dealt with. Humanity is never completely free

of moral authority, but Old Testament legalism no longer applies. The law never gives a person power to resist sin; it merely condemns a person when he or she sins. God's grace, on the other hand, does enable one to resist sin.

"This justification by faith alone' is going to return us to the days of Sodom and Gomorrah. Immorality will reign. Without adherence to law, chaos will follow close behind." These were the thoughts of those who found fault with Paul's theology. Paul defends his point by suggesting that a Christian will never abandon morality; instead they trade sinfulness for a higher morality, namely, righteousness.

Slavery to God produces holiness, which, in turn, uniquely gives us eternal life. We become "slaves to God" by being reconciled to Him. When that occurs, we will exhibit holiness in our lives. Paul mentions holiness in many letters, including 1 Corinthians 1:30; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4, 7; 2 Thessalonians 2:13.

Paul concludes chapter 6 with the often quoted verse, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." This restates his point that by nature, people will enslave themselves to one master or the other. Slavery is based on legalism and works, during which, one can earn whatever life he or she gets. The other is based on grace and mercy, and the life received can never be earned and is never deserved—it is free. A gift!

This next chapter depicts freedom from the condemnation of the law. It is not hard to connect to Paul's rationale in this section. Not only does he relate it to the marriage relationship, but also he talks about things with which we are very familiar. The law, by its very definition, is built to catch violators. For instance, if there were no speed limits (hooray!), there would be no speed-

ing and, therefore, no radar detectors. The need for safety on the roads has brought about laws, which have brought about highway patrolmen, which have brought about fines and jails. More importantly, they have produced generations of persons who delight in testing the limits of the law and who concurrently possess the lowest bottom line of personal ethics: "If I don't get caught, I have done no wrong."

There has been a long-standing debate over the meaning of the last half of chapter 7. Is Paul talking about the non-Christian or Christian? Those who support the former belief point out verses 14, 18, and 24, in which Paul seems to point to the former nature. Those who contend he is referring to a Christian note his use of the present tense verbs, his humility, and his discussion of sanctification. Verse 14, which talks about being "sold as a slave to sin," reflects the difficulty even the Christian has to live up to the radical demands of holiness and the unrelenting perseverance of sin.

## ENGAGE THE WORD

### *It's Your Move*

Paul says in 6:16, "Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?" The Living Bible says it this way: "Don't you realize that you can choose your own master? You can choose sin (with death) or else obedience (with acquittal). The one to whom you offer yourself—he will take you and be your master and you will be his slave."

List three choices you are facing today. One can

be an everyday choice; one might be a life-direction choice; one might be a relationship choice. Under each one, list at least five “Pros” and five “Cons.”

*Choice:*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## EXPLORE THE WORD

### 1. Overview

The preceding section of Paul’s letter to the Roman church was about redemption and justification. How can we be saved? Now his attention comes to a deeper, more profound lifestyle in Christ—what the holiness scholars call sanctification. (You’ve heard of that, haven’t you?) He does so in three stages in the next three chapters: chapter 6 explains that we are no longer slaves to sin; chapter 7 tells us that the new “law of Christ” liberates us from the old law of condemnation; and chapter 8 shows us the awesome power of the Holy Spirit as He begins to set up house in our hearts.

In these two chapters of study; you will see antonyms (opposite words) like “life and death,” “sin and righteousness,” “slave and master.” Paul is contrasting what was before the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, the Son of the Living God, and what is after, using graphic language and concrete illustrations.

### 2. Dead

Read over these two chapters with a sense of freedom. Experience Paul’s enthusiasm and strong concern that the new Christians fully understand the gift they have been given through grace and mercy. Then answer the following questions.

- What is the most difficult concept or passage for you to understand?
- What word(s) seem(s) to stand out to you as you read these verses? Why do you think it sticks in your mind?
- Why is Paul’s illustration about the marriage relationship appropriate?
- If you were to write a hymn about the truths in these chapters, what would you title it? (How about writing the chorus to this hymn? The first verse?).

### 3. From One Slavery Into Another (6:15–23)

You’ve perhaps heard that chorus “Let Me Burn Out for You, O Lord,” extolling the virtue of spending all of your life working for the kingdom of God until there’s no more life to live or energy to be spent. On the surface, that’s probably a commendable idea that prevents us from “Rusting Out for You, O Lord,” because of our inaction. But as Tony Campolo says, “Hey, either way, burning out or rusting out, you’re out!” God does not want us to bum out any more than He wants us to rust out, drop out, or cop out.

That’s how this passage might be read as well: “Why should I trade in one slavery for another

slavery?” That’s a good question that you or a friend might have asked recently, and Paul does his best to answer that.

After you finish studying these verses, answer the following questions.

- What does it mean to be “weak in your natural selves” (v. 19)?
- What are some things on a daily basis to which you feel enslaved? (Chores? Homework? job? Coaches? That car?)
- When is basic obedience (to anything/anyone) easy? When is it hard?
- The final verse of this passage (6:23) is often quoted from the pulpit, isn’t it? As you have looked at it now for a few minutes in context, what do you suppose it means?

#### **4. To Have And To Hold (7:1–6)**

Now this is something most of us can understand, even though some of us are scared to death to consider that it might one day happen to us: marriage. Paul uses the marriage relationship and covenant as a sermon illustration to show us the deeper truth of Gods new covenant and loving relationship to us, His Church.

Despite its concreteness, Paul makes some really strong claims here, using words like “adulteress” and “bound” and “dies.”

As you study, consider these questions. After reading, jot down some of your immediate responses.

Jesus told parables to convey truth. Paul offers an illustration. Why do you think these figures of speech and writing work so well?

Think of words and marriage vows in the typical wedding ceremony that might have some bearing on the point Paul is making. List some and explain their relevance.

Take a moment or two to describe the “ideal marriage.” (You might use words like “commitment,” “understanding,” “communication,” etc.)

Now apply those same ideas to the “ideal relationship with God.” See what connections you can make between those two concepts.

Pause a moment and pray that God will help you commit to a strong friendship with Him and let that provide the foundation for your love relationships in your future.

#### **5. Torn Between Two Lovers(7:7-25)**

Do you remember when you were little and you heard rules, such as “You are not allowed to cross the street without an adult present”; “I don’t want you to eat any candy until after supper”; and “You will have to finish your homework and practice the piano before you can go outside to play”? Immediately that set up the boundaries of your behavior-which you tested at the first opportunity.

That’s the way it is with rules and regulations and laws. Now, you’re probably tempted to stretch the limits of car speed, of curfew, of length of work breaks. It’s in our rebellious nature to feel these strong temptations to break the rules.

Paul is dealing with that old nature as it contrasts with the new nature that seeks righteousness more than satisfaction, holiness more than gratification.

Read the verses and answer the following questions:

- What rules at your house seem the most difficult to follow or understand?
- Why do you suppose your school has set up rules of behavior for you to follow? What happens to those who break these rules?
- Paul admits his frailty; his humanity that probably sounds a lot like you: “What I don’t understand about myself is that I decide one way; but then I act another, doing things I absolutely despise” (7:15, TM). Has there been something recently that you have done despite the fact you despise it?
- Paul seems to answer his own question in verse 17 when he says, “It is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me.” Do you think that sounds a lot like Flip Wilson’s claim of the late 1960s, “The devil made me do it”?
- These last verses of chapter seven sound so real, so “today”--and so desperate! What might you say to Paul if he were sitting there with you today?
- Do you think that if the two great commandments of Christ--to love God and each other--were truly lived out by humanity; we would need any of our laws? What keeps us from behaving toward each other with love?



# 4 THE HEIR UP THERE

**STUDY SCRIPTURE:** Romans 8:1-39

**KEY VERSE:** “For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:38-39).

## TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. Comprehend the breadth, height, and depth of the love of God for them as individuals.
2. Release their pasts in order to grasp their spiritual futures.
3. Visualize a Heavenly Father who adores them more than any earthly creature could, including their own mothers and fathers.

## PERSPECTIVE

Chapter 8 is not only the physical midpoint of the Book of Romans but might very well be the fulcrum or the balancing center of Paul’s entire doctrinal treatise as well. What Paul has written up to this point lays the foundation for his primary point: “God loves you beyond your wildest dreams. Nothing you can do or say can separate you from the agape love of your spiritual Papa.”

And because God’s love never fails, life is full of eager expectations and anticipations that will keep us during the tempests of trial and trouble. Since He will never fail us or give up on us, we can rest in peace and eternal serenity. Paul anticipates his audience’s skepticism with several questions that might at first appear rhetorical but that he, indeed, answers with confirmation.

## BIBLE BACKGROUND

Chapter 8 is the conclusion to Paul’s three-point argument that through Jesus, our past lives of sin, death, and willful disobedience to the laws of God are in the history books. He has concluded the preceding chapter by declaring that he is at the end of his rope and begins this chapter with the great word of classical persuasion, “therefore.” It’s as if to say (in legalese), “Whereas party A is no longer under the tyranny of sin; and whereas party A is no longer condemned by the law; therefore, party A has been set free.” And to add a touch of Martin Luther King Jr., party A “is free at last, free at last, thank God Almighty, he’s free at last.”

The law brings about condemnation because it is bound to sin-bringing sin to our attention, perpetuating, sin, encouraging sin, and finally condemning sin. Just as human law seems to focus our attention on crime, the violation of the law, and the process of upholding the law, so does the Old Testament law focus on human sin.

But that is no longer the case, thanks to God. As we follow Christ to the Cross and participate in His resurrection, our lives are free in the Spirit, and that is simply downright exciting!

Paul uses the term “law” in several contexts in this letter. In this particular case it means “controlling power.” In 2:17-20; 9:31; and 10:3-5, Paul is referring to the law of God. In 3:21 he is referring to the first five books of the Old Testament and in 3:19 to the entire Old Testament. In verse 3:27 the law is a principle by which to live. Because the law brings condemnation, it brings death. Law cannot remove or eradicate sin any more than government legislation can remove or eradicate crime. It can stimulate it and point it out, but it has no power to erase.

This is not to suggest, Paul says in 8:4, that believers have nothing to do with the law whatsoever. It is still a guideline of behavior; still a moral and ethical measuring device. It simply is not to be considered as a means to salvation or reconciliation with the Father. It is to be obeyed but not out of fear of what might happen, rather out of love for what will happen through the Holy Spirit. This will fulfill prophecy: “This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,’ declares the LORD, ‘I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, “Know the LORD,” because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,’ declares the Lord. ‘For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more” Jeremiah 31:33-34).

The sinful nature is death and insubordination and hostility, all unacceptable to God the Father, just as it would be unacceptable in a home. But our lives have been re born, and our relation-

ships with God have been transformed to those of a Father with His children. We are not slaves or prisoners to our fears or the Old Testament law but joint heirs with Jesus, the Son of the living God. God has created all things, and with out Him was nothing made. His entire fortune is ours, as well as His agape love and compassionate care.

But this is no automatic thing. There is a true sense of volition (free choice) involved: we choose to become sons and daughters of God through faith and the giving over of our wills to His great will. We must be led by the Holy Spirit into this relationship that enables us to share in Christ’s Sonship and inheritance that are rightfully His alone. The original Greek language allows us to see that the phrase “if we share in his sufferings” in verse 17, is not a condition of inheritance but a statement of fact. Despite our current condition and present suffering, our faith assures us that we will participate in the inheritance. We are heirs!

The Christian’s life in the Spirit is not only evidence but also a promise. It shows in real life the salvation of a person and guarantees the future inheritance by creating a kind of deposit or down payment. If your last name is Jones, then not only do you bear that name as a testimony to your present ‘Jones-ness,” but it puts you in position to gain the Jones Estate one day. We are born sons and daughters of God, but only through salvation do we realize that included inheritance. This adoption comes in three stages: first, God’s original intention for the relationship; second, our present relationship as His children; and third, the Resurrection.

There are three reasons that no one can condemn the believer: first, Christ has already paid the price of condemnation and is our sacrifice or

“surrogate sufferer”; second, He overcame death and rose to sit at the throne of God’s grace and mercy; and third, He is our Advocate, pleading our case on our behalf.

## ENGAGE THE WORD

If we live long enough to make a choice in life, no doubt we have experienced this sense of regret and sorrow over a decision we have made. Paul tells us in this eighth chapter of Romans that we are given a new life with a clean slate. The old losses, sorrows, regrets are washed away, and we can start all over again.

- What is one major event in your life you’d like to live over again so that the outcome might have been different?
- What was involved in your decision to handle it the way you did?
- Looking back, what do you see now that you couldn’t see at that moment?

Now for some more thinking about that, here are the three primary responses Tony Campolo discovered in his survey as described in his book, *Who Switched the Price Tag?* Below each response, write out a brief description of how it might apply to your own life:

“I would reflect (think about things) more.”

“I would risk (dare to be different) more.”

“I would be sure to leave something behind after I am gone.”

## EXPLORE THE WORD

### 1. Overview

This is probably the most recognizable chapter in the entire letter to the Roman church. It is, remember, the culmination of a three-chapter explanation of the freedom we have in Christ Jesus, the risen Son of God: chapter 6 was the freedom from sin’s domination; chapter 7 was the freedom from the law.

Notice the first word of this chapter is “therefore.” You’ve probably heard the old saying, “Whenever you see the word, therefore, in Scripture, be sure to stop and find out what it is there for.” In a logical argument it signifies that a conclusion is about to be reached. What Paul has suggested in chapters 6 is that with freedom from sin and the law, we can conclude that life in the Spirit is ours for the asking.

The chapter is structured to show us the great trade-off that God offers us. All we have to do is die out to our old lives that were headed nowhere in the first place for a new life that will know no limits and no end. We are not victims of God’s wrath; rather, we are joint heirs with Jesus in the kingdom of God.

Before we get into deeper study of the entire chapter, read it over, and answer some of these general questions:

- What do you think is the most significant promise in these verses?

- Paul describes hard times and good times. What is one or two of each of those ideas from your own life?

- What is the life in the Spirit like to Paul?

## 2. The Spirit Of The Law (8:1-11)

Read the first verses of chapter 8, then answer the following questions:

- What is the result of the law of sin? What is the result of the law of the Spirit?

- What does our sinful nature desire?

- What does it mean to you to have the Spirit of life in you?

## 3. Obligations (8:12-17)

Sometimes out of guilt, we human beings tend to hold on to the remnants of the past with no real purpose. Those parts of the past do nothing but keep us from moving forward, reaching upward.

Paul tells us here that we owe those olden days absolutely nothing. The sooner we release the past and let it fall where it belongs, the sooner

we can start the adventure of living with God in the here and now. We no longer simply wait around for life to end and death to take over. Now we are on the expedition of a lifetime, celebrating each day with the question, “Hey, Dad, what you got planned next?”

Read over these verses, and see if you can’t feel the excitement and anticipation of Paul as he reveals his enthusiasm to the Roman church. Then answer these questions.

- It’s almost as if Paul says, “Listen, we have places to go, things to do.” What do you think he had in mind?

- Why do you think we sometimes grasp the past as if it’s our best friend?

- Briefly explain some of the characteristics of the following relationships:

Landlord and tenant

Doctor and patient

Teacher and student

Boss and employee

Father and son/daughter

- How does each resemble our spiritual relationship? How does each differ from it?

#### 4. Back To The Future (8:18-27)

Paul uses a very familiar analogy of the birth process. A mother and father wait and plan and prepare and fix up in anticipation of the big event. Then, when the time gets close, that same mother begins to experience labor contractions that would be so much more difficult to bear it if were not of the knowledge of what lies beyond the discomfort and work of giving birth: her new baby. So she suffers for the moment in order to celebrate forever.

That's how it is with our present life—the problems and suffering we endure are nothing compared to the glory that is to come.

Read through this passage; then answer the following questions:

- Ask your mother to tell you about the day you were born. That is how Jesus speaks of the day you were “reborn.”
- Given Paul's birth analogy, what new meaning might we see in the birth of Christ?
- How might some of the “nicknames” of Jesus be interpreted through this analogy?
  - Prince of Peace
  - Son of God
  - Lamb of God

#### 5. It Will Work Out (8:28-39)

This passage reiterates Paul's undying belief that our new relationship with God is one of Parent to child. Our Heavenly Father embraces us, holding us close to His great heart for as long as we allow Him. And nothing we can say or do will keep Him from longing to hug us. His love is agape love that needs no payback, no reciprocation.

In your own words, explain what you think Paul means by each of the following potential separators and why they have no effect on God's love for you (from verses 35-38).

- *Death*
- *Life*
- *Angels*
- *Demons*
- *Present*
- *Future*
- *Any powers*
- *Height*
- *Depth*
- *Anything else in creation*
- *Trouble*
- *Hardship*
- *Persecution*
- *Famine*
- *Nakedness*
- *Danger*
- *Sword*

# 5 THE ABCs OF SALVATION

**STUDY SCRIPTURE:** Romans 9:1-10:21

**KEY VERSE:** “If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. 11 As Scripture says, “Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.” (Romans 10:9-11).

## TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. See once again that the life, death, and resurrection of Christ divided time in half.
2. Understand the simplicity of the gospel.
3. Recognize their roles in the process of evangelism.

## PERSPECTIVE

After a detailed and well-organized classical argument in chapters 6, 7, and 8, Paul lets his emotions fly in chapters 9 and 10. He is not trying to convince his audience that his theology is true—he is pleading with them to accept it, willing even to die himself—if that would mean they will understand and apply it to their lives.

What makes this passage equally interesting is how Paul quotes nine prophecies from Hosea,

Isaiah, Moses, and David to support his points. It lends a sense of both urgency and history to his writing.

Much like the preceding chapters, Paul relies on the style of hypothetical question and theoretical answer to propel his theology through the details. It’s almost as if he is carrying on within himself a dialogue of two voices: that of his past as prosecutor/persecutor and that of his present as follower and apostle. He predicts the questions that skeptics will have and attempts to answer them satisfactorily.

These chapters provide a marvelous insight into the zeal of Paul. We have already witnessed his intellect and scholarship, but now we see those trails coupled with his heart. Simply put, “Christ has put an end to the law.” All we must do to inherit eternal life is confess, believe, and then evangelize.

## BIBLE BACKGROUND

Romans 9 begins with Paul wearing his emotions on his sleeve. “Oh Israel, my people! Oh, my Jewish brothers!” “I speak the truth in Christ—I am not lying” (NIV). “I carry with me at all times a huge sorrow. ... an enormous pain deep within me” (TM). We begin to understand the true depth of spirit with which Paul is writing the congregation of new believers in Rome. He doesn’t just believe what he’s writing—he feels

it. And writers know more than anyone that emotional writing is the most powerful kind of writing there is.

This passage seems to be directed more to Israel, the descendants of Jacob, than to the church at Rome—at least on the surface. Paul is more than likely pleading with those Jewish skeptics at Rome, using his knowledge of their history to address their questions and gain their respect. In Genesis 32:28, God tells Jacob, “Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with men and have overcome.” Judges 5:7 indicates the first time the word “Israel” was used to denote the entire nation. When the nation was divided after the death of Solomon, the northern half was called Israel and the southern portion was known as Judah. It was during the period between Old Testament times and New Testament times that the Jews in Palestine began to use the term to show their chosen nature. That is what makes Paul’s use of it in this passage so important—he seems to be showing that no matter how much they disobey, how little they believe, they still receive the promises of God as His adopted children: “Theirs is the adoption as sons” (9:4). “The divine glory” refers to the empirical evidence that God is here, dwelling with His adopted, living among them, supporting and upholding them through their tremendous suffering.

The covenants that Paul mentions in 9:4 have several reference points. First of all, there is the covenant with Abraham in Genesis 15:18-20. Second, there is the covenant with Moses in Exodus 19:5: “Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” This was renewed in Deuteronomy 29, Joshua 8, and 24. Third, there

is the Levitical covenant mentioned in Numbers 25:12-13: “I am making my covenant of peace with him. He and his descendants will have a covenant of a lasting priesthood, because he was zealous for the honor of his God and made atonement for the Israelites.” Fourth, there is the Davidic covenant found in 2 Samuel 7:8-10: “I took you [David] from the pasture and from following the flock to be ruler over my people Israel. ... Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men of the earth. And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed.” And finally the latest covenant, prophesied in Jeremiah: “I will be the God of all the clans of Israel, and they will be by my people.... The people who survive the sword will find favor in the desert; I will come to give rest to Israel” (Jeremiah 31:1-2).

The promises Paul refers to in Romans 9:4 are the many prophecies to be found in the Old Testament, including the promises to Abraham in Genesis 12, 13, 17, and (“The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel—which means, ‘God with us’”); Luke 1:35 (“The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God”); and John 1:1-18 (“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.... Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made”). Other Pauline statements can be found in 2 Corinthians 13:14; Philippians 2:6; Colossians 1:15-20; and Hebrews 1:3, 8; and then further New Testament verses are in Titus 2:13; 2 Peter 1:1; Revelation 1:13 and 22:13.

In Romans 9:6 Paul reestablishes God’s cov-

enants, making certain that his readers understand that God's Word has never failed, though Israel seems to be divided into Jewish believers and unbelievers. Though Jews are biologically descended from Abraham, that doesn't make them naturally sons of God, for that distinction is a matter of faith and not genetics. He illustrates his point with reference to Jacob and Esau, the fathers of the nations of Israel and Edom, respectively (vv. 10-13). Most Bible scholars believe Paul is referring to God's personal preference for Jacob over Esau, and not a national preference.

Paul seems to answer the question of God's seemingly arbitrary justice by again contrasting this with our difficulty in understanding the big picture. Omnipotent, omniscient God has the authority to be merciful when He chooses and to be condemning when He decides to be. We cannot question because we cannot comprehend. He even states in verse 20, "Who are you, O man, to talk back to God?" This may be difficult, at first, to understand, for most of us have had the audacity to ask God "why?" on many occasions. Paul does not seem to be ruling that out. What he seems to be referring to is a defiant questioning of God's character that would water down God's power and put it under man's microscopic evaluation. That, according to Paul, would blaspheme God and slander His character.

The illustration of the potter and the clay seems to demonstrate the merciful and gracious aspects of our Heavenly Father, not the judgmental, wrathful character. It seems it would go against the context and tone of Paul's letter to suggest otherwise at this point.

Chapter 10 begins with a powerful statement in verse 4: "Christ is the end of the law." There are

several interesting interpretations possible for the word "end." Most readers will at first believe it means eradication, erasure of the law—that the presence of the Messiah must, by definition and necessity, mean the absence of the law. But then there's that second meaning of aim or goal or mission (as in the phrase, "a means to an end"). "Christ is the goal of the law," or "Christ is the fulfillment of the law." That seems to be the most logical interpretation here, which is in harmony with Jesus' statement, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law

[the Pentateuch] or the Prophets [both major and minor]; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them" (Matthew 5:17). The word "fulfill" in Jesus' meaning was probably analogous to "obey." Even so, Paul seems to say that the law, though it still exists, no longer has full dominion over the Christian who has been freed from its condemnation.

During the baptism declaration, Paul says that the confession of "Jesus is Lord" is the first step toward salvation. "Lord" in this sentence refers to Christ's deity and control. The Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament's original Hebrew language, uses Lord (Greek) thousands of times to mean Yahweh (Hebrew).

So by calling Jesus Lord, one is in reality calling Him Yahweh or God. They are Father and Son, one in the same.

Salvation is not enough for the Christian, however, as Paul seems to indicate in verses 14 and 15. Evangelism would be the next logical step. Paul makes it clear that it is up to the Church to take the simple message of salvation to all nations: A messenger is sent by God to declare the Good News to those who will hear and heed its truth. "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" This is a direct reference to



Isaiah 52:7, which used the same adjective to describe the messengers who brought to the exiles in Babylon word of their release from captivity.

## ENGAGE THE WORD

### *Loving the Loveless*

Every community, every school, every neighborhood, and every church has someone or group of someone's who seem to be on the outside looking in all of the time. For some reason, they have been unaccepted and ostracized.

Did you know that Jesus Christ was one of those? Yep. In His day and in His society and at His church, He was the unwelcome guest at most occasions. They thought He was a blasphemer, a liar, a braggart, a malcontent, a deranged man. So they pushed Him aside and then marveled at the following He acquired outside their jurisdiction.

Whom do you know who is unloved or friendless? How can you begin to bridge the gap between that person or people and yourself?

### *Unloved and/or Friendless*

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.

### *The Bridge*

## EXPLORE THE WORD

### 1. Overview

Talk about an emotional outburst! If the previous three chapters of Romans were full of logical development and rational argument, these two chapters seem to spill out from Paul's heart as much as from his mind. He is longing for the Jews, Gods chosen people, to understand the simplicity of the gospel.

As he says in 9:3-4, "I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, the people of Israel. Theirs is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises."

The Message seems even more emphatic: "If there were any way I could be cursed by the Messiah so they could be blessed by him, I'd do it in a minute. They're my family: I grew up with them" (9:3). And then there are the cries of The Living Bible: "Oh, Israel, my people! Oh, my Jewish brothers! ... I would be willing to be forever damned if that would save you" (9:1, 3).

Do you get the point? Paul's beliefs have begun to merge with his feelings, and he means with his whole heart what he is saying. It should give us in the 20th century cause to listen to the weight of these words.

Paul entreats all of us to become evangelists in 10:14-15, asking four questions that point to that process. In sum, Christians are sent to preach so that the unsaved can believe what they hear and call on Jesus to forgive them.

Once you have finished studying all of this passage, jot down some of your reactions and responses to the following questions:

- Which verse or passage in these two chapters seems to give you the most problems? Why is it hard to understand or explain?

- What kind of God is Paul describing in these chapters? Which characteristic seems to be the most prominent?

- Paul seems to ask a lot of questions to keep his ideas moving forward. Which question have you heard yourself (or others) asking lately?

- Try to write the theme of these two chapters in your own words.

## 2. Captain, My Captain (9:1-18)

Have you ever played at the park with your friends when the idea of choosing teams has come up? Probably so—it's almost second nature to do that kind of thing eventually. Of course, the top position on any team, the one all of us dream of being, is captain because that person can choose who is on their team, who plays what position, who goes first and who goes last (and the captain almost always goes first), and who has to nm to the Coke machine to buy everybody something to drink when the temperature climbs above 100 degrees.

The hardest part about teaming up is being the choosee rather than the chooser, the pickee. If you're not very athletic or experienced, being the last chosen is just about the worst thing to happen because you know you'll be sitting on the bench or worse-sent to right field where the

ball is never hit.

Paul uses this type of analogy in the opening verses of chapter 9 in order for us to see that God is the Captain of the team. His sovereignty, His position, His almighty power propel Him to the top, and it is He, and He alone, who chooses what will happen, when it will happen, and to whom it will hap pen. Our role as His player is simply to trust Him and do what He asks.

Read these 18 verses; then answer the following questions:

- Why is Paul so emotional about the Jews?

- Paul brings the story of Abraham into his plea here. What purpose does that serve?

- Write down what you know about the “characters” in this story.

- o Abraham –

- o Sarah –

- o Rebekah –

- o Isaac –

- o Jacob –

- o Esau –

- Verse 18 indicates that God chooses to show mercy to some and not to others. Why do you think He does that?

### 3. Silumps of Clay (9:19-29)

One of the lines you've heard from your parents that you have probably vowed never to say to your own children is "Because I said so." Right? What that means is that "As your father or mother, my authority over you is not to be questioned." Yet we continue to do so because that seems to be our nature.

The truth of the matter is, your mother and father have been where you're going and know more than you do about what it will take in life to overcome failure and live with success. It's called wisdom, and that comes only through experience.

That's why Paul seems to be so strong with his language in these verses. God is omniscient—that means He knows everything. He has always known everything. He will always know everything. No matter how smart we get, how much experience we have, or how much knowledge we acquire, our finite minds will never be able to match Gods. Not even all of our minds put together will understand what He understands. It's as if we're ants and He's Einstein. More appropriately, it's as if we're clay and He's the potter.

Read these verses; then answer the following questions:

- What is another metaphor from your own experience/talents that parallels Paul's potter/day symbolism?
- Paul quotes four pieces of prophecy, two from Hosea and two from Isaiah. What does each mean in your own words?

- Have you ever talked back to your parents?

- Have you ever talked back to God? What were the circumstances? How was that different from what you described in the previous question?

### 4. You Gotta Believe (9:30-10:4)

It seems the older we get, the more comfortable we become in our ruts, repeating our routines day after day after dismal day. Some people eat the same breakfast every day, while others scoff at such bore-dom; yet they simply alternate eggs and cereal every other day. We tend to put our keys or our glasses in the same place every day, and if we don't find them there in the morning, we go ballistic.

Have you ever known someone to spend 5 or 10 minutes searching for his keys---only to suddenly realize he's been holding them in his left hand? Or someone who has turned the house upside down for her glasses-when they've been sitting on her nose the entire time?

That's really the way the Jews have been acting, according to Paul. They've been so deeply mired in their own traditions, in their own laws, in their own search for the Messiah; they haven't been able to see Him right in front of their very noses.

As you read these few verses, think about the following questions:

- The Scriptures are full of family language: father, sons, brothers, sisters, and so on. What does Paul's use of "brothers and sisters" in 10:1 imply?

- What is Paul’s “heart’s desire”?
- What does it mean for Paul to claim that “Christ is the end of the law” (10:4)?
- There’s an important play on words in The Message’s wording of Isaiah’s prophecy: “Careful! I’ve put a huge stone on the road to Mount Zion, a stone you can’t get around. But the stone is me! If you’re looking for me, you’ll find me on the way, not in the way” (9:33, emphasis added). What does that play on words mean?

Read to the end of chapter 10; then answer the following:

- When was the last time someone apologized to you and set things right? What were the circumstances?
- What does it mean to you to trust someone? To be trusted by someone?
- According to Paul’s quotation of Isaiah, why did Israel remain clueless about its role in the message of Good News?
- Is there someone with whom you need to reconcile, to set things right? What’s stopping you?

## 5. Setting Things Right (10:5–21)

It feels good to go to bed at night, knowing everything is settled with the ones you love. Conversely, when arguments remain unresolved or apologies go unsaid, insomnia often occurs. We are reminded in this last part of chapter 10 that God’s purpose in His plan of salvation is to set everything right, to reconcile and redeem. He sent His Son to make a path leading straight to His side. All we have to do is follow Him.

But some things in their simplicity are very difficult for some people to swallow. For people who have learned that righteousness comes from the way they obey the law, it is hard to believe that it can come by faith in Christ alone. It just can’t be that easy! Praise God, it is. All we have to do is claim Him as Lord and believe that God raised Him from the dead. “Anyone who trusts in him,” Paul says (10:11), “will never be put to shame.”

# 6 YOU ARE A BRANCH OFFICE

**STUDY SCRIPTURE:** Romans 11:1-36

**KEY VERSE:** “If some of the branches have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, 18 do not consider yourself to be superior to those other branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you” (Romans 11:17-18).

## TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. See that pride, conceit, arrogance, and vanity are antithetical to the spirit of true Christianity.
2. Become generous distributors of God’s bounty rather than selfish storehouses.
3. Understand their place in the process of salvation.

## PERSPECTIVE

One of the natural reactions to feeling rejected or left out is an overcompensation of pride. It’s almost as if we view the enemy attacking from outside, so we circle the wagons in order to protect our values and valuables. Psychologically; people tend to withdraw and seek shelter within

themselves when they feel threatened, thereby becoming alienated.

Conversely; sometimes it is our very pride that ostracizes us from the community. We feel as if we’re better than everyone else, or smarter or wealthier or more blessed. We see both individuals and groups of individuals with this sense of self-serving arrogance. Some nations call it patriotism when it’s little more than ethnocentrism. Some religious groups call it biblical interpretation when it’s little more than denominational fundamentalism.

Paul seems to sense this in chapter 11 of his letter to the Romans. He has been dealing with the Gentile-Jew relationship throughout the letter, but this chapter seems to be his strongest rebuke against keeping it going. Jews should not feel rejected by God because He chose to include the Gentiles any more than they should continue to reject the Gentiles for becoming a part of the family of God. We are all branches; he seems to say, even though some of us have been grafted into the family tree.

And once we are all parts of the “true vine,” according to John 15, our united purpose is to bear fruit for the kingdom of God.

## BIBLE BACKGROUND

Salvation knows no skin color. It knows no national allegiance. It knows no in come level or

welfare system. It drives no car and pedals no cart. It owns no bam on the hillside or mansion on the mountaintop. It feels no more of an obligation to one set of people than another. It closes the door on no one. It accepts all people, no matter their pasts, their sins, or their biases. Salvation is the one true “Rainbow Coalition.”

What Paul does in this chapter is explain away the logical fallacy called “either/or,” a fault in reasoning that narrows the possibilities of conclusion to two options and two options only: “Either it’s black or white; either it’s good or its evil; either you think like me or you’re wrong; either it’s round or it’s square.” Most of us know there are very few polemics like that in real life; usually there’s more gray area than anything else. It’s not a case of chosen or unchosen, rejected or accepted, broken branches or grafted branches, Jew or Gentile when it comes to the kingdom of God. For God, it is an open door for all who will believe and confess.

To establish the context of his answer to the opening question, “Did God reject His people?” Paul reminds his audience that he, too, is one of “his [God’s] people,” and as long as there is one remnant, the availability of grace is still present. God will not abandon His people while there are faithful people who will bow in recognition of His redemptive plan. As Eugene Peterson puts it, “God has been too long involved with Israel, has too much invested, to simply wash his hands of them” (Romans 11:2, TM). What had happened, according to the prophets quoted in Romans 11:8-9, is that most of the Jews sought to become righteous through a series of works and laws and good deeds. They believed they might earn favor in the eyes of the Lord by their own efforts. But when they didn’t get it, for it is impossible to gain such favor by works, their hearts became hardened, and God removed

himself from their sight and their sighs, thereby forcing them to look hard at themselves.

But God did not abandon them completely nor permanently: The breach in the relationship with Israel simply afforded entrance into God’s kingdom to the Gentile “to make Israel envious” (v. 11). The Jews are the ones who walked out, but they left the door open, and now the Gentiles are entering in, to the full knowledge--and chagrin--of the Jews. But Paul remains hopeful and optimistic, using the same language and tone Christ used in His parable of the Lost (Prodigal) Son. “If their leaving triggered this worldwide coming of non-Jewish outsiders to God’s kingdom, just imagine the effect of their coming back! What a homecoming!” (11:15, TM).

According to the footnote in the NIV Study Bible at this point, “The sequence of redemptive events is: The ‘transgression’ and ‘loss’ (v. 12) of Israel leads to the salvation of the Gentiles, which leads to the jealousy or envy of Israel, which leads to the ‘fullness’ (v. 12) of Israel when the hardening is removed, which leads to even more riches for the Gentiles.”

Paul mixes his metaphors in verse 16, the first half referring to bread from Numbers 15:18-21 and the second half referring to roots and branches from John 15:1-12. It is this second one that he develops fully in the verses that follow, though it seems either would apply to the kingdom of God. The first allusion has more to do with the offering of the first bread from the ground as a sacrifice of thanksgiving to God, thereby consecrating the whole batch. The “first-fruits” have come to mean the patriarchs or fathers of the faith, and the “whole batch” is Israel.

The second figure of speech establishes the growth pattern of the Kingdom that would in-

clude Jews (“branches”) and Gentile Christians (“wild olive branches”) that were grafted in. Paul’s readers would immediately have recognized his reversal of the normal routine. Usually a domesticated branch was cut in order to be grafted into a wild plant stem so as to multiply the yield. After all, the wild branches were unusable, so by grafting good branches into wild stems, more fruit would grow. What Paul was suggesting was taking wild branches and grafting them into cultivated stems, a rather unnatural and usually foolish effort. That was Paul’s point. With God as the vinedresser and Christ as the vine, this reversed procedure would yield a bountiful harvest unexpected by logic or tradition.

Paul seems to show the two sides of God in verse 22—His kindness and His sternness. Without the former, God would be a merciless ogre, waiting at judgment to throw His power around like some kind of maniac. However, without the latter, He becomes a blind Father, allowing chaos and disorder to reign. God is a Ruler of balance, demonstrating both mercy and justice, both praise and punishment. Just as our earthly parents balance their discipline, so the Holy Father looks first to be merciful. Through Israel’s ignorance and rebellion, they have fallen off the tree and are on the outside looking in—just as the Gentiles had been. But “if they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again” (v. 23). This is a brilliant maneuver of Paul’s mind, placing Jew and Gentile at once outside the will of God but equally eligible for salvation, for “God is able to graft them [both] in.” This makes God the Sovereign, the Merciful, the Vinedresser—while at the same time making both Jew and Gentile equally in need of His grace.

In Paul’s day there would have been a double

meaning to his reference to mystery (v. 25). So-called mystery religions promoted a revelation to the chosen alone, but Paul used the term a bit more universally. God had something concealed that He was now revealing to all people so that all could comprehend and follow. This something was the “Christ event,” including Jesus’ incarnation (1 Timothy 3:16), death (1 Corinthians 2:1-2), resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:51), and the consummation of all things, with the inclusion of both the Gentiles and Jews (Ephesians 3:3-6).

Verse 26 seems to be the culmination of thought for Paul in this chapter, emphatically asserting that this indeed is God’s plan to redeem all Israel and the Gentiles together, on the basis of a personal declaration of faith in Jesus Christ. Paul, we must understand, is not teaching universal salvation; he is simply claiming that salvation is universally available.”

## **ENGAGE THE WORD**

In a surprise that rivals any surprise that has ever occurred to you, a wealthy relative whom you have never met has left you \$1 million in her will. A MILLION DOLLARS! That’s \$1,000 a month for 1,000 months.

The trouble is, this gift has one condition: You must give 90 percent of it away in order to keep any of it. In the space below, list the people, groups, and/or places that would receive your generosity. Next to each name, list the amount and then explain why you have awarded that amount to that recipient.

What do you wish to do with that money?

## EXPLORE THE WORD

### 1. Overview

Romans 11 almost sounds as if Paul had just finished reading the Gospel of John over a cup of coffee, doesn't it? Especially John 15:5-8: "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples".

What does it mean to be a "branch," a "branch office"? Paul indicates it means nothing apart from God's grace and guidance. We might as well be wild olive branches, away from nourishment, sustenance, purpose, and harvest. But as we remain in him and him in us, according to John, we will bear much fruit. In other words, we will find purpose in our lives, becoming conduits of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Paul continues to hammer home the point of distinction between the chosen people of Israel and the Gentiles, here using the metaphor of grafting. Remember, he was writing primarily to his Jewish audience who had at once rejected their Gentile brothers and felt God's rejection. Paul unites both segments of the Church under the single idea that Jews are branches of God by inheritance and Gentiles are equal branches by grace.

Well, anyway, you gotta read this chapter. It's pretty rich and full. Once you complete the reading, try to respond to the following questions

- It would be wise for you to read John 15 at this point. What is the main idea you get out of those verses?

- Now try to do the same thing with Romans 11. What is Paul's main idea?

- Do you have a question from this chapter? Is there anything that interests you or confuses you?

- Do you know of anyone who would benefit a great deal by reading this chapter? What part?

- Why might the Jews have felt rejected?

- Why might the Gentiles be tempted to boast?



## 2. Remnants For Rent (11:1-10)

Can you remember how chapter 10 ended? If not, why don't you re-familiarize yourself with Paul's quotations from the Old Testament, specifically from David, Moses, and Isaiah? No wonder Paul feared giving the impression that God had spat Israel from His mouth.

That's why this chapter begins with a defensive stance: "Hey, people, I'm a Jew. As long as there's one Jew who believes, God will not throw out the entire bunch. You're safe." But Paul goes on to remind them that although they might be temporarily safe, they're not yet eternally saved—at least not until they have accepted God's gracious gift of mercy.

Because Israel had a history of burning down the altars and killing the prophets, "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes so that they could not see and ears so that they could not hear" (11:8; see Deuteronomy 29:4). But there is a remnant of Israel that will be preserved; and if a remnant is preserved, so shall the entire nation—once it understands God's gift of salvation by faith.

After you read these verses, answer the following questions:

- What is a remnant?
- Have you ever felt like the last vestige of hope, the only person with a clue, the lone voice of reason? Describe the setting and what that felt like.
- Look up 1 Kings 19:10-14. What was the situation confronting Elijah?
- What had Israel "sought so earnestly" but "did not obtain" (v. 7)?

## 3. Sharing The Sap and Staying Alive (11:11-24)

This section of chapter 11 is probably easier to understand than the opening section; sermon illustrations and parables often are because they put abstract truth into understandable concrete terms. In this case, Paul used word pictures that his readers could comprehend.

Whereas we might today understand metaphors using personal computer jargon or television program lingo or street slang, the people of Paul's generation knew about agriculture—that was their livelihood. They had to know how to sow and grow and reap in order to stay alive. So for them, Paul's use of branches and sap and grafting was easy to grasp—perhaps easier for them than for us.

Before you read the passage listed, read over these questions to get some ideas of what to be looking for. Then once you have completed the reading, write down some of your thoughts.

- In Paul's illustration, what represents the Gentiles? And what represents the Jews?

- What is their “botanical” relationship to God?

- What is the difference between being a natural branch and being a grafted one?

- God is described as both stem and kind. What would a parent be like if he or she possessed only sternness? Only kindness?

- What might the significance of the olive tree be? (See Genesis 8:11; Judges 9:8; Jeremiah 11:16; Zechariah 4:3; and Revelation 11:4.)

- In what situations do you feel like an adopted member/friend/child, like a graft?

#### 4. God's Open Door Policy (11:25-32)

God never closes the door to His throne; it always stays open, and He is standing there to welcome all who will come to Him. It truly is like Jesus' parable of the lost (prodigal) son. As long as God is holding the door open for the Gentiles to come in, the once-hardened Jews can also come in. It's the same door. It's the same entrance. It's open to all.

There's a famous painting of Jesus standing at a door and knocking, which depicts a seeking Christ. At the entrance to our hearts, asking for permission to enter. That is an appropriate representation of the gospel, to be sure. Yet that is only half the story: God also has a door to His kingdom; the major difference between the two doors is that while ours often remains closed and bolted tight, God's is swung wide open for all, forever.

After you finish these verses, answer the following questions:

- What is it that keeps some peoples doors (hearts) closed to the gospel?

- What does God's open-door policy tell you about His kingdom?

- Through God's providence, all people have been “on the outside, looking in”-the Gentiles first and now the Jews. Why do you think it happened that way?

- Have you ever been locked out of some place (your home, your car) you felt as if you belonged? How is that different from being locked out of some place where you don't belong?
- Paul seems to ask here, "Is there anyone around who can explain God?" (TM). Hasn't Paul been attempting that very thing? What do you think is going on here?
- Have you ever felt locked out in a psychological or emotional way, excluded from a group? How did that make you feel?
- Let's say you're in a position to explain God's plan of salvation to an unbeliever. What would you say?

### **5. The Man With The Plan (11:33-36)**

These four verses are called a "doxology." They are Paul's praise verses that thank God for His masterful plan of salvation for all.

After you read these final verses, answer the following questions:

- Where do you see people today pretending to "know the mind of the Lord"?
- Why do we sometimes think if we give God our tithes and some extra offerings, we can earn His bounty? We might even expect something from Him in return.

# 7 LIFE IN THE NARROW LANE

**STUDY SCRIPTURE:** Romans 12

**KEY VERSE:** “Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” (Romans 12:1)

## TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. Fully comprehend what it means to live “Christianly” in a worldly society
2. Equip themselves with practical lifestyle admonitions and habits.
3. Become members, brothers and sisters, and soldiers in and for God’s kingdom.

## PERSPECTIVE

One of the fastest growing markets in the publishing world today is the genre of self-help books. Focusing on the power of the human spirit to remake itself so that life seems smoother and richer, these books pretend to show the reader the way to a meaningful life. Many of them, on the other hand, that center on Christ’s teachings certainly have merit, to be sure.

Among the more successful writers in this field is Robert Fulghum, who wrote a best-seller titled “All I Really Need to Know I Learned in

Kindergarten” (New York: Ivy Books, 1993). In it, he summarizes his philosophy of life with the simplicity of a five year-old’s way of thinking: Share everything. Play fair. Don’t hit people. Put things back where you found them. Clean up your own mess. Don’t take things that aren’t yours. Say you’re sorry when you hurt somebody. Wash your hands before you eat. Flush. Live a balanced life. Learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some.

When you go out into the world, watch for traffic, hold hands and stick together. Be aware of wonder. Remember the little seed in the plastic cup. The roots go down and the plant goes up and nobody really knows how or why, but we are all like that.

This is the type of writing we find in the 12th chapter of Romans, one of the most sermonized chapters of the New Testament. Paul lays down his philosophy of life as a follower of Jesus Christ. Along with the Ten Commandments and the nine Beatitudes, these admonitions give us simple yet profound habits of Christian behavior that are centered on fairness, appreciation, love, and harmony.

## BIBLE BACKGROUND

Just as chapter 8 seems to be a logical conclusion to the immediately preceding chapters, chapter

12 also begins with the same word, “therefore,” indicating that a culminating, consummating thought is about to follow. Paul eloquently sets forth a series of exhortations that echo the words of Christ himself: sacrifice yourself; give yourself; love one another; fight evil with peace-words Paul will hear echoing in his own heart as he later faces prison and persecution.

Paul began this series of thoughts on practical Christian living in chapters 6, 7, and 8 really, but now he becomes simpler and more concrete in his admonitions to live like Jesus. It would be good for you, and then for your students, to reflect for a few minutes or a few days on the simple life of Christ. What did He teach with His words? How did His life reflect that teaching? What was the response of His 12 disciples? Of the crowd that followed? Of the skeptics that plotted His death? What does it mean today to be a follower of the Christ, to live “Christianly”?

Chapter 12 says that believing is step one. Faith is the foundation. But it takes behavior modification-good deeds, loving lifestyles, sacrificial thinking, days of peace, and nights of prayer-to show the world the narrow way to Gods kingdom. Obedience is the key. To that end, Paul seems to divide his advice into four parts: the Christian as a sacrifice on the altar, as a member of the body, as a brother in the family, and as a soldier in the battle.

The first two verses of the chapter describe holiness and sanctification in a nutshell. Eugene Peterson says it this way: “So here’s what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life-your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking around life-and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don’t become so well-adjusted to your

culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You’ll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you” (12:1-2, TM).

Believe. Confess. Sacrifice. Those are Paul’s three steps toward righteousness. Note that all of this, however, was initiated by Gods mercy, which Paul has spent the previous 11 chapters describing and defining in great detail. It was God who loved us first; changing the way we live day-by-day is only a natural response to His reaching down to us. Paul had already alluded to this “offering” in 6:13, “Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.” And unlike the sacrifices of dead animals in the past, now we offer ourselves as living sacrifices with new life in Christ Jesus.

Paul’s second division begins with a reminder that we are to humble ourselves not only before the throne of God but also before one another. “Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought” (v. 3). When we consecrate our lives to God, we also become servants to His Church in building His kingdom. Just as the leg and arm serve the body in conjunction with each other, and just as the eye and the ear provide warning together, and just as the brain and heart sustain the body with equal importance, we are all to work together for His grander purposes.

All power is given by God to each of us in order that we might fulfill the variety and breadth of His calling in ministry; therefore, none of us

can feel better than another or more powerful or more favored. The power is His, not any single individuals or groups. That speaks to our denominational pride and piety today. There are some Christian groups promoting their way of thinking as the only way to the Kingdom, dismissing other groups as erroneous or disobedient. Paul seems to be talking to us to day; saying, “We are all in this together, and as soon as we find ourselves serving our own motives and agendas, we have strayed from Gods overall plan. We must cooper ate, not compete!”

Furthermore, within many individual fellowships, there is unchristian bickering and jockeying for position, much like James and John in the 20th chapter of Matthew. There is no superiority complex allowed in God’s work, Paul emphasizes here. The body is too fragile to withstand such individualism. Imagine the mouth saying to the ears, “I will destroy you with my power. There is no room for the both of us. Get out.” What good will the mouth be without ears to hear?

After Paul establishes this line of reasoning, he promotes several of the ministries available in the Church. In this, he is giving each member a position of equal importance. Each of us can serve no matter how public or private our “gift” might be. Whether or not it is noticed by other people is irrelevant; it matters only that God can see it working for Him. So if you bake cookies well or write well or pray well, do those to the glory of God even though few people notice. And if you have the gift of speaking or leadership or instruction, where by definition people will know about it, then do those things also to the glory of God. Nobody is unimportant or more important in the kingdom of God: “Who-soever believes will have eternal life.”

The third section of Paul’s teaching is a list of

Christian imperatives. It would be significant simply to list the verbs he uses:

- Love
- Hate
- Cling
- Be devoted
- Honor
- Keep fervor
- Serve
- Be joyful
- Be patient
- Be faithful Share
- Practice hospitality

Now complete each admonition with your own words that reflect your own world. How might God be speaking to you about loving, hating, clinging, and so on? Pray that He will give you the strength, grace, and wisdom to complete His ministry in these areas. This love Paul speaks about is a brotherly love, a social action love, a do something-for-somebody love. It is the Holy Spirit that provides this kind of fervency, renewing the soul and mind daily.

Perhaps recalling his words in 5:4, Paul repeats the thought that tribulation brings about patience here in Romans 12:12. It is our hope of eternal life in heaven with Jesus that sustains us in the dark times of our lives, and it is that hope that gives us patience to endure those struggles. Minna Antrim once wrote: “To be loved is to be fortunate; to be hated is to achieve distinction.” It is part of being a Christian to be hated, to be persecuted by the world. Until we are willing to

do that, we may be playing Christian rather than praying Christian.

The final passage in chapter 12 concerns the “battle” we fight as Christians who will be persecuted for our beliefs. Repeating Jesus’ words in his great sermon, Paul says that we are to answer curses with prayers, hatred with love, blows with blessings. We can win the war only if we fight evil with good; to do otherwise is simply to perpetuate the world’s folly. Therefore, pride has no place in the battle. Self-serving attitudes have no place. The Kingdom will not be served by returning wrongs for wrongs. Harmony in music can only be achieved when one voice carries the melody and the other voices support with complementary tones and rhythms. So it is in the holy lifestyle: God sings the melody of love, and we must support Him and others with our attitudes and actions. Jesus blesses those who live in peace (Matthew 5:9). As His followers, we are to plant the seed and reap the harvest of peace as far and often as we can. That means being the first to apologize and the last to point fingers of blame. It means working just as hard when someone else will get the credit, as we work when we get the praise. It often means anonymity and neglect in this life, but think of the treasures we are sending to heaven!

## ENGAGE THE WORD

### *The Gift of Gifts*

Your church is celebrating its anniversary with a huge party and gift exchange, but you have no idea what you can bring that anybody might want. Your wallet is flat most of the time; your attic is full of nothing but junk; and you don’t even wear some of the clothes hanging in your closet. Then a great idea hits you. Instead of giving clothes or toys or appliances at the party,

why don’t you offer your talents to one another?

Here is a brief list of people in your congregation and their personal gifts. Why don’t you help them out a bit and make a suggestion on how they might use their talents for someone?

- Mrs. Wright has the gift of hospitality.
- Mr. Lawlor is a great speaker.
- Stan is generous.
- Sally Mintor loves to write.
- Same likes to work outside.
- Your mother paints.
- Mr. Fudgekins is a pastry chef.
- Marty loves cats and dogs.

Now list those in your group with each of their talents, and make similar suggestions.

## EXPLORE THE WORD

### 1. Overview

Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) clearly communicates that anyone who wishes to follow Him would have to change their lifestyle. Matthew 7:13-14 records His words: “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it” (italics added).

The Jewish people had traditionally built their values and ethics on a system of rules and regu-

lations that were based on what was then known as the Law, the “Pentateuch” (the first five books of the Old Testament), specifically the Ten Commandments. Jesus explained that Law in different terms, laying out the life of the Christian with nine Beatitudes and several admonitions that followed. In the 12th chapter of Romans, Paul gives us a list of practical imperatives that echo Jesus’ instructions for the life of the New Testament Christian.

If someone were to ask you, then, what it means to be a Christian or how one might live the Christian lifestyle, you wouldn’t have to go much farther than Romans 12 and Matthew 5-7. But this chapter is more than a capsule summary; it is a terribly strong statement of practical theology that has been the subject of thousands of sermons and dozens of books. And in many ways, it has become one of the true hinges of the “narrow gate” that Jesus mentioned.

After you read it thoroughly, take a few minutes to consider the following questions. Write down some of your initial thoughts. Then after a day or two, come back to these questions, and see if any of your first reactions have developed into some deep convictions and commitments.

That logical argument is frequently built on a syllogism, a three-tier statement that begins with a major premise, then goes to a minor premise, then ends with a conclusion that begins with “therefore.” (Example: Major Premise-“All students hate to get up early.” Minor Premise-“You are a student.” Conclusion-“Therefore, you hate to get up early.”)

Note that Paul begins this chapter with a “therefore.”

Looking back over the preceding chapter or two, what do you think were the major and minor

premises?

Major Premise-

Minor Premise-

In a couple of sentences, try to paraphrase this chapter.

- Which lifestyle command seems the most difficult for you to understand or to live? (Have you prayed for guidance on this matter?)

- Paul uses the metaphor of the physical body to describe the Church. Why do you think that is an appropriate parallel?

- What question do you want to ask when your study group gets together?

- What are your favorite and least favorite verses in this chapter?

## 2. The Christian As a Sacrifice on The Altar (12:1-2)

When Paul commands his readers to consider this life nothing compared to the life to come, he has in the back of his mind the sacrificial lamb of the Old Testament. This concept was made profoundly personal in the death of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and just a few years prior to Paul’s words here.

One of the most difficult things for a person to do is to become a stone in a stream. You’ve prob-



ably seen rippling brooks, haven't you? You know that it is rocks that cause those ripples, and when those rocks are big enough, they can completely redirect the flow. Paul is calling us to be change-agents in the river of life. We are to stand up and stand firm for the gospel.

Read over these two powerful verses two or three times; then answer the following questions.

- What does it mean to you to become a “living sacrifice”?

- How does your world put pressure on you to “conform”?

- For each of those pressures you have just listed what specific steps might you take to be “transformed”?

- The phrase “the renewing of your mind” can be appropriately translated “the renewing of your will.” How does that change your interpretation?

- What are some differences between a life “pleasing to God” and a life “pleasing to the world”?

### **3. The Christian As a Member of the Body (12:1-8)**

In a work he titled “Meditation Seventeen,” 17th-century English Anglican priest and poet John Donne penned those famous words, “No man is an island.” He went on to say that we are each an integral part of the human race, not isolated beings doing our own thing. In fact, he claimed that when one person dies, it's as if “a

page has been torn from the book,” implying that the book becomes a bit more incomplete as each person dies.

Paul alludes to that same idea in these verses. The Body of Christ, the Church, is completely dependent on the full functioning of each of its parts. Have you known anyone who has lost a valuable organ or limb through amputation, paralysis, or surgery? Life for that person is never the same, is it?

But it's more than merely the presence of each body part that makes the Church go—it's the work and function of that body part that is necessary for the Church to grow. As each part of the human body has a specific role and purpose, so, too, does each part of Christ's Body in the work of His Father's kingdom.

As you read these verses, reflect on these questions.

- For each of the “gifts” (roles, purposes) listed, name someone you know who possesses or fulfills it.

- o Prophecy (proclaiming the Truth of Scripture)*

- o Service Teaching Encouraging*

- o Contributing to others' needs*

- o Leadership*

- o Showing mercy*

- What do you think is your “gift” in the Body

of Christ? (You can refer to Paul's list, but don't limit yourself to it.) What role do/can you serve in the Church?

- What does it mean to you to be a member of your local church or Bible study group?

- Read Ephesians 4:11-13 and 1 Corinthians 12:4-12 right now, and see what insights you gain about this idea of "gifts." Write them down here?

#### **4. The Christian As Brother and Sister in the Family (12:9-13)**

All of us are (or have been) a part of a family. Most of us have belonged to a club or committee at school or church. Some of us have played on athletic teams. We know what it means to cooperate and complement (that's complement with an e) one another in order to gain a prize or reach a goal.

Being a single individual among many with a shared purpose means that we make the good of the group our top priority. That, frankly, sometimes means personal sacrifice. We don't do something we personally want to do because it would delay the goal or derail the method. We do something we personally would rather not do because it means our group will get to where we're going that much more quickly or effectively.

That's what Paul is talking about in these verses. Being in the family has benefits and sacrifices. After you read over this passage, answer the following questions.

- What is the hardest part of being a member of a family?

- What is the greatest benefit of being part of a family?

- Which groups have you been a part of that have done something productive and meaningful? Describe how it worked.

For each of the imperatives listed in these verses, write down at least one practical way you might provide that this week.

- Hate evil
- Cling to good
- Be devoted
- Honor one another
- Never lack zeal
- Serve the Lord
- Be joyful
- Be patient
- Be Faithful
- Share
- Practice hospitality

## 5. The Christian As Soldier in The Battle (12:14-21)

“It’s a big world out there”. “Nothing worth having comes easily.” “You value what you earn.” “Nobody ever said life was fair.” “It’s a war out there.” “Drive defensively.”

Any of those sound familiar? Parents say them to their children all the time-not out of spite or ridicule, but out of wisdom and compassion. Moms and dads simply want to prepare their children for the reality of life outside the fortress of family. In contrast to the world’s unfairness and cruelty; our homes become the havens of rest and protection we need so desperately. Not to sound paranoid or anything, but many times life is unfair. The world is huge. People sometimes are out to get us.

Paul attempts in these verses to equip us for battle. He would further develop this idea in Ephesians 6, but here he virtually paraphrases the Beatitudes with a list of “Be Attitudes” that will distinguish us from the world. When the world hands us lemons, we will make lemonade.

Spend some time with these verses, then answer the following questions.

•Which of Paul’s commandments is hardest for you to live up to?

• Look back at the opening of the 5th chapter of Matthew, Jesus’ Beatitudes, and see if you can find a parallel thought in Paul’s teachings here.

- Blessed are the humble.

- Blessed are those who mourn.

- Blessed are the meek.

- Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.

- Blessed are the merciful.

- Blessed are the pure in heart.

- Blessed are the peacemakers.

- Blessed are those who are persecuted.

- Blessed are the insulted.

• Paul spends quite a bit of time developing this idea of how to treat our enemies. What does he say about that?

• Name one of your enemies here. What would be the vengeful thing to do? What would be the Christian thing to do?

# 8

## IT'S TIME TO WAKE UP

**STUDY SCRIPTURE:** Romans 13:1–14:23

**KEY VERSE:** “The hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.” (Romans 13:11)

### TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. Appreciate the differences that exist between individuals and groups of people.
2. Tolerate rather than condemn those people who believe differently.
3. Feel a need to become united in love rather than separators by hate

### PERSPECTIVE

The God of mercy shown to us through the life of His only Son, Jesus, is not a God of strife and unrest. He does not separate us into meat-eaters and vegetarians, Sunday-Sabbath advocates and Saturday-Sabbath advocates. The God of the New Testament is glorified in our unity, in our peaceful cohabitation, and in our love for one another. No one glorifies God by judging others as unworthy or unchristian.

In this day of terrorism and discord, it has become all too easy for the Church to jump on the bandwagon of protesting what it deems as the

wrongs of society rather than building bridges of brotherly love. We seem much more concerned, at times, in keeping evil out of our spiritual fortresses (sanctuaries) than we are of inviting sinful people in to meet the Master.

Pray now that the Lord will prepare your heart and purify your thoughts as you lead your group deeper into the Word and world of God: the world of submission, agape love, tolerance, and peace.

### BIBLE BACKGROUND

Paul has just finished telling his readers that they [we] are not to practice vengeance and evil. In fact, it is not good enough simply to ignore wrongs committed against them [us]. Nor is it enough to forgive and forget those wrongs. They [We] are to go out of their [our] way to return good for evil—that means they [we] are actively to seek methods of confronting their [our] enemies and offering favor in return for their disfavor. It's radical sociology and it's divine theology. Now he begins this chapter with another hot potato of human behavior: the relationship of the Christian to the governing authority

Paul uses a word that he uses many other times—"submit" (13:1). In 1 Corinthians 16:16, he says, "Submit to ... everyone who joins in the work, and labors at it." In Ephesians 5:22 and 25, he uses it to describe the marriage relation-

ship: “Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord.... Husbands, love your wives just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.” What it boils down to is a lowering of individual will to the will of the corporate body; in this case, the governing authorities who happen to be the civil rulers of Rome.

The temptation for Christians today, and certainly for the new Christians at Rome, is to despise the rulers of this world in order to throw all allegiance to the Ruler of the next world. It is all too obvious when reading the headlines that there are several groups in our society who claim to know and follow God but are at war—sometimes literally—with the governing authorities. Paul was well aware of the pagan rulers but still believed that their government by its mere existence was in some way ordained by God and should, therefore, be respected and obeyed.

This principle can be somewhat confusing to your teens (not to mention their parents and grandparents) when they see a government that seems in many decisions to counter biblical teaching. It brings to the forefront several controversies that are thrust into that never-never-land between morality and legality: what is right versus what is allowed.

Think of those issues that pervade our informal conversations and formal dialogues and of the role of the individual Christian and corporate Church for dealing with governmental breaches of biblical teaching. When Jesus tells us to “turn the other cheek” and the government tells us to “shoot the enemy between the eyes,” which voice do we heed? Is conscientious objection to war wrong? Is going to jail rather than going to battle a sin? When Jesus commands us “not to sue our brothers” and the courts nearly force us to countersue in order to stay out of bankruptcy,

which voice do we heed? If a church were to be sued by a greedy landowner, is it wrong to countersue in order to keep the doors to the sanctuary open? When government spends billions of tax dollars in endeavors that have little moral basis, or worse, have an immoral basis, should Christians continue to contribute to the general funds that support that kind of research?

Many of today’s social problems stem from the fact that technology is going faster than our morality can keep up: genetic engineering, euthanasia, surrogate motherhood, and so on. Where does the Bible address any of those specific problems that continue to face us? Talk to your group about some of these questions and seek their opinions and judgments. What goes into the decisions they are making, or have made, concerning these issues?

Paul spends the next section talking about love, one of his favorite topics. The first seven verses of the chapter may seem controversial, but there is little debatable in the next seven verses. “Love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law” (v. 8). Paul repeats what Jesus said to the Pharisees as they sought to entrap Him in His own words before His crucifixion:

The greatest commandment is “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’” (Matthew 22:37-39).

Both Jesus and Paul satisfy the Jewish need to follow the Ten Commandments by capsulizing them in these two. In looking at the Ten Commandments, it is somewhat easier to see that the first four deal with our relationship with God, and the second set of six deals with our relationships with each other. (One interesting exercise

is to rewrite the Ten Commandments into the Ten Commitments, changing the second person address, “You shall [not] ...,” into “I will [not] ...”)

To love someone is the one debt that has no final payment attached. We will never complete that bill, for no matter how long we have loved another, no matter how many times we have forgiven another (even 490 times), no matter how many times we have needed to be forgiven by another, we are under obligation by the mercy of God to continue loving and forgiving and asking for forgiveness.

This is not simply for those we know; we are to love in all social settings, for it is our social as well as personal responsibility. Our neighbor is anyone in need (see the story of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37), whether we know that individual's name or not, whether he or she lives next door or in the next state, whether we owe this person one or not.

Paul reiterates the urgency of the moment from other passages in the New Testament: “When the Son of Man comes in his glory; ... he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. ... Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat... Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat.’ ... whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me” (Matthew 25:31-45). And from Mark 13:32-33: “No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come.” And 2 Peter 3:11-12:

“Since every thing will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.”

Because we cannot predict His return, we must be prepared; it may come by daylight (the coming of “end times”) or under the cover of darkness (the present “evil age”), but our lives are to be beacons of His light and life and not symbols of our sinful nature. In reading passages like this and Matthew 24:33; 1 Corinthians 7:29; Philipians 4:5; James 5:8-9; 1 Peter 4:7; and 1John 2:18, one might get the feeling that Paul's New Testament audience believed they were within days or just a few years of Christ's return.

The hope of that has less to do with strict chronology than it does with complete inevitability. Our reading of “The night is nearly over” (v. 12) ought to be tempered with this realization. It will happen; even though we will not know when, it will happen! The first half of the 14th chapter is probably aimed at the new Jewish Christians who felt compelled to retain the laws of dietary restrictions and observances of Sabbath celebrations. Paul addressed something similar to this in his letter to the Galatians. Paul concludes that differences of opinion concerning Christian lifestyles will always exist but should never become walls of dissension and degradation. Our differences must coexist, and can coexist, under the umbrella of God's grace. Our denominational differences are small and must never be the source of pride or condemnation. Whatever a Christian does is to the glory of God, no matter the religious calendar or menu. Those things don't contribute one drop of influence on the Spirit.

Therefore, tolerance of those differences is required of the Christian. A closed-minded

Christian is bound to the law and its severe limitations; a Christian whose purpose is to love unconditionally will seek to tear down walls and rules that separate us from one another. We must not clutter up our hearts and minds with judging others. Our concern is to glorify the Father in all that we do, embracing our neighbor at every opportunity, praying for our enemy at every wrong, seeking to do good for every evil we confront, making peace, and building up others.

On the other hand, this is not to say that the interpretation of sin is completely subjective or left up to the individual or the denominational conscience to decide. The discussion in these chapters is not about clearly defined sin from all scriptural accounts; rather, it concerns itself with actions and activities that are open to disagreement, such as the eating of meat, the celebration of certain religious holidays, and so on. Those are matters more of tradition than of moral integrity or eternal consequence.

## ENGAGE THE WORD

### *Olympic Steeplechase*

The last event of the 14th Olympiad is the 1,500 meter steeplechase. It's a grueling test of speed, coordination, agility, endurance, and kick.

What you notice immediately is that this race is different from any you've witnessed. Not only are there hurdles to jump and lanes to follow, there are also obstacles to overcome.

Listed below are some hurdles and obstacles we all face in life. Some we can leap over with a little bit of preparation and training, while others continue to be stumbling blocks that keep us from reaching our goals. In the next few minutes, place each of the following items under one of the two headings below:

Obesity, extreme thinness, family income, facial features, location of home, attitudes, height, athletic ability, scholarship, a certain teacher(s), a certain subject, a Christian role model, a church policy, sexual thoughts, sexual actions, traffic tickets, hair, habits, music, movies/TV, work schedule, dating life, temper, a bad relationship, devotional, prayer life.

HURDLE

STUMBUNG BLOCK

What is the difference between a hurdle to leap and a stumbling block to bump into?

## EXPLORE THE WORD

### 1. Overview

The urgency Paul feels shows loudly and clearly from the opening bell of Round 13. It is at this point in his letter to the fledgling Roman church that he "puts the hammer down," so to speak, and lets his readers know that the time to listen is over. You must wake up!

To that end, Paul's language in the 13th and 14th chapters seems to get even stronger than in the preceding chapters. Instead of dwelling on philosophical differences of opinion, he suggests that differences in the way we eat, the way we work, and the way we think about holy days are relatively trivial in the big picture. We should be so concerned with serving God and building His kingdom that following rules and regulations pale by comparison. How relevant his warnings seem even 2,000 years later.

These are some very interesting verses and admonitions. Some of them may seem a bit overstated or understated, while others are just downright confusing. Give chapters 13 and 14 the once-over; then read over these questions. After that, reread the two chapters a bit more carefully; then try to answer the following items as honestly as you can.

- What passage bothers you the most?
  
- Is there anything in this section that seems to fit our situation today more than the others? Is there an idea that seems not to be applicable to what is happening in our world today?

Make a list of things Paul seems to plug into these two categories:

OBEY:

TOLERATE:

## 2. Citizenship 101 (13:1-7)

The New International Version puts it this way: "Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities" (v. 1). The Living Bible says simply "Obey the government." Eugene Peterson paraphrases it by saying we are to be "good citizen[s]" (TM). Submit. Obey. Be good. In this day, sizzling cynical television commentaries, and blazing headlines of government corruption, it seems more than difficult to take Paul's opening words to chapter 13 seriously.

But we may need to heed His instructions now more than ever. There are many who call themselves Christian who interpret our government actions as so unchristian that we'd be foolish to submit, obey, and be good.

Read these verses; then answer the following:

- Peruse your morning paper or a weekly news magazine for a while today. What kinds of stories, editorials, and/or columns do you read that deal with the government? Are they positive? Negative? Conservative? Liberal? Calling for action?



- What is the government doing that you have trouble with? What issues do you hear your parents, church groups, school friends, and teachers discussing?

- What is the most pressing social issue your government needs to deal with? Is anyone from your community active in that area?

- What is the responsibility of the Christian when it comes to social action? Do Christians have a right or responsibility to protest or boycott in order to promote Christian values?

- According to Paul, what are the limits to the Christian's role in government?

- How would you define these terms?

- Submit

- Obey

- Be good

### **3. All We Need is Love (13:8-14)**

The second half of chapter 13 talks about loving our neighbor. After you read Paul's ideas about how we can show love in our world, answer the following questions:

- Try to think of five popular songs on secular radio that are about loving each other. Write their titles here.

- What kind of love is each talking about?

- In your own words, summarize the ideas Paul is promoting in these seven verses.

- Why does Paul have such a sense of urgency toward the end of this passage?

- What are some ways people "gratify the desires of the sinful nature" (v. 14)? Where does the world get the idea that those things are OK or deserved?

### **4. Tolerance Is Cool (14:1-12)**

Do you ever get the idea that membership in a church means being a flyswatter more than it means being a vacuum cleaner? In other words, does the Church feel like an exclusive club dedicated to keeping out the riff-raff and extinguish-

ing the pests, or is it an open door to all who pass by, including the “filthy” people of society? Are class discussions and sermons at your church focused on groups that violate Christian behavior and the need to do something about it more than on people who could use a Christian friend and filling that need? (Take a look around your own congregation next Sunday, and see what kind of people are sitting in the pews.)

It’s tragic that the church is so often portrayed and, therefore, viewed as active against negative trends rather than for positive ones. It seems that we’ve stepped away from promoting the gospel to condemning certain facets of our culture. Paul saw that coming and warned against it in chapter 14.

See what he specifically has to say in these verses; then answer the following questions.

- Why does Paul warn so strongly against judging others?
- Paul uses eating patterns as a metaphor for trivial differences. What are some other trivial differences you see today that separate our fellowship?
- What is Paul’s bottom line in this debit/credit chart?
- Who or what in your opinion has led to this perception of the Church as being a voice of condemnation rather than a voice of reconciliation?

## **5. Be No Stumbling Block (14:13-21)**

Putting someone down for the things he says, what she wears, where they worship, where he lives, what she drives, makes us feel better about ourselves somehow--at least for a minute or two. It’s easy to see the hypocrisy in others, thereby judging ourselves superior.

Paul tells us here that we are the hypocrites when we do that. Instead, what we need to admit is that we are the chief of sinners and no one is worse than we are or what we’ve done. Jesus died to forgive us of our sins, and He died on the same Cross for that guy or that woman we condemn so freely with our own limited judgment.

- When was the last time you spoke judgmentally against someone? What were the circumstances?
- When was the last time you were the target of someone’s judgment? How did you feel?
- What does it mean to “make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother’s way” (v. 13)?
- What does it mean “whatever you believe about these things [trivial differences] keep between yourself and God” (v: 22)?

Take a few minutes to pray for grace and patience when you run into differences of opinion with someone that tend to separate you from one another rather than unite you under the mercy of God.

# 9 HOW CAN I HELP?

**STUDY SCRIPTURE:** Romans 15:1-16:27

**KEY VERSE:** “May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Romans 5:5-6)

## TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. Appreciate the value of patience, steadiness, and understanding for living in unity with fellow believers.
2. Glorify God and His Son, Jesus Christ, in all their actions and attitudes.
3. Become strong and courageous witnesses in their Christian walk.

## PERSPECTIVE

In a culture that promotes selfishness and self-centered thinking at every opportunity, it is difficult to fully grasp Paul’s words in these chapters. Christians are to do everything in their power to uplift, build up, encourage, and support the other guy, not themselves. Paul says in verse 2, “Let’s please the other fellow, not ourselves, and do what is for his good and thus build him up in the Lord” (TLB).

This contradicts most of what your students learn from popular culture. On the one hand, they are told to dress for success, to get an education in order to get a better job, to set their goals high, to buy the best, eat the best, wear the best, and drive the best. On the other hand, the Bible teaches them to give their lives to the Kingdom, to give their material possessions to those who need them, to place their wills into the hands of Jesus, and not to worry about clothes and food and cars.

Paul shows us that the life of the dedicated servant is not a glamorous life of wealth and fame: such a person would never be featured on *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous*. Rather, it is a life so involved with the Master that serving is natural. There is just no other way to get up in the morning.

## BIBLE BACKGROUND

Now we are at the end of one of the most remarkable pieces of first-century writing and certainly one of the strongest statements of holiness living in all of Christendom. Paul’s letter to the fledgling church at Rome has been the focus of countless exhortations, explications, and exegeses. What he says about salvation and righteousness is used as the measurement of all subsequent discussions on those matters.

Paul immediately places himself as one of the

“strong Christians” who, by the depth of their conviction and commitment, are free from legalism and can worship God with gratitude. As a “strong Christian” Paul is duty-bound to not only tolerate but encourage and build up those who have not yet discovered the freedom of Christ’s life at work in them.

We are to do likewise, according to Paul’s admonitions, not in a haughty or proud way, but to humbly “bear with the failings of the weak” (15:1). Paul has not been talking about sins in the preceding chapters, so there seems to be little reason to assume he is using “failings” to mean “sin.” He is more than likely discussing those differences found between certain groups, the Gentiles and Jews specifically, that have less to do with spiritual integrity than they do with tradition. As always, Paul cites the life of Christ as the model. In his first letter to the church at Corinth Paul wrote, “I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved. Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ” (10:33-11:1). In his follow-up letter he writes, “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9). And finally again in Philippians 2:5-7, “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.”

The “spirit of unity” (Romans 15:5) Paul affirms is part of the Christian way of thinking, and doing is not a utopian consensus on all matters. There will never be a fellowship, much less a denomination or a religious movement that agrees on all things. There will always be some who put

more emphasis on “appropriate worship clothing” than others. There will be some who restrict certain activities more than others. There will be disagreement over the interpretation of some passages of Scripture. Others will suggest that one theological stance is superior to another. What Paul is admonishing the Church to consider is that any disagreement must be seen as simply a difference of opinion that can never sever our relationship with God and must never cut off our relationship with each other. “Agree to disagree in love,” he seems to say. After all, Christ agreed to accept us all, agreeing to die for the weakest brother as well as the strongest, and as His followers, we are to do likewise.

It is obvious that Jesus was sent to Israel, to the Jewish community, limiting most of His earthly ministry to them. Jews were chosen by God to be the trustees and spokespersons for His message of redemption, in accord with His promises to the fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (see Genesis 12:1-3; 17:7; 18:19; 22:18; 26:3-4; 28:13-15; and 46:2-4). All of this laid the foundation for God’s provisions of reconciliation with the Gentiles. According to the NIV Study Bible footnote here (v. 9): “God’s greatest and climactic act for Israel’s salvation was the sending of the Messiah to fulfill the promises made to the patriarchs and so to gather in the great harvest of the Gentiles.”

As a thrown stone can cause a ripple in the pond, starting at the center and moving ever outward, so too the gospel. Christ’s “signs and miracles” have been reaching farther and farther from their origin as time goes on. From the beginning of the Church at its center, Jerusalem, then to the outer reaches of the Roman Empire at Illyricum, the impact of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, can be felt. “In Lystra there sat a man crippled in his feet, who was lame from birth and had never

walked.... Paul looked directly at him, saw that he had faith to be healed and called out, 'Stand up on your feet!' At that, the man jumped up and began to walk" (Acts 14:8-10).

"Once when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling. This girl followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, 'These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved.' She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so troubled that he turned around and said to the spirit, 'In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!' At that moment the spirit left her" (Acts 16:16-18).

"Seated in a window was a young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep as Paul talked on and on. When he was sound asleep, he fell to the ground from the third story and was picked up dead. Paul went down, threw himself on the young man, and put his arms around him. 'Don't be alarmed,' he said. 'He's alive!...' The people took the young man home alive and were greatly comforted" (Acts 20:9-12). Other signs can be found described in Acts 16:25-26; 28:8-9; 2 Corinthians 12:12; and Hebrews 2:3-4.

Paul wanted to use the church of Rome as his headquarters for his work in Spain. He anticipated taking the Gentile offerings, "fruit," that had been collected on his mission and hand-delivering it to the Jews at Jerusalem. Despite the numerous warnings of what might befall him there, he wanted to explain that it showed, not only the Gentiles' good faith in their Jewish brothers, but also their spiritual faith in Jesus Christ.

The final chapter of Romans lists many names that may bear introduction.

## ENGAGE THE WORD

### *Like a Good Neighbor*

Jesus talked about it. Paul talked about it. Even writers in the Old Testament discussed what it means to be a neighbor and how we are to treat our neighbors. Look up the following references to neighbor and paraphrase (in your own words) what they say.

Exodus 20:17

Leviticus 19:18

Deuteronomy 10:19

Psalms 133:1

Proverbs 11:12

Zechariah 7:10; 8:17

Luke 2:14

Acts 7:26

1 John 4:21

## EXPLORE THE WORD

### 1. Overview

How long has it been since you wrote a personal letter? If you're like most letter writers, you begin with a conversational beginning—"Hi, how are you?"—then move on to how the weather is, what you've been doing at school, and other topics, such as sports, hobbies, friends, and family; finally you wind down to the end. That final paragraph, for some reason, will often begin with the word, "Well..." You can almost hear that same concluding sigh with Paul at the beginning of chapter 15.

With final instructions and observations in chapters 15 and 16, Paul draws to a close his theological guide to salvation and holy living. Read over the verses casually, as if you're reading a letter from a friend; then take a look at these questions. You may want to reread parts of the letter before jotting down some of your responses.

- What is Paul's overall tone in these two chapters?
- What do you think is Paul's main challenge for you, personally, in the day and place on you live?
- Why is Paul planning to visit Rome?
- What is Paul's primary concern? What is the primary source of his joy?

### 2. Reach Out And Touch (15:1-13)

These verses almost sound as if Paul is praying as he addresses himself to his readers at Rome. While they at times seem instructional, they also seem to be full of intercession to God. Read through them; then answer the following questions.

- What does Paul pray God to give the people of Rome?
- If you were to capsule these verses in one word that denotes a theme, what would that one word be?
- What activities and attitudes of Christ does Paul highlight?

### 3. Paul The Pastor (15:14-22)

Why do you think pastors do the kind of work they do?

What is it that motivates them and keeps them enthusiastic about the tasks ahead of them?

Now try to answer those same two questions for "Pastor Paul."

- 1.
- 2.

- What would you find the most unpleasant thing to do? Why?

#### 4. Paul The Tourist (15:23-33)

Paul, like most pastors and missionaries, probably never really felt like a tourist (it's hard to imagine a flourishing tourism industry in a culture that traveled by sandal), but these verses almost have that same sort of first-visit zeal and excitement that tourists often have when anticipating a trip.

Once you finish reading his planned itinerary, answer these questions.

- Why was Paul headed to Spain? What was he hoping to accomplish there?

- Why was he going to Jerusalem first?

- What were the “spiritual blessings” (v: 27) that the Jews provided the Gentiles?

- From what specifically do you think Paul needed to be rescued in Judea?

#### 5. So Long, Farewell, Good Bye (16)

It's tempting to look at Paul in chapter 16 like

one of those people who stand at your front door for a half hour, trying to say good-bye, but never really wanting to leave. Or maybe like one of those personal letters from a friend that adds P.S. after P.S. after P.S., always finding one more bit of news or information to add on after the closure has been signed.

But once you read this final chapter of Romans, you're glad Paul decided to add such a personal touch. It makes it seem like a real human being wrote this letter about other real human beings to a destination of real human beings, all with lives not that different from our lives today.

Read through his final remarks, his final greetings, then answer the following questions.

- What kinds of postscripts does Paul include here?

- Which of the people listed in the first 16 verses and verses 21 through 24 do you think you would have liked to know? Why?

- What kinds of people does Paul warn about in verses 17-20? Are there any of those people around today? Where?

- Read verse 22. What tidbit of information does that give you?

- How does a person retain “innocence” and gain “wisdom”?

# 10 COUNTING

## IT PURE JOY

**STUDY SCRIPTURE:** James 1:1-2:13

**KEY VERSE:** “Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.” (James 1:2-4)

### TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. Look upon all trials in life as choices-either to get overwhelmed or to overcome.
2. Avoid the temptation to see people as stereotypes.
3. Recognize the value of reading and listening as well as the power of doing.

### PERSPECTIVE

The Book of James is a solid letter of encouragement to all new Christians who struggle with what it means to follow Christ-from those who see their salvation as an immediate cessation of all of life’s problems to those who can’t seem to shed their old way of looking at people and doing things. Its admonition to put feet to the speech and walk to the talk serves as a nice response when reading other letters, such as Hebrews, that might emphasize faith to the point of

ignoring (in a relative sense, of course) the need for deed.

Because most churches are by definition and function full of people who are self-centered and in need of a spiritual awakening, most human corruption that exists outside a church can persist inside one. That certainly seems to describe the congregation to whom James wrote this letter. To an outsider, the Church might have seemed a failure because it was full of failures. Yet just as a hospital is a haven of physical ministry and bodily healing, so, too, the Church is a haven of spiritual renewal and redemption. Is it any wonder, then, that a church might be viewed by the cynic as a place that needs more help than he does?

It seems that James may have had many of our modern-day churches in mind, particularly in this age of electronic media that have put worship on the 19-inch living-room screen and the radio dial. In the past several years, many of those programs have been criticized by most and ridiculed by many, including those within the Church, for losing sight of the true calling of God to redeem the world.

Far too often, it seems, our churches have strayed off course and have begun to focus on one item of business to the utter and complete exclusion of all other endeavors. We have been guilty of playing favorites, of succumbing to temptations,



of sitting in our pews and not walking in our streets. For that we must be called to account.

## **BIBLE BACKGROUND**

James wrote a pastoral letter to the Jewish Christians who had scattered to places like Syrian Antioch, Phoenicia, and Cyprus. As the oldest, earthly brother of Jesus himself, James' familiarity with the words of Christ are understandable. So when he paraphrases and quotes parts of the Sermon on the Mount, he is quoting both his biological brother and his Heavenly Father. The intended readers of the letter were clearly Christians as we read in 2:1.

The date of writing has been under some question—ranging from about A.D. 50 to the early A.D. 60s, but most will put it at the earlier date for several reasons: its Jewish nature, which hints that it was written when the Church was still young and Jewish; its references to church hierarchy as “elders” and “teachers”; its lack of discussion of Gentile controversial matters; its use of the term “synagogue” to mean a place worshipers gather.

In 1:2, James echoes the words of his brother, Jesus, when He said on the Mount, “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you” (Matthew 5:11-12). Unfortunately for most of us, this is far easier to say than it is to do because in our culture, it is far more comfortable to conform than to be transformed, far easier to fit in than to stand out, far more economical to travel down Broadway than to trudge up the narrow way, far quicker to take the highway than to take the “My” way.

Paul used similar language in Romans 5:3-4, “We also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.” And Peter put it this way, “In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed” (1 Peter 1:6-7). It is when we try to relieve the tension and pressure prematurely that we fail to mature spiritually these trials, whether internal temptations or external situations, are universal.

James refers to his readers as “brothers” and “sisters” no fewer than 15 times in this five-chapter letter. The implication from that term is that although he is often warning them and chastising their behavior, he is doing so out of love. It is as a parent chides children for playing in the street or with matches, not out of meanness or spite but out of caring, nurturing love that is willing to take the heat for the moment to heal the heart for eternity.

The words about trials followed by a discussion of the rich and poor implies that James meant for his readers to understand that the trial of the poor man lies in his poverty—which will bring him “high position” as a believer. The trial of the rich Christian brings pride in the fact that he has been lowered, perhaps even losing his wealth. Such trials bring blessings (Jeremiah 17:7-8 and the Beatitudes in Matthew 5), much like the olive wreath would have been placed on the head of the winner of the Olympic race or the victor of war.

At the beginning of chapter 2, James offers a couple of reasons we are not to show favoritism

to the rich: God shows no favoritism, so why should we; the wealthy often rule over the poor with an iron fist and a pushing thumb; playing favorites violates the law of Love, which looks at all people as equal in the eyes of God.

The three stages of temptation that James refers to in 1:15 reflect the process through which Eve went in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:6-22) when she felt desire for the forbidden fruit, gave in to those desires and committed disobedience and sin, and then faced banishment from the garden and death. That same process is repeated in the sin of David that we read in 2 Samuel 11:2-17 as he commits adultery with Bathsheba. “[David] saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful. ...he slept with her. ...some of the men in David’s army fell; moreover, Uriah the Hittite [Bathsheba’s husband] was dead.” Succumbing to temptation leads to sin, and as Paul writes in Romans, “The wages of sin is death” (6:23).

The conclusion of the opening chapter sounds an awful lot like Pauline theology, doesn’t it? The “perfect law” (v. 25) is the moral and ethical teaching of Christ and His Church that is based on the Old Testament law we call the Ten Commandments. That law was consummated in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, who liberated the Christian to become all he can be through the grace of God.

The judgment mentioned in the final two verses of this lesson (2:12-13) refers to the rewards that will be received by Christians. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 3, “If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man’s work. If what he has built survives,

he will receive his reward” (vv. 12-15), And in his second letter to Corinth, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad” (5:10). And finally; John writes in his Revelation, “I [God] am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done” (22:12).

## ENGAGE THE WORD

### *Lessons Learned*

You have no doubt survived tough situations, events, and circumstances in your life. Chances are you’ve begun to grow from those experiences. In that respect, you have gained wisdom.

On the left side, write down the five hardest things you’ve had to deal with in your life. Next to each one, write down the lesson you have learned—the bit of wisdom you have gained from the struggle.

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

## EXPLORE THE WORD

### 1. Welcome to James

Have you ever gone to the hospital with a sudden injury or a nasty sickness of some kind {like a fungus crawling up your leg}? Chances are if you're reading this sentence, the medical team at the health center took care of your problem, and you were able to resume your life unimpeded—and thank goodness for medical insurance, huh?!

In many ways, James' letter to Jewish Christians ("the twelve tribes scattered among the nations [1:1]) has the tone of a spiritual doctor prescribing medication to a sick person. And for good reason. After all, what kind of people are in a hospital? Sick people, that's who. And what kind of people were in the early congregations of the Church? Spiritually sick people, that's who. So to the folks on the outside of the Church, those fellowships must have looked pretty sorry and corrupt because they were full of people who were pretty sorry and corrupt themselves.

A few years ago, a man who had spent his life preparing other young men and women for the ministry told his students that a pastor who does not have cigarette butts on the steps of his or her church not doing a good job. What he was implying, of course, is that the church is indeed a hospital for the dying—not just a maintenance shop for the thriving. It will become obvious to you in a hurry as you read this short letter from James that he certainly had a few "cigarette butts" strewn across his church steps.

The James who wrote this letter was not the disciple, but more likely Jesus' oldest biological brother {Matthew 13:55}. And like a typical brother, he did not at first believe that his older brother was the promised Messiah. Can you

imagine? But he eventually became one of the strongest and most committed supporters of the Christian Church, even being one of the few who saw Jesus after His resurrection. Paul later called him a "pillar" of the church (Galatians 2:9) who was later martyred.

The letter was written somewhere in the 50s—that's A.D. 50, not 1950. This evaluation is based on its Jewish nature, its ignoring Gentile differences, its use of the term "synagogue" and its references to "elders" and "teachers." This makes it the earliest document of all the New Testament.

One of the most important elements of the letter is its emphasis on works as they reflect faith: faith without deeds [works] is useless [dead]" (2:20). It may have been tempting in the early days of the Church to proclaim faith in the face of opposition or ignorance, but not demonstrate or manifest that faith outside the protective walls of the Church or one's own home. James reveals that hiding one's faith under a basket is like dousing the flame of a bonfire. A fire must rage in order to be a fire. As you read the letter, you will see many references, both direct and implied, to Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, written with similar conviction and fervor.

The letter mixes practical living with powerful theology. Dos with don'ts, exhortation with warning, and admonitions to believers with revelations to unbelievers. Spend 30 minutes or so reading through the letters five chapters; then answer the following general questions.

- What do you think is the primary point of James' letter?

- If James, the oldest brother of Jesus, was sitting across from you right now, what question would you like to ask him?
- What has been the biggest trial you have faced in your life?

- What passage of the letter intrigues you the most?

- What wisdom have you gained from persevering through that trial?

- If you were a mailperson assigned to deliver this letter, to whom would you take it? Why?

- Have you come to the point where you can “count it pure joy”? At what point does a crisis become a joy?

## 2. Overview

Now that you have a good idea where the letter is coming from and where it’s going, let’s spend a few minutes looking at it in more detail. It might be good to read this passage aloud as if you are actually reading a letter to your family. Listen to the words James uses and the topics he raises.

The opening eight verses are often read by people who are in the middle of a personal crisis: a failed friendship or marriage, sudden unemployment, a death in the family, a failure at school, and a strained relationship with God. It seems to put those kinds of trials in life in immediate perspective, as if our microscopes are transformed into telescopes and we take our eyes off the immediately urgent in order to focus on the eternally important. The next portion tells us how we are to deal with temptation. Then James encourages us to put walk to our talk. After you finish this chapter and a half, answer the following.

- What is the most alluring temptation you face on a daily basis? What has been the biggest temptation you have ever faced?

- What makes you really angry or immediately upset? How do you handle it? What is your first reaction when you’re mad?

- How can James help you understand how to deal with that?

### 3. Trials and Temptations (1:1-18)

If there's anything you've already learned about life, it's that it's as full of trials and temptations as it is of joy and hope. "That's the way the cookie crumbles" and "Grass is always greener on the other side" are adages that come from truth. Sometimes the cookie does break apart in front of our very eyes, and of ten we do think other people are a lot better off than we are.

It's apparent James saw the Early Church folks riding that wave of doubt and uncertainty as they struggled to make sense of what was happening all around them-and directly to them. As you finish reading this section of the first chapter, try to respond to the following questions.

- How does one become wise? How is wisdom gained according to James?
- What will happen to the poor and to the rich (1:9-11)?
- What is the source of temptation? Why can't God tempt? What is His nature?
- What does it mean to be "double-minded"?

### 4. Brothers and Sisters, Lend Me Your Hands and Feet (1:19-27)

Wait a minute. Doesn't James have it all backward? He says, "Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak" (v. 19). That's not the way most of us live, is it? Be honest now. Take a look in some of your classrooms at school and tell me most people aren't quick to speak but awfully slow to listen. That is why a lot of people stick their feet in their mouths and chew on their shoes--they speak before they read; unfortunately, we do far too little of either of those things nowadays. James takes it one step farther, however, when he claims that listening, though well and good, is not the end of the process. Once we have listened, once we have learned, then we must climb off our recliners and out of our comfortable beds and get to action.

Read these verses, and then answer the following questions.

- Take a 3 minute break right now. Close your eyes, lay everything else aside and let your ears go nuts. Listen (but don't fall asleep).
- Now write down some things you heard. What can you learn from listening to those things?
- If you listened to your parents, really tuned them in for once, what would you learn from them?

- If you listened to James, not just read his words like black squiggles on a white page, what would he be telling you?
- Why does our society bless the rich and punish the poor?
- Why is the tongue such a wonderful tool and such a dangerous weapon?
- Where in your community do you see the kind of favoritism James condemns?

### **5. Teacher's Pet! Teacher's Pet! (20:20-34)**

Have you ever watched one of those news magazines on television that document peoples appearances and how the public responds to people who look good (I mean GOOD!) and those who look less than good (as in U-G-L-Y)? It's been found that we tend to treat attractive, rich, well-groomed individuals with a lot more respect and a lot more attention than we do people whose clothes don't match, whose scent is offensive, or who look like they just climbed out of a cardboard box.

James must watch those same news programs because these verses are strong indictments against a society that promotes and praises the wealthy but casts aside and ignores the poor. In Gods kingdom, there is no economic disparity, no attraction quotient, no beauty and no beast. In Gods eyes, we are equally children who need love and respect-and "the first shall be last and the last first."

As you finish this lesson, consider the following questions:

- In the 11th verse, James says that a lawbreaker is a lawbreaker, no matter which laws are broken and which laws are obeyed. Are there laws that, in your opinion, can be broken without violating "the law"?
- It seems easy to "love your neighbor as yourself" when your neighbor is just like you, doesn't it? What makes it difficult to love your neighbor when he or she is quite different? What differences are particularly difficult for you to overlook?

# 11 FAITHING IN ACTION

**STUDY SCRIPTURE:** James 2:14-3:18

**KEY VERSE:** “You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone” (James 2:24).

## TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. Realize that the Bible teaches more than sit-down theory; it also teaches get-up action.
2. Recognize the awesome power for good or bad of the way we talk about each other.
3. Distinguish between the popular culture’s pressure to succeed at all costs and God’s calling to spiritual wisdom and humility.

## PERSPECTIVE

Man may not be able to live by bread alone, but according to these words from James, it would seem that the Church cannot live on faith alone either. There must be a melding of the two so that the faith that lives on the inside will minister to those people who live on the outside. The two ideas really do go hand in hand: Faith that stagnates in inactivity will die, and deeds done apart from God’s merciful purposes are empty accolades that will soon fade.

One of the sure signs that our faith is alive and well and living in Cleveland (or wherever

we live) is that we will watch what comes out of our mouths. This is not a vain attempt to gain human perfection, for that is impossible. We do it rather in order to lift our fellow men and women to a place of spiritual renewal and eternal redemption. The tragedy in James’ day and our own is that Christians are often guilty of praising God on Sunday and “cursing” people the other six days of the week. It is not enough to worship God with our hearts and tongues in congregational singing and public Bible reading if we spend the balance of our week condemning “that weird guy” or “this incompetent woman” or “those people over there.” Our words are to unite us under His care and watchful hand, not divide us into the “haves” and “have-nots.”

We must always speak humbly of ourselves and hopefully to and about others. By so doing, we learn Godly wisdom. Whereas the world might seek success in terms that are temporary and boastful, God helps us find meaning in giving “pure, peace loving consideration” to others. True wisdom comes in the endeavor of building God’s kingdom and “harvesting righteousness” for eternity.

## BIBLE BACKGROUND

In the first chapter and a half, James frequently contrasts pairs of ideas and elements: mercy and judgment; listening and doing; trials and perseverance; religious and redeemed. From the

middle of the second chapter to the middle of the third, he tackles the controversial issues of faith and works; praising and cursing; wisdom and success.

James' premise is that what the body does reflect 100 percent of what the heart tells it to do. If the actions don't fit the attitudes and the follow-through doesn't fit the faith, then something is wrong. One cannot enter the kingdom of God by claiming to be reborn if the rebirth makes no significant changes in the way one lives. A person cannot lift the name of God in praise while pummeling an enemy at the next opportunity. No one can climb the ladder of worldly success and the stairway to heaven at the same time; the first leads directly to hell, and the second is lined with humble service to anyone in need.

The faith that James alludes to in the opening verses of this lesson, specifically in verses 14-20, 24, and 26, is not the faith that leads the believer to the gates of the Kingdom. The so-called faith he is referring to is that mind-game that accepts certain matters and dogmas on a mental psychological plane but fails to grasp in the spirit that Jesus is Lord and Savior over all. We must not think that James is promoting works over faith, claiming that salvation is earned by what we do. That couldn't be farther from his point-or from the truth, for that matter. Let's not put James' cart before the horse: faith comes first and foremost on the journey, but faith all by itself is not enough. A faith that does not manifest itself in 'works and good deeds in this life is a demonic pseudo belief that deceives and denies. Real faith, genuine, life-changing faith will, by its very nature and definition, transform the believer into an activist for the Kingdom. As Paul stated eloquently in his letter to the Romans, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the

redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood" (3:23-25, italics added). It is faith that initiates the process and works that keep it going.

We read in 1 John 3:17, "If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?" That sentiment is stated in James' letter (2:15-17): "Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, 'Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,' but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead." By placing these side by side, it is apparent that Scripture links love and faith within the context of action. If one cannot have love without showing it and one cannot have faith without showing it, then it would only come to reason that one cannot have love without faith nor faith without love. Paul writes in his letter to the Galatian churches, "The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love" (5:6). Faith, love, and action-another holy trinity (with lowercase letters).

James foresees the counterargument facing his words, namely, that some will divide Christendom into the Be-ers and the Do-ers. In verse 18, "But someone will say, 'You have faith; I have deeds.'" James points out the tragic irony of such a claim in the next sentence by challenging the Be-er to show James his faith. One cannot show any thing without doing, so James is correct and comfortable to say, "I will show you my faith by what I do" (italics added). Then, as if he needed more support, he cites the life of Jewish patriarch Abraham as he is about to sacrifice his promised son, Isaac, on the mountain. "Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the



altar?” (v. 21). One must be very careful when reading this verse, for taken out of context, one might claim that James is stating that righteousness is something earned by good works, not by faith. Within the context, of course, James is simply stating the spiritually obvious—when one has genuine faith in God, his life will show it. So verse 21 might read, “Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous because what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar was to show us how strong his faith in God truly was!” If one studies Genesis 15:6 carefully, one will note that Abraham’s act of faith happened before he set Isaac on the altar, thus demonstrating the reality of his faith.

The flow of reasoning into the third chapter, then, would imply that the first good work of a faithful and loving heart is the curbing of speech or the control of the tongue. James uses the relationship of teacher and student to illustrate the point that account ability is based on the degree of influence. The teacher is held more accountable for what happens in the intellectual world, not because he or she necessarily knows more, but because his or her range of influence is much wider. The power of the podium is like the power of the pulpit, and vice versa, for what is said from that place, whether in classroom or synagogue, no matter who says it, will be deemed right and righteous. That is the awesome power of words. The tongue has caused all of us to fall from perfection, for only a person strong enough to control something as powerful as the tongue would be strong enough to control the rest of his or her life and become perfect.

An alarming indictment is almost hidden in verse 9. Because all people are created in the image of God, cursing another human being is the same as cursing God. “Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let

them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground” (Genesis 1:26). “Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man” (Genesis 9:6). That seems to indicate that when we disparage a person for whatever reason, even seemingly legitimate reasons, we disparage God. When we perpetuate a rumor, lie, or gossip about another person, we do the same against God. If we condemn a group of people because they live differently, think differently, or act differently from the way we live, think, and act, we do the same against God.

Those people are just as much children of God (even if they choose not to live in that relationship) as we who have made that choice are His children. We must let God judge their hearts and actions; the only thing we are required to do is to live in a way that is “pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere” James 3:17).

Strong words for a world (and in some cases, a church) so bent on intolerance and alienation!

## ENGAGE THE WORD

### *The Hall of Faith*

The 11th chapter of Hebrews is full of names of men and women whose faith set them apart from the rest of the human race. They are listed below. Next to each name, write down the reason(s) you discover they were elected to the Hall of Faith.

Abel-

Enoch-

Noah-

Abraham-

Isaac-

Jacob-

Joseph-

Moses-

Rahab-

Gideon-

Barak-

Samson-

Jephthah-

David-

Samuel-

The Great Hall of Faith is taking one new inductee this year from your community or church. This person has demonstrated tremendous trust in the power of God to do what He has promised.

The wonderful thing is—you've been asked to submit the nomination sheet and deliver the nomination speech.

On a sheet of paper, write your nomination speech for this person of faith. Consider what it takes to enter the Hall of Faith: perseverance, unwavering commitment, suffering, consideration for others, humility, and good works.

Write in such a way that the crowd listening will give your nominee a standing ovation.

## EXPLORE THE WORD

### 1. Overview

Dr. Tony Campolo, sociology professor and humanitarian, tells about a missionary convention he attended a few years ago where he was asked to pray the closing prayer. Just before he stood up to pray, the person in charge shared a prayer request from a missionary couple whose only field-worthy vehicle had broken down beyond repair. They were heading back to their mission without means of transportation, and they were understandably concerned. Then the speaker introduced Dr. Campolo.

This bald-headed, average-looking man with the voice of a football coach and the heart of Christ, stood in the pulpit, ready to pray when a thought-bubble broke loose, and he said, "Instead of praying for this couple, I think we ought to do something for them. There are a couple thousand people in this room, and you're all getting ready to head home and perhaps stop on the way for something to eat, so I know you've got some spare change sitting in those pockets. Let's take an offering for this couple's vehicle, shall we? And I'll get it started."

With that, Dr. Campolo reached into his trousers, pulled out a little cash, and got the plates moving east and west across that expansive building until they were overflowing. Within minutes, God had turned a prayer request into an answer to prayer—and all it took was a little urging from one person's open heart.

That's exactly what James is talking about in this passage from his letter. It's great to have faith, for salvation indeed comes by faith. And it's great to exercise that faith by prayer and devotion to God's Word. But if that's all faith does, if faith stays inside and never visits another person,

then what good has that faith been to anyone? Before you feed a person's soul, it is often necessary to feed their stomach. Faith takes action. Ministry can cost you.

After you read over these important words for the Christian to hear, respond honestly and openly to the following questions.

- What are five prayer requests you are carrying around today? Have you taken time to lift them to God's throne and leave them there for a while? List them here; then bow your head in silent prayer, imagining the face of God as He listens to your heart.

- Looking back over those requests, is there one that might be answered by the ministry of someone like you? What could you do today to help God answer that prayer?

- Which verse do you agree with the most, perhaps even causing you to whisper to yourself, "Amen, James"?

- What specific questions do you want to ask when your group gets together this week?

## 2. Faith Comes Alive (2:14-26)

Have you ever been walking, riding, or driving around your neighborhood and seen someone working in his yard to the point of exhaustion, having difficulty climbing a ladder, or just sitting alone on her porch, looking out at the street? Sure you have (if you haven't, see an optometrist immediately). Most of the time, that's probably what they want to be doing, and a simple greeting from you is all they need or want.

Sometimes, God asks us to be His hands and feet, and instead of walking by with a quick hello, He wants us to ask if there's anything we might do to help. Or He wants us to take over a pitcher of lemonade and make a new friend. We must be sensitive to His direction and go eagerly where He leads us.

Read over these challenging verses that point us toward service; then answer the following questions.

- What's the difference between "faith without works" and "works without faith"?

- Where do you see the latter (works without faith) being done? Some of those actions are quite successful-how do you explain that?

- Read Joshua 2 about Rahab, and write a brief synopsis of that story here.

- James would be a real fan of Hebrews 11, wouldn't he? Why?
- What kind of talk or verbal flaw do you have the most trouble with?

### 3. Stick A Sock In It (3:1-12)

Watch an infant sometime—even if you're related—and you will notice that everything he or she can reach goes directly (without passing GO) into the baby's mouth. From the moment we are born, we have a real "oral fixation."

Unfortunately, we eventually grow into a life-long stage of not necessarily putting everything we see into our mouths (though many of us tend to do too much of that still), but letting anything we think come out of our mouths. We end up hurting other people, often unintentionally.

See what James suggests for combating this innate problem of speaking before we think; then answer the following questions.

- This part of the lesson deals with tying your tongue. What is the gift that teachers must possess? What's the difference between a teacher and a student?

- James uses the metaphors of a bit in a horse's mouth, a rudder on a ship, and a spark with a forest fire to describe a wild tongue. What other images come to your mind that illustrates the power of a small part steering or directing the whole?

- What is the highest praise you ever remember receiving? How did it make you feel?

- What is the toughest thing you remember ever hearing said to or about you? How did that make you feel?

### 4. Heavenly Wise (3:13-18)

There's knowledge... there's scholarship... there's intelligence... there's street smarts. Then there's wisdom. There's just something about that word that sounds impressive, isn't there? It's a word we regard highly because we tend to respect those people who have wisdom. Wise people are worth their weight in gold.

In these few verses, check out what James says about wisdom that comes from God; then answer the following questions.

- Name a person you consider wise (not just intelligent or smart or always a winner at Trivial Pursuit). What do you think made him so wise? How do you define "wisdom"?

- What are five or six characteristics according to James of real wisdom from God?

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

- Now, next to each characteristic, describe how that trait is evident in a person's life.

- Why do you think humility is such an integral part of this kind of wisdom?

### 5. Worldly Wise (3:13-18)

Do not adjust your television sets. You are on the right channel. You've noticed by now that the same set of verses is applied to this idea of what the world considers "wisdom" as was applied to the preceding lesson on heavenly wisdom. There was just too much of each kind of wisdom going back and forth in this passage to separate them conveniently.

James is concerned in these six verses with clarifying the differences between what the world values are and what God's kingdom puts at the top of the list. In doing that, he contrasts these two kinds of wisdom. After rereading the pas-

sage for a second time, spend some time considering what kind of wisdom the world rewards.

Like we did for the other kind of wisdom, list here five or six characteristics the world thinks are important for the wise person. Next to each, describe a way you've seen this characteristic come alive in front of your eyes.

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

- Is it wrong for a Christian to have ambition and seek material success? Why? Or why not?

- There are many who believe a Christian should not drive a luxury car or own 100 pairs of shoes. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

- If the grass is not greener on the other side, where is it greener?

# 12 SUBMISSION

## TICKETS, PLEASE!

**STUDY SCRIPTURE:** James 4

**KEY VERSE:** “Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” (Romans 4:7).

### TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. Refrain from wasting their time, energy; and spiritual breath in trivial bickering.
2. Become examples of humility and modesty in their communities.
3. Think with the mind and heart of Jesus before they react with the mind and heart of their carnal natures.

### PERSPECTIVE

With adages, such as “Winning is everything,” “Everybody loves a winner,” “just win, Baby;” and “It’s not whether you play or lose, it’s how you win the game,” is it any wonder our culture is plagued with fistfights, brawls, drive-by shootings, riots, and even suicides? We have put such a high premium on scoring more points on the playing field that it has translated into our classrooms, boardrooms, bedrooms, street corners, and, yes, even our sanctuaries.

When was the last time you walked through the grocery store or mall or watched a game on tel-

evision or at the local high school without finding yourself an unsuspecting witness to a huge argument over a most trivial matter? Ten years from now, will it matter that the player may not have actually put his foot out of bounds? Will it matter that a little boy broke a bottle of olives on Aisle 13B? Will anyone remember you were overcharged a dime on that dress you sold in a garage sale (for 10 cents) six years ago?

James is writing in chapter 4 to those of us who waste so much time and energy; not to mention spiritual integrity; with such things. Instead of viewing ourselves as know-it-ails, done-it-alls, and be-it-ails, we ought to take a strong dose of humility; then we will understand that God, who made everything that we are arguing over and bragging about, brought himself down a few million notches and joined our little rag tag team for 33 years. Then, if that weren’t enough, He allowed us to kill Him, only to see that many of us still climb back into our little comfort zones. Now compared to that, do we still have room for pride? Come on!

### BIBLE BACKGROUND

This short passage of James’ letter to the 12 tribes draws us toward the end of his thoughts, and his urgency becomes more evident as the verses develop. Just as there are times when a parent must step in and chide the children for their misbehavior—their bickering, bowing to

peer pressure, petty jealousies, waning integrity, backbiting, boasting—so must a pastor enter the pulpit with the heart of discipline for his flock. And that is precisely what James is doing in chapter 4.

There is a philosophy called hedonism that has one basic tenet: If it feels good, do it. Not only is a hedonist one who pursues pleasure in every facet of life, but that one is totally devoted to it physically, psychologically, and spiritually. It is an ethic that believes all pleasure is sent by God, and since pain hurts, that side of life cannot be a part of a person who believes in God. So whatever feels good is good. Conversely, anything that seems painful must be inherently evil and should, therefore, be avoided.

The guilt associated with this heresy must be tremendous, for life by its very nature has painful moments; few people escape the trauma of loved ones lost or the trials naturally associated with day-by-day existence. To assume those tribulations are evil makes so much of life hard to deal with: “If I’m hurting, I must be evil”

This is what James is referring to in the opening verse when he presumes that the disagreements among these Christians stem from their hedonistic bent toward the pursuit of pleasure. Are they that much different from us in the 1990s who put so much emphasis on “grabbing all the gusto [we] can get” and pursuing success to its wealthiest limit? And arguments over territoriality in the Church are wrong, according to Scripture. Whether they are within a single congregation or among denominations, they do nothing to build the kingdom of God.

James used a hyperbole (overstatement) in the second verse by using the Greek word for “kill” to mean hate. Remember in that culture, and within the context of the New Testament as

well (particularly Jesus’ sayings, including His Sermon on the Mount-Matthew 5:21-22), that word conveys both meanings. To hate a brother is to kill a brother (spiritually). James further borrows from Christ’s sermon by using another harsh term, “adulterous” (v. 4), to describe their unfaithfulness to God when they take on the mistress of the world and succumb to its (hedonistic) lifestyle. The prophet Jeremiah wrote in 31:32, “It [the new covenant] will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,” declares the Lord.”

The end of that paragraph, James 4:4-6, can be a bit perplexing, for there are multiple possibilities in the translation. Some believe (see NIV Study Bible text note) verse 5 could read, “[Or do you think Scripture says] that God jealously longs for the spirit that he made to live in us?” Others suggest a slightly different reading: “[Or do you think Scripture says] that the Spirit he caused to live in us longs jealously?” According to the NIV Study Bible footnote on this point, “The words ‘the spirit he caused to live in us’ refers to God’s creation of man [specifically Genesis 2:7]. Because of the fall, man’s spirit ‘envies intensely,’ but God’s grace (v. 6) is able to overcome man’s envy. ... the meaning of the first [translation above] is that God jealously longs for our faithful ness and our love [“You shall not bow down to them [idols] or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, I am a jealous God...” (Exodus 20:5)... [In the second translation,] it is the Holy Spirit [as the subject] who longs jealously for our full devotion.” James quotes Proverbs 3:34 on pride and humility (v. 6), just as Peter did in his first letter (5:5) in reference to the foot washing Christ gave His disciples as recorded in John 13.

In the next four verses, James offers his own set of Ten Commandments, using what we would call in our grammar the imperative mood, which demands immediate response. Each command is stated for one purpose: to eradicate personal pride. “Submit.” “Resist evil” (as Paul tells his audience in Ephesians 6:11, “Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes”). “Approach God.”

“Wash [your spirit]” (a reference to the Old Testament practice of washing hands and feet before approaching the tabernacle). “Purify your hearts.” “Grieve, mourn and wail” (all three verbs indicating repentance). “Change laughter [contentment with sin] to mourning [repentance of sin].” “Humble yourselves” (“Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted” [Matthew 23:12]). (Emphasis added in above)

The conclusion of the chapter speaks to us as vividly as it did to James’ readers 2,000 years ago. Talking about a spiritual brother or sister in any negative way is breaching the law and puts us in danger of hellfire (Matthew 5:21-22). In fact, any action that does not show love [“philos”] is a violation of the Old Testament commandment, “You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor” (Exodus 20:16).

The Psalmist puts it this way: “He who ... speaks the truth from his heart and has no slander on his tongue, may dwell in your [God’s] sanctuary [and] ... live on your holy hill” (15:2-3, 1). And the writer of the Proverbs is perhaps strongest yet: “There are six things the Lord ...hates: ... a lying tongue ... a false witness who pours out lies and a man who stirs up dissension among brothers” (6:16-17, 19).

## ENGAGE THE WORD

### *Your Own Ten Commandments*

All of us live by a code of ethics, a list of values, a series of acceptable and unacceptable behaviors that we follow at home, at school, at church, and so on. Below, write a list of the ten rules you live by—for home, school, church or wherever.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

## EXPLORE THE WORD

### 1. Overview

Talk about a lecture for the ages! The 4th chapter of James may include the highest number of consecutive imperative statements since the Ten Commandments: “do this,” “don’t do that,” “and don’t even think about the other stuff”

As you read over these 17 verses, open your heart and let the writer’s words wash your mind clean of other thoughts, appointments, or obligations. Think about what it means to be transformed



by the Holy Spirit rather than to conform to the world's pressures.

When you have done that, consider your responses to the following items.

- Which of James's commands seems to be the most important to him?

- Which one seems to hit you right smack on the nose?

- What verse or passage is the most difficult for you to understand?

- How would you compare James's tone to the tone of Jesus in His Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) as He listed His criteria of the Christian life and then to the tone of Paul as he did likewise in Romans 12?

## **2. Stop Your Bickering (4:1-4)**

Do you get the impression from these verses that James had had it up to here with his "fellow believers" who seemed to get more pleasure finding fault with other Christians than they did in having fellowship with God through the Holy

Spirit? He sounds a lot like most of our fathers did during the middle of a long trip in the car when, from the backseat, all he heard for 450 miles was "You touched me first."

"No, I didn't. You touched me first." "Did not!" "Did too!" "Did not!" "Did too!"

"KNOCK IT OFF, ALREADY!"

There is instruction hidden under all that frustration.

Read these four strong verses of admonition, then answer the following questions.

- What had the readers of James' letter been quarreling about?

- What's the difference between bickering and logical, rational debating?

- What kinds of things do you and your friends or siblings argue (quarrel) about?

## **3. Here Comes The Pride (4:5-10)**

One of the signs that a person is immature and still in need of a "reality check" is that he or she continues to think the world revolves around him or her. Have you ever watched an infant for a few hours? Everything in baby's little world is centered around baby and baby alone. When

hungry, baby screams until fed. It doesn't matter that Mother is asleep for the first time in three weeks. Baby wants to eat NOW Dirty clothes? Same selfish wailing. Sleepy? Same thing.

Eventually; most of us grow out of that me-first/others-last mentality by the time we hit junior high. Others retain an egocentric view of the world through high school. Then there are the egomaniacs and celebrities who never seem to run out of ways to draw attention to themselves.

James says we all need a healthy dose of humility to make us Christlike. Jesus humbled himself to become like us-then took it to its almost absurd end by dying on a horrible wooden cross for us. The Creator of the universe wound up suffering for the universe. In our finite world, that just doesn't make sense.

Read carefully these imperatives from James; then answer these questions.

• In verses 7-10, James gives his own "Ten Commandments." List those 10 imperatives here:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

• If you were to finish the following sentence with one idea, how would you summarize James's 10 instructions? "To be like Christ, I need to ..."

• Why does God find personal pride so repugnant? What should we be and not be proud of?

• How does grace fit in with humility?

#### **4. Trash Talking (4:11-12)**

The hardest thing for a person to do, even a consecrated Christian, is to keep from judging other individuals for who they are or what they do. It is far too easy and tempting to raise our own image barometers by bringing everyone else down to our level.

When you were little, chances are you had building blocks of some kind, didn't you? Can you remember the hours you spent erecting elaborate towers and piles, only to have some yahoo (usually a younger sister or brother) come along and knock it down? What took a L-O-N-G time to build, took less than a second to destroy.

Or how about those men and women on demolition teams? That looks like so much fun, doesn't it? They walk up to a building that took two or three years to construct, then stood 40 years through wind, rain, heat, and snow, and with a few well-placed sticks of dynamite, in less than

10 seconds, the skyscraper is a pile of rubble.

We have that same kind of power over another person. A person who has spent thousands of dollars, thousands of hours, and thousands of sweat drops building a reputation and a community image can be reduced to a pile of human rubble with about 10 seconds of our verbal dynamite. What is so hard to build is too easy to destroy.

Reflect on your own weak moments of slander as you read these verses; then answer the following questions.

- Make a brief list of the criteria people use for judging someone else:

- Why do you think people judge other people?

make all of our plans within that context of a higher authority.

Read the conclusion to chapter 4; then answer the following questions:

- What are your immediate plans for the rest of the day? For tomorrow? For the rest of the week?

- What are three long-term goals you have for the next five years?

- Why does James equate making plans with boasting?

## **5. Wait Till You See What I do Next (4:13-17)**

Jesus approached this same idea a bit differently in his Sermon on the Mount when He told His flock to stop fretting about clothes and food and salaries and promotions and the like. He said nobody even knows if tomorrow is going to come before the Lord's return, anyway, so chill out and enjoy today.

There is that same sense of futurity here in James' words when it comes to planning for the future. There may not be a future on this earth —apart from God's willing it to happen. So we ought to

# 13 STAY THE COURSE

**STUDY SCRIPTURE:** James 5

**KEY VERSE:** “You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord’s coming is near.” (James 5:8)

## TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. See the difference between the pressures of this world and the pleasures of God’s kingdom.
2. Appreciate the gift of patience when growing mature in spiritual matters.
3. Understand the awesome privilege and power of prayer.

## PERSPECTIVE

As the gap seems to widen between the rich and poor, the haves and have-nots, it is imperative that Christians reorder their priorities in everyday decisions. Not only is it distasteful to seek wealth over service and power over humility, it is damnable, according to James. We don’t like to read these strong words, but they may be more important than anything else we do read in this letter.

It is not hard to look at our current cultural

trends and see how completely opposite they are to what the Word instructs. Not only are they obvious things like rich vs. poor, power vs. service, but they include more subtle things like instant gratification vs. long-suffering, quick fixes vs. collaboration, and disposable products vs. ecological stewardship. James implores his readers to look through the telescope of God’s view to see life not as a few steps on earth but a long walk into eternity.

## BIBLE BACKGROUND

This single chapter seems to have everything from Old Testament prophecy to New Testament revelation. It condemns the lifestyle of self-serving hedonism at the beginning, encourages the lifestyle of selfless service in the middle, and admonishes believers to keep on praying at the end.

The “rich-” whom James refers to in the opening sentence are not fellow Christians who have strayed. James proceeds to warn them to turn from their wicked ways because their judgment is near. These opening verses, for that matter, are highly reflective of Old Testament warnings. Isaiah 13:6-8 says, “Wail, for the day of the LORD is near; it will come like destruction from the Almighty: Because of this, all hands will go limp, every man’s heart will melt. Terror will seize them, pain and anguish will grip them; they will writhe like a woman in labor. They will

look aghast at each other, their faces aflame.” And in Jeremiah 46:10 the prophet says, “That day belongs to the Lord, the LORD Almighty—a day of vengeance, for vengeance on his foes. The sword will devour till it is satisfied, till it has quenched its thirst with blood.” The prophet Ezekiel proclaims the word of God in 34:16, “I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy: I will shepherd the flock with justice.” The first two chapters of Amos are also full of such language: “I will send fire upon the walls of Gaza that will consume her fortresses. I will destroy the king of Ashdod.... I will turn my hand against Ekron.... I will not turn back my wrath” (Amos 1:7-9). In James’ society, clothes were one of the primary means of showing social levels--not unlike our own culture, really--so in verses 2 and 3 he points out the futility of “storing up ... [our] treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy” (Matthew 6:19).

For the modern person, we might use automobiles, job status, house location, and vacations as the reflection of how much money a person makes (or doesn’t make). It’s not important what item we employ in this metaphor--the principle remains consistent. If we focus all of our attention for 70 or 80 years on acquiring things and acclaim, then we are exercising in futility: For the worth of worldly possessions passes with our last breath, and we enter eternity with nothing. One doesn’t need to go much farther than an auto salvage yard to get the point. (In fact, it might not be a bad idea for you to plan such a field trip.) Whereas a brand-new car, sitting on the dealer’s lot with hundreds of other shiny; clean cars, might be more than mere transportation for a while, becoming a status symbol in the neighborhood and at work, eventually time

will diminish its importance. All too soon, it becomes a means to an end and, then finally; an end in itself. After so many years of service, it winds up as a rusted piece of scrap metal atop thousands of other scraps of metal that no one on earth wants. Think how much emphasis and pride went into getting it and keeping it and showing it off.

In God’s kingdom, time is the ultimate currency; and when one is dealing with eternal days--with a past that had no beginning and a future that has no end--10 years of car ownership (or clothes wearing or house buying, etc.) is absolutely fleeting. James refers to God as “the Lord Almighty” (v. 4) for one of the few times in the New Testament; the term is used 46 times in the Old Testament and 7 in the New. It is interesting to note that the term is a modern one, more accurately translated “Lord of hosts” or “God of hosts.” It literally means “he who is sovereign over all the hosts/powers in heaven and on earth, especially over the hosts/armies of Israel.”

James compares the stupidity of the wealthy to beef cattle who continue to graze and fatten themselves up, completely oblivious to their impending doom. When most people are asked, “If you knew this week was your last week to live, how would you spend it?” they respond with rather drastic lifestyle changes. Some would quit their jobs and travel. Others would make amends with everyone they had offended. Some would pray. Others would write down their thoughts for succeeding generations to enjoy. James indicates that given the same question, rich people would not change one thing. They’d continue to hoard and spend on themselves until the final bell rang. The sign of compulsion/obsession is the maniacal, mono-optic view of the world, where only one thing matters because at that moment, only one thing exists. Some of

the rich are compulsive-obsessive in the worst way, for they have allowed themselves no means and no time for redemption.

But brothers and sisters in Christ are not compulsive-obsessive, nor are they self-serving and indulgent. Their view is poly-optic and compassionate. And when they feel abused and persecuted by the sin that surrounds them and pervades every facet of their community, they have the hope that their suffering is only temporary and the glory of heaven is only a heartbeat removed from now. James refers to the rains of October and November immediately following the planting of seed, then to the rains of March and April that immediately precede the harvest. (“Then I will send rain on your land in its season, both autumn and spring rains, so that you may gather in your grain, new wine and oil. I will provide grass in the fields for your cattle, and you will eat and be satisfied” [Deuteronomy 11:14-15].)

Christ’s second coming was then and is now the next thing scheduled for the cosmos. So we are in the same “last days” the original readers of James believed themselves to be in. These last days began with the coming of Christ and will end with His second coming, which, as He said before He left, we will not know when that is. So all days in between His comings are deemed last days.

To illustrate patience, James used common farmers, but to illustrate perseverance, he refers to job, the only such reference in the New Testament (v. 11). It may seem apparent, then, that James did not think job “patient,” but there is no dispute that the life of job is a life of holding on in faith, which is the meaning of perseverance.

Christians are not to use the name of God casually to support what they say or write, for a

Christian’s integrity should be “oath” enough (v. 12). James doesn’t seem to be condemning solemn oaths (see Hebrews 6:13; Matthew 26:63-64; Romans 1:9; 9:1; and Exodus 22:11).

The oil used in healing was both medicinal and spiritual in the time of James (Isaiah 1:6; Luke 10:34). There are some scholars who believe, then, that James meant it medically; whereas others think he meant it as an outward expression of faith (v. 14). The wanderer from the truth can be seen as one of two types of people: lukewarm Christians whose profession of faith does not match their lifestyle or a backslidden Christian who needs to be redeemed. Therefore, the “death” is probably referring to two different kinds of death. For the lukewarm Christian, James may be referring to the “second death” mentioned in Revelation 21:8, “Their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur.” For the backslidden Christian, James is probably referring to actual, physical death. Yet no matter the case, if a person is reclaimed, all sins, no matter how vile, will be covered by the blood.

## **ENGAGE THE WORD**

### *The Measure of Success*

All of us want to be successful. The trouble is, we get conflicting information on how to be successful. It would be wise for us to make a list of ways we will know we have become a success. One list from the view of the world, and one from the view of God’s Word:

#### *According to the World*

I will know I am a success when...

*According to the Word*

I will know I am a success when...

How are the lists different?

## EXPLORE THE WORD

### 1. Overview

You've made it! You are now at the end of the letter from James ... and you are now at the end of this series of studies. You've read two books of the Bible and learned more about God's kingdom than you had ever known. Congratulations! Find a way to celebrate.

Once you read this last chapter of James' letter, however, you'll realize that God's kingdom is not just about ice-cream cones or the weather (unless you're talking about the spiritual weather before the proverbial storm). James is more than a little concerned that his readers have entered the fast track rather than the narrow road, so he lets them know in no uncertain terms that the God of judgment awaits their final decision to reject Him or follow Him.

Read these final verses, and study the questions that follow. Respond to them openly and honestly, and be prepared to share your answers with the others in your group.

- In a single sentence, what has James said to you in this chapter?

- In a single sentence, what seems to be the overall theme of his entire letter to the Jewish Christians?

- Which idea in chapter 5 is the most difficult for you to understand or agree with?

- Which verse do you happen to agree with the most strongly?

### 2. The Rich Get Poorer And The Poor Get Richer (5:1-6)

When everything you see and hear teaches that happiness lies in your own personal success and that success is usually measured in dollar signs and decimal points, it is far too easy to lay the teachings of Jesus and the rest of Scripture aside and follow that vision.

Jesus said in Matthew 6 that our hearts and happiness will lie with our treasures, so if we build our treasures on earth (money, cars, clothes, feasts, jewelry, etc.), those treasures will disappear when we die. But if we invest our treasures in heaven (witnessing, sharing the gospel, compassionate ministries, benevolence, kindness, etc.), they will stay with us eternally. James is even more indicting in these six verses: Wealth corrupts the soul forever, and those who hoard their "stuff" as if they will die without it don't know the irony of their misjudgment. They will surely die because of it.

Read the passage; then contemplate the following ideas. Jot down your immediate reactions.

- Why is it so difficult to be rich on earth and rich in heaven?

- Reread verse 4. In your society today, who are the harvesters and field mowers that have been cheated out of their fair share?

- Clothes, in those days, were the primary means of showing wealth. What is one way people “show off” nowadays? Why do you think that is?

- Jesus and the writers of the New Testament seem so opposed to pride and boastfulness—the joy in “flaunting it.” Why do you think they are so opposed to those particular human frailties?

### 3. Just Be Patient (5:7-12)

In these verses, James turns his attention from the oppressors to the oppressed. Without so much as a word or phrase of transition, he suddenly goes from his scathing words toward the landowners to comforting words toward the harvesters, from “you rich people” to “brothers” (v. 7). In so doing, he gives us a glimpse of the heart of God on Judgment Day when He will say to the goats, “Flee from me for I never knew you,” then will turn to His sheep and say, “Well done, my good and faithful servants” (see Matthew 25).

James highlights one more time the difference between living for the immediate, the here and now, and living for the important. Whereas the world grabs “for all the gusto,” the kingdom of God loosens its grip on everything transient. James reminds us that people tend to look at life through a microscope to see the minutest detail; God sees things through a telescope to portray the big picture.

Read through the verses of this passage; then answer the following.

- You’ve heard the adage “Patience is a virtue.” What is so virtuous about persevering?

- In the context of James’ writing, what does the metaphor of the farmer in verses 7-9 symbolize?

- It often seems that suffering for the sake of the gospel was easy to detect in the New Testament. After all, many believers were imprisoned or martyred for their beliefs. How do Christians in a country that allows religious freedom suffer today?



- When James instructs Christians not to swear, he is not merely referring to using curse words; he is talking about those “I swear to God” kinds of oaths. Why does he think it should be unnecessary for Christians to attach that to everything they say?

- What was the last thing you asked your mom or dad for? What was your reason for that request? What was his or her response? Why do you think you got that response?

- When you get really, really sick or when you get really, really hurt, what do you want most? Where do you go to get that?

#### **4. The Power Of Praying (5:13-18)**

We sometimes forget that prayer is like a two-way conversation between a child and his father. Imagine yourself in such a dialogue. Was it about stretching your wings of independence a bit? Was it about something you felt you had to have at that very moment? Was it about a pain in your arm or a scratch on your leg? Imagine that your dad smiled as he listened and then offered either some words of advice or took care of your immediate needs.

Even if your real life is not like that, praying to our Heavenly Father is just like that, according to James in these verses. No father, to again paraphrase Jesus in His Sermon on the Mount, would listen to the hunger pangs of his daughter and give her a stone to eat or lay a snake on her plate. Neither will God hear the pleas of His children and gloat in trickery and deception. God loves His children and cannot wait to see them succeed and be happy. But like our earthly parents, He teaches us the true meaning of success and happiness.

Read these verses; then think about these questions. Write down a few ideas if you'd like.

- How does either of those previous situations parallel what James says in these verses?

What are the four things James suggests that Christians lift in prayer? Next to each one, put something specific from your own life that reflects that prayer request.

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

#### **5. They Call Me The Wanderer (5:18-19)**

The danger with going through life without an anchor of any sort—spiritual, physical, or otherwise—is that when the storms of trials, tribulations, temptations, and traumas come, a person who simply coasts through life will be tossed around like a rowboat in a hurricane. In a spirit-

ual sense, that can mean eternal damnation, and therefore, we must become each other's Coast Guard, according to James.

Read these final statements from James; then answer the following.

- What is a word you hear in church that describes this act of rescuing the perishing?

- In what ways could you seek to “bring them back”?

- Why do you think it's so easy to backslide, to fall from grace and return to the evil ways of your former life?

- How do people you know “wander from the truth”?

# BIBLE QUIZZING

## A PERSPECTIVE

### What is Bible Quizzing?

Bible Quizzing is a program that helps youths study and learn about the Scriptures. About once a month, youths from different churches gather for a time of fellowship and competition. In each competition, there are questions about a specific pre-announced portion of Scripture and the teams compete in order to correctly answer those questions.

The official slogan of the Nazarene Youth International is quoted from I Timothy 4:12 - "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity". The purpose of Bible Quizzing is to help cultivate the actions, attitudes, and the lifestyle that are necessary to accomplish this slogan. The Bible Quiz program intends to reach this goal through a tactic that is divided in these different areas:

- An avenue of meaningful Bible study for youth to attain a deep and intimate knowledge of Scripture.
- A means of increasing fellowship and interaction among youth around the world.
- An integral part of the outreach and discipleship aspects of local church youth ministry.
- A medium for the training and mentoring of youth leadership.

- A catalyst for encouraging active participation in ministry and mission projects.
- A bridge for building relationships between youth from different world regions.
- An arena for exciting Christian competition.

Rules alone can never prevent unfair tactics or unsportsmanlike attitudes. However, these rules are necessary in order for the competition aspect of Bible quizzing to be clear and consistent. It is the duty of every individual associated with Bible quizzing to uphold the integrity and intent of these rules and guidelines. Any attempt to gain an advantage by circumvention, disregard, or manipulation is un-ethical and detrimental to the mission and purpose of Bible quizzing. The pursuit of success must never dominate the commitment to exhibit a Christ-like example.

### How to Organize a Bible Quizzing Ministry?

1. Bible Quizzes are intended to be for youths between 12 and 25 years old. You may want to divide the competition into two categories: 12-18, and 19-25.
2. The year for Bible Quizzing starts in August through May or June of the following year, or January 1st and continues until

November or December (whichever works better for your district). Decide how much Scripture to be covered at each weekly meeting (e.g. one chapter or one story) and plan a calendar study chart.

3. During the year a tournament will be planned for every one or two months, generally on a Saturday or a Sunday afternoon.

4. Every local church can have one or more teams that meet together for Bible study and competition practice. Each team is composed of 4 or more people in a small group setting.

5. The location for the competition events (tournaments) must be rotated amongst all the churches participating in the District.

6. For every year, there is a book (or books) from the New Testament that is used as a resource material for the questions of the competition.

Following is the 8 year cycle that is used around the world for Quizzing.

- 2013-2014 - Romans and James
- 2014-2015 – Acts
- 2015-2016 - Galatians, Ephesians, Philipians, Colossians, Philemon
- 2016-2017 – Luke
- 2017-2018 - 1 & 2 Corinthians
- 2018-2019 - John
- 2019-2020 - Hebrews and 1 & 2 Peter
- 2021-2022 - Matthew

Then the cycle begins again. We currently have Bible studies/questions for many of

these books in English, Spanish, and French.

7. Every church must have someone who is the Bible Quiz chairman and two or three more mature helpers to help train the teams and lead them in a weekly Bible study over the Scripture. (e.g. If meeting twice a week, spend time in Bible study, discussion, devotion and make an effort to understand the material together in one meeting. In a second meeting spend time practicing for competition. If meeting once a week divide the time between Bible Study and Competition practice.)

8. The District must have an elected or nominated Bible Quiz chairman, to plan and organize the calendar of the competition and also co-ordinate the different tournaments.

## **How to organize a weekly Bible team meeting**

1. Before the meeting, the leader should read and study the material to be covered during the meeting. Pray for the Lord's guidance.

2. The leader should arrive at the church where the Bible Study will take place before the time in order to prepare.

3. The group can play a game that helps the group begin thinking about the Scripture being covered.

4. Pray together.

5. Read the material out loud together. Spend time asking and answering questions regarding the passage. Help everyone in the group understand what the Scripture means.

6. Allow God to speak through the message of the text. Share a story or a personal experi-

ence that relates to the Scripture.

7. Allow time for more questions or input regarding the understanding.

8. Talk about what kind of response the Scripture calls for in the life of the church or in individual lives.

9. Close with prayer.

10. Encourage the study of material for next meeting. Hand out a paper w/ the material to be covered in the next meeting, the time, the place, and some study questions.

## **How to organize a weekly competition practice**

1. After the Bible Study or at a separate time during the week, practice for competition.

2. Encourage the memorization of important verses; spend time memorizing and quoting to each other.

3. Play a learning game to familiarize the group with the material being covered (ex. Hangman or Pictionary or charades).

4. Ask quizzing questions from the material being covered. (see examples)

5. Divide the group and compete against each other.

6. Keep the focus on knowing and understanding the Word and not on winning and losing.

7. Give out study “homework” for next practice.

1. Plan and attend practices

2. Arrange for personnel at practice and quizzes

3. Arrange trips to district invitationals and coach a team

4. Plan and participate on trips to off district tournaments

5. Contact quizzers on a weekly basis using notes (maybe an email) and phone calls

6. Demonstrate good sportsmanship at all quizzing events

7. Demonstrate and facilitate interest in God’s Word

8. Plan quiz parties at least twice during the quiz year

9. Recruit new quizzers and coaches

10. Plan a demonstration quiz with local pastors

11. Mentor assistant coaches

12. Organize and lead weekly devotionals (at practice or maybe during Sunday School)

13. Keep statistical records from quizzes

14. Manage a quiz budget if available from the local NYI

15. Keep an organized quiz schedule and keep parents of quizzing up to date

16. Keep local pastors updated on the state of quizzing. Encourage announcements, make sure events are on the church and NYI calendars and interact with the pastors on a regular basis

## **COACHING**

### **Coach’s Job Description**

17. Product a newsletter to keep everyone, especially parents, up to date
18. Attend non-quizzing activities that the quizzers may be involved in. For example, a band concert or play at school
19. Integrate with the rest of the youth group. Be involved in other activities with the youths and work together with the NYI president or youth pastor. They will feel more comfortable with you when that occurs.

## Assistant Coach's Responsibilities

1. Attend practices and assist with the quiz activities – be a quizmaster or scorekeeper
2. Coach at district invitationals and off district tournaments
3. Call quizzers during the week to encourage them to study and see how things are going
4. Check quizzer's memory verse recall at practice
5. Fill in during the coach's absence
6. Help lead devotionals
7. Assist in team formation – give opinions about how quizzers are doing and share with the coach

## HOW TO MOTIVATE

Every individual has a personal agenda, the "Real Reason" he or she wants to be on the team. That personal agenda is the key to motivating each person.

It has been said that the only true motivation is self-motivation. If that is true, then our responsibility is to remove the barriers that de-

ivate an individual. Some factors that can limit a quizzers motivation is the fear of failure, not being successful, lack of excitement, lack of challenges and not seeing what they are capable of achieving in quizzing.

A quizzer may become less motivated because they do not realize what they are capable of accomplishing. When a quizzer experiences success or sees what they might accomplish, they become excited. Our goal should be to help them have big dreams or the desire to do better.

Quizzers like to be involved in things that provide them a sense of success. If they do not perceive that they have been successful, then they will not give more than the minimum effort required or they will drop out altogether. They must also have a sense of security and safety within the group. If they do not feel safe or accepted, many quizzers will not risk failure.

The biggest thing that makes quizzing different from any other Bible study is the competition factor. This factor is also a key to motivating most quizzers. Most people like to win and will often go to great lengths to win as long as the correct environment is there. Most quizzers are naturally motivated by the competition, but lack the safety from failure, and the vision to push themselves.

Seeing and knowing that there is more to achieve can be just the challenge needed to motivate. Help your quizzers see what they can accomplish if they work hard enough. Let them see really good teams quiz, great individual quizzers and award ceremonies. Discuss what it will take to accomplish what they have seen. It may take a while to convince them that they can accomplish the same thing.

Help them to create individual and group goals.

Make some of them easily attainable and others that require a great stretch to achieve. Most quizzers also need to see how they have been successful before they will dare try to accomplish more. Each of us is normally our harshest critic. Take every opportunity to point out the successes, no matter how small they may be. Look hard to find things to compliment every quizzers on.

True motivation is internal, but external factors can play an important role in motivation. Consider these ideas when motivating.

- Set a good example – your enthusiasm will rub off on them
- Set appropriate goals – create multiple goals including some that will challenge them
- Give lots of feedback – praise first and then improvement
- Help quizzers measure success against themselves not others
- Provide incentives for reaching goals
- Keep track of personal scores and awards
- Make trips to tournaments
- Allow quizzers the opportunity to quizmaster when they reach certain goals like quizzing out or studying a certain amount
- Provide public recognition in church

Another effective way to help motivate is to create some yearly awards. Feel free to make up some unique ones of your own. Make sure the quizzers know exactly how to earn them and try to keep them updated on how they are doing.

## **Organizing a Quiz Competition Tour-**

## **nament**

### **What to do before the tournament**

1. Announce, clearly, to all the participants, coaches, and officials the details of the Quiz (date, time and place, what to study, etc.)
2. Prepare the questions
  - a. Write down the questions or use prepared questions.
  - b. Divide the questions into groups of 22 or 23 (That would be 20 questions, plus extras for bonus questions or challenges.) You will need enough groups of questions for all the rounds.
3. Choose a format for the Quiz (Each team quiz each team; Round-robin style with each team quizzing within a group of 4-5, and the winner of each group quizzing against each other for the championship, etc.)
4. Arrange for people to serve as Quiz Chairman (he or she reads the questions and rules on the correctness of the answer) and scorekeepers/jump judges (He or she keeps score and determines who jumped first for each question. Jump judges are not used if electronic jump seats are used.) If you have enough teams, you might have 3, 4, or more competitions going on at the same time in different rooms. If that is the case, you will need a Quiz Chairman and a scorekeeper for each competition.
5. Organize with someone to provide something to eat and drink. You may charge a fee for lunch, or have each person bring their own lunch.
6. Make or buy the prizes

- a. Choose some special prizes (Bibles, books, trophies, etc.)
  - b. Make strips or ribbons (for individuals and for teams)
7. Make copies of points sheets
  8. Make a list of the announcements for the beginning of the competition
  9. Choose someone to lead a short devotional time before the tournament begins.

- quiz chairman and 1 for the contestants
- e. Tape recorder and music tapes
- f. Prizes

4. Begin the quiz with the devotion and the announcements
5. After the quiz
  - a. Sum up the points and organize the contestants according to their points
  - b. Give the prizes.
  - c. Pray
  - d. Clean the church

### What to do on the tournament day

1. Arrive at the church where the tournament will take place at least one hour before the time in order to prepare the venue.
2. Items to take to the tournament
  - a. Points sheets
  - b. Groups of questions (hidden from the participants)
  - c. Pencils or pens for the quizzing officials
  - d. Prizes
  - e. Tape recorder and music tapes (optional)
3. Organize the venue
  - a. A table and chairs for the quizzing of officials. (One set needed for each competition location.)
  - b. 2 benches or 8 chairs for the contestants
  - c. Seats for the quiz officials
  - d. Microphones (optional) - 1 for the

### Rules for Youth Bible Quizzing for the Church of the Nazarene

These rules are necessary to run a program whose purposes are clear and solid. Every member of the Bible Quizzing program must make sure that the rules and the program are respected. However, these rules cannot prevent unfair acts or attitudes that are not fair play. The actions and attitudes of those who are involved (teams members, coaches, competition officials, etc) must reflect the purposes and objectives of the program and of NYI. The pursuit of success must not dominate the goal of exhibiting a Christ-like attitude.

**METHODS OF COMPETITION** - Before any competition, the chairman should choose the quizzing method (electronic jump seats or jump judges) for all the teams. The methods that are going to be used must be clearly indicated to the officials, coaches, and captains of the team before the beginning of the competition.



## THE TEAM

1. The Team is composed of four or more contestants who regularly attend the Church of the Nazarene and are members of the local NYI. More than five contestants can be used on a team during a competition, but only five can be included in the team in each round. No one can be a member of the team if he or she has attended any university, college, Bible school, or any other educational training beyond high school.
2. The coach can talk with or assist his team only during the breaks between the questions.
3. Only four contestants per team can be competing. The fifth one is substitute.
4. Specific members of each team must be designated by the coach before the competition as the captain, and another as co-captain.
5. Only the captain can talk with the quiz chairman after a decision, either to challenge a decision, to protest, or to correct.

## THE OFFICIALS OF THE QUIZ

A. The Quiz Director - the person who organizes the tournament. His or her responsibilities include:

1. Prepare the study and tournament calendar in advance
2. Obtain all the officials necessary for the competition.
3. Provide all necessary materials for the competition: seats, groups of questions, score sheets, copy of biblical material, a stopwatch, pencil, etc.

4. Prepare enough groups of questions for the competition.

5. Prepare or buy the prizes for the quiz: certificates, trophies, or others

6. Advertise the time, place and date of the tournament in all local churches and to all the people involved.

B. The Quiz Chairman - the person who leads and controls the rounds in the tournament. His or her responsibilities include:

1. A good knowledge of the rules and of the material in the competition. During a competition, the interpretation of the Quiz Chairman is final.

2. Be unbiased and consistent.

3. Read each question during the round

4. Recognize the first contestant and ask for the answer.

5. Judge the correctness of each answer

6. Consult, if necessary and wanted, with the scorekeeper when judging answers, challenges, or appeals.

7. Note faults when they take place

C. The Scorekeeper - the person who maintains the official scoring sheet during the tournament rounds. His or her responsibilities include:

1. A good knowledge of the rules of the Bible Quiz

2. Register each member of the competing teams onto the scoring sheet.

3. Register points obtained and/or lost by

each team and individual contestant.

4. Notify the Quiz Chairman when a contestant:

- a. Has correctly answered four questions
- b. Has committed three errors

5. Regularly notify the Quiz Chairman of the running score

6. Register the final team and individual results

7. Serve as timekeeper.

## THE TOURNAMENT

1. Duration of the tournament.

- a. There are 20 questions in a round
- b. If there is a draw after twenty questions, there will be play-off questions until the draw is broken. Only one question is necessary to break the draw, unless no one answers it.

2. Composition of the teams

- a. Each team's coach must give the names of his or her team to the scorekeeper before the first question is read.
- b. The captain and the co-captain of the team must be designated before the first question is read.

3. Breaks.

- a. A break lasts for one minute and can only be asked between questions.
- b. Each team can ask for two breaks per round, and only the captain, the coach, or one of the officials can ask for a break.

4. Substitutions

a. The coach can only change an active member during a break. The contestant that leaves a round is a substitute and can come back in the competition later. The substitute comes back automatically to the competition when one of the contestants answers all the questions he has to answer, or makes all the faults and/or errors he is allowed to make.

b. Only a substitute can take the place of a contestant - two contestants who already are competing cannot exchange places.

5. Questions

a. All the questions will be based on the same version of the Bible (announced ahead of time).

b. A question for all can be read only once.

c. If no contestant stands to answer a question within five seconds after it has been read, it will be considered closed. The Quiz Chairman must read the answer, and go on. No points will be given for that question.

d. At any time before beginning to read the next question, the Quiz Chairman can throw out a question that contains incorrect information or has not been well read.

e. A captain may appeal to the Quiz Chairman if there is incorrect information in a question, if the question was not well read, or if the question could not be understood because of interference.

6. Electronic Seats

a. The equipment used for a Bible Quizzing competition is called "jump seats". The cushions are plugged in to a box at the officials'

table. Each cushion functions as a switch that shows with a light who stood up first.

b. When all the lights are off (all the contestants are seated) the Quiz Chairman can start reading a question.

c. When the question is being read, the first contestant to stand must answer the question

d. The Quiz Chairman observes the lights while reading the questions.

e. When a light is on, the Quiz Chairman stops reading, and calls the name of the contestant whose light is on.

N.B. Most quizzing programs will not have access to jump seats to begin with. In that case, a Jump Judge (or scorekeeper) will determine who jumped first.

## 7. Answers

a. A contestant cannot answer before being recognized by name by the Quiz Chairman.

b. The time limit of 30 seconds starts immediately after the contestant is recognized by the Quiz Chairman.

c. The contestant must finish the question (if he interrupted the reading of the question) and give the correct and complete answer during the 30 seconds time limit.

d. The Quiz Chairman cannot repeat the question or give any information to the contestant. The contestant must answer without any help.

e. If the correct question and answer are given in the correct time limit, without any errors in information, the answer will be considered as correct.

## DECISIONS OF THE OFFICIALS

The Quiz Chairman must judge if the answers are correct this way:

1. When the contestant gives all the necessary information for the question and the answer, and sits back down, the Quiz Chairman will judge if the answer is correct.

2. The Quiz Chairman must not interrupt the contestant. The only exception is when the contestant gives enough incorrect information to eliminate any possibility to give a correct answer. If more information is necessary, the Quiz Chairman will not say anything until the contestant sits down or the 30 seconds time limit has ended.

3. If the Quiz Chairman considers that an answer is “correct” the points will be given to the team and the contestant.

4. If the Quiz Chairman considers that an answer is “incorrect”, the points will be deducted from the score of the team and/or contestant (if after question 16), and a bonus question will be read.

5. The Quiz Chairman will not judge an answer “incorrect” because of a pronunciation error.

## ERRORS AND BONUS QUESTIONS

1. If an incorrect answer is given, the contestant with the corresponding seat on the opposite team can answer that question as a bonus.

2. The Quiz Chairman must read the question completely before the contestant answers the bonus question.

3. The contestant must answer the bonus question within 30 seconds.

4. A correct answer to a bonus question is worth 10 points for the team of the contestant who answered the question. Individual points are not given for bonus questions.

5. Points will not be deducted for incorrect answers given to bonus questions.

#### CHALLENGE AND APPEALS OF THE DECISIONS OF THE OFFICIALS

1. Only the acting team captain can challenge or appeal the decisions of the officials.

2. The captain may not challenge or appeal before the question and the bonus question (if necessary) are asked, answered and judged. All the challenges or appeals must be done before the beginning of the next question.

3. There may be no communication between the coach & captain, between two contestants, or the contestants and the audience.

4. Each captain can challenge a question only once.

#### 5. Challenge

- a. A captain may challenge a decision of the Quiz Chairman if he thinks an incorrect decision has been taken.
- b. The captain can ask the Quiz Chairman to read the correct question and answer before challenging.
- c. The captain of the other team can refute the challenge, once it is complete.
- d. After hearing the challenge and the refutation, the Quiz Chairman will judge the validity of the challenge.
- e. The challenge will be invalidated if it

contains incorrect information, or if the argument does not justify a different decision than the first one.

f. The challenge will be accepted when the argument justifies the modification of the previous decision. When a challenge is accepted and the previous decision is reversed. The points will be adjusted as if the error happened in the beginning.

#### 6. Appeals

- a. The captain can appeal to the Quiz Chairman to invalidate the answer due to an incorrect reading, incorrect information in the question, or visual/audio interference.
- b. After hearing the appeal, the Quiz Chairman may consult the scorekeeper for the final decision.
- c. The appeal will be upheld if the argument justifies the change of the first decision.
- d. When an appeal is upheld, the question appealed will be invalidated, and another question will be asked.
- e. The official point sheet must be changed as if the appealed question was not asked. The points given after the first decision will be deducted and the points deducted after the first decision are given again.

#### FAULTS

1. There is a fault when:

- a. There is communication (verbal or non-verbal) after the Quiz Chairman asks the

Question and before the points are given.

b. A contestant begins answering a question before being recognized by the Quiz Chairman.

2. Any contestant who does three faults in a round must leave the round. He may be substituted.

## POINTS

1. A correct answer to a question is worth 20 points for the team and the individual contestant.

2. A correct answer for a bonus question is worth 10 points for the team.

3. Four correct answers (not including bonus questions) by any one contestant is worth 10 bonus points for the team and the contestant who answered the four questions. This is called a “quiz out”. When a contestant has quizzed out, he or she must step down from the quizzing seat and may be substituted for if there is a substitute.

4. When 3 members from the same team answer at least one question correctly, there is a 10 point bonus for the team.

a. The fourth contestant who answers correctly gains 10 points for the team

b. The fifth contestant who answers correctly gains 10 more bonus points

5. Beginning with question #16, 10 points are deducted from the points of the team for each error.

6. At the third error of a contestant, 10 points are deducted from the points of the team and of the contestant. This is called an “error out” and

the contestant may no longer answer questions for that round. The contestant may be substituted for.

7. For the fifth error of the team (and each subsequent error) 10 points will be deducted from the points of the team.

8. The points for the play-off questions after the time limit are not part of the individual or team points.

## Study Tips: Memorization

### Memory Verses

If your quizzers plan to learn all the memory verses this year, you’ll want to pay special attention to the prejump list in the back of Book 1. The purpose of having a prejump list is to show them where the earliest “safe” place to jump on each memory verse is, and to help you learn to complete the verse with the fewest possible beginning words. Use it to perfect their skills in jumping on memory verses. Also, download the free memory verse flash cards from [www.youthquiz.com](http://www.youthquiz.com) or from the Power Tools CD.

### “15” Method

1. Read the verse through a couple of times.

2. Have them say it without looking. If they get stuck, check the Scripture, and then go on.

3. When they can say the verse through without looking, they’re ready to start memorizing. (You thought you were through, didn’t you?)

4. Have them say the verse through as fast as they can, five times, without a mistake. If they

make a mistake, start over.

5. Read the verse again to make sure they are saying it right. If not, do it over.

6. Have them say the verse five more times without a mistake. Then five more times. (That makes 15.) If at any time they make a mistake, start over with that group of five.

7. Do the next verse the same way, then return to the first verse memorized to make sure they still know it?

8. Continue the process until they are done memorizing.

### Writing Questions

It's a proven fact that the more you deal with a subject, the better you learn and remember it. It is a great idea to have your quizzers write their own questions as they study the material. Make sure they have a solid knowledge of the material before they begin to write questions. Once they do, they will find that practicing forming questions and answers will really test their knowledge of the material. Once they learn this method, you might find they don't need to actually write the questions and answers down on paper; it may be enough to simply form questions mentally and answer them in their mind. Those written questions could be used in practice and compared to the questions in this book.

### Phrase Method

1. Read the verse carefully, making sure they understand its meaning.

2. Break the verse into phrases (punctuation marks do this pretty well) and say each phrase several times, emphasizing words that are difficult to remember.

3. Read the entire verse again, concentrating on difficult parts.

4. Quote the verse 5 or 6 times, or until they can say it smoothly without error.

5. Review the verse about 10 times the same day they learn it.

6. Review the verse at least once a day for three or four days after they learn it.

### 3-5-7 Plan

Assume that you've just studied 1 Corinthians 8. Now have the quizzers review the chapter three chapters before this chapter—chapter 5. Then review the chapter five before—chapter 3. Then review the chapter seven before your original chapter—chapter 1. Hence, the name 3-5-7 Plan. When the total number of chapters gets high enough, it will need to become the 3-5-7-9 Plan.

### Index Cards

A great way to help quizzers learn the memory verses (or all of the material) is to create a catalog of the verses they (or you want them) want to memorize. Write or type each verse on one side of an index card and put its reference on the back. Computer programs have made this a somewhat simple task, especially with the ability to purchase the NIV for that computer. (It's important that they do this step themselves (regardless of the method); try not to have their parents or you as coach do this for them. The cards will mean much more to them—and they'll remember the verse much better as well—if they take the time to mentally process each verse as they prepare the catalog.) Once they have all the verses on cards, they're now ready to begin. They'll probably want to memorize the verses in the order as they appear in the Scripture. Have

them use any of the memorization methods already mentioned to actually learn the verse. The big advantage of this method is being able to separate those verses that they're having difficulty learning. They will also be able to review the verses by looking at the reference or review the references by looking at the verses.

#### Study Tip: Comprehension Underline Method

Have the quizzers read the chapter enough times that they know most of it, starting at the beginning of the chapter and underlining every fact in the chapter that they are not sure they would remember in a quiz without further study. Then, beginning with the first verse, have them study all the underlined phrases. To fully complete the study method, have them continue working on all these phrases until they know each of them well enough to recall details in a quiz.

#### Study Tip: Reading

##### CD/Cassette Method/MP3/Podcast

Learning comes easier when one can not only see the words but hear them as well. You can purchase a pre-made audio recording of the book to help your quizzers read and memorize. You might consider making your own recording using a blank recordable CD, (you will need a computer with a microphone and appropriate recording software) or a cassette tape and recording your own voice reading each chapter for study purposes. (Remember that it is illegal to make copies of pre-made Bible recordings, or to distribute or sell copies of your own voice recording of Bible passages without permission.) This may take some time, but you'll find it worth your while in the long run. Remember to read clearly and loudly. You might want to identify

each chapter and/or verse with its reference as you come to it. Recorded CD's should be available at [www.youthquiz.com](http://www.youthquiz.com).

There are several ways you can use a recording like this in your study. Here are a couple:

- Straight Reading—Read along in the Bible or scripture portion, and listen carefully to the recording at the same time while reading. In this way, they will not only see the words on the page but hear the words as well. This combination will help them remember the material better. A variation is to try to quote the material along with the recording.
- Pantomime Reading—Turn on the CD/Tape player/MP3 player. As the verses are read, pantomime (act out) everything that is happening. Exaggerate! Do fun, crazy things to act out the passages. If they are not too self-conscious, have your quizzers act out the passages. You'll be surprised to see how well this method helps them remember the material.

##### Straight Reading Method

Simply have them read through the chapter carefully and thoughtfully five times. The more they read something, the better they will know it. Also, have them read the related scripture or commentary if they have some type of reference Bible. Be careful to use only the NIV for memory work but other versions can be helpful when trying to understand what the author is trying to convey.

##### Repetition Method

1. Read verse 1 (of the chapter they are studying) three times.
2. Read verse 2 three times, verse 3 three

times, verse 4 three times, and verse 5 three times.

3. Now read verses 1 through 5 all together at once.

4. Read verses 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 three times each.

5. Now read verses 6 through 10 all together at once.

6. Now go back to verse 1 and read straight through to verse 10.

7. Read verses 11 through 15, each three times; then read them together once; then go back to verse 1 and read through to verse 15.

8. Read verses 16 through 20 three times each; then 16 to 20 once all together; then 1 to 20 altogether.

9. Keep doing this until they finish the chapter.

### Paraphrase Method

Have you ever stopped to think that if you were writing some of the Scriptures you're studying; it would sound a lot different from what you are reading?

Before you suggest this method to your quizzers, they'll need about three or four pieces of notebook paper. At the top of the first page they should write the number of the chapter they'll be reading. Have them read the chapter, through a couple of times. Now the goal is for them to rewrite the chapter, verse by verse, in their own words.

They can make it serious or funny, creative or normal—however they usually talk. They should paraphrase (explain how to accomplish paraphrasing) at least 10 verses of a chapter just

to find out if they like this method. They do not even have to use it all the time. They should try it once in a while to lend variety to their studying.

### Study Tip: Prejumping

#### Question Writing

In order to fine tune your quizzers prejumping ability it is really not as important for them to write hundreds of questions as it is for them to learn how to write questions. You will eventually have them move from actually writing questions and answers to simply forming them mentally. The key to good prejumping is not simply winning the jump but being able to correctly complete the question from the point where they jumped. Learning to recognize questions and answers in their mind will be of tremendous advantage as they begin to prejump.

In the average verse, there are four or five possible quiz questions. Even though several questions may cover the same information, the way a quizzer prejumps on each question is different. So, it is helpful to be able to look at a verse and see the different questions that can come from it. To write a question, have them begin by finding the answer in the verse and then decide how to ask a question about it. Beginning at the first verse, have them look at each phrase, each noun, each action verb, each adjective, and each adverb, to see if any could be an answer to questions. Then, have they written the questions.

#### Key Word Spotting

Key word spotting is to help a quizzer be able to jump faster. It is very difficult to improve their jump reaction time without learning to spot key words.

What is a key word? The key word is the word



that comes at that place in the question where, for the first time, one can tell what the rest of the question is. In other words, if they hear a question and the quizmaster stops reading just before the key word, they won't know for certain what the rest of the question is. There may be only a few possibilities, and they may make an educated (or lucky!) guess, but they won't be for certain. However, if they were to hear one more word—the key word—they would know without a doubt what the correct question is.

Your job as a coach is to help the quizzer learn to locate that key word so that they can jump at that place in the question. In a quiz, that means faster decision-making under pressure. To get started, though, have them practice with a few questions and take all the time they need to decide what is the key word.

Here is an important point to remember: the key word will not always be the same for everyone! The better they know the chapter, the sooner they will be able to jump. Right now the key word for questions may be the last word; but by the end of the year, the key word on some of the very same questions could possibly be the third or fourth word. The key word changes as their knowledge of the material improves.

### Anticipating the Key Word

Anticipation is accurately predicting that the next word of the question will be the key word. Why anticipate you ask? If a quizzer can tell that the next word of a question will be the key word, then they can jump just as the quizmaster begins to say it, but late enough that he or she does not have time to stop before he or she says at least the first syllable of the key word. The quizzer can then identify the key word by watching the quizmaster's mouth as a clue to the remainder of the word. This means that they will actually

jump before they hear the complete question! If they can learn to anticipate accurately, they will obviously win many more jumps than a quizzer who does not anticipate. Remember, though, that anticipating is taking a definite risk; they will want to be sure that they know the material well enough to take this risk before you jump! Prejumping is a major hurdle for most quizzers to overcome, but when they do, they will find competition much easier.

### Recording Jumping

To practice their jumping and to improve anticipation of the key word, you may want to try this method. In order to use this method they will need computer recording equipment and a CD/DVD/MP3 burner, or a simple cassette recorder. To prepare for the study, record some of the questions and the answers to the CD/DVD/MP3 or cassette. Start the CD/DVD/MP3 or cassette and have them “jump” (either physically or mentally), and stop the recording at the point where they jump. Now have them try to complete the question and give the correct answer. To check yourself simply restart the cassette and then listen to the correct question and answer. They'll find that as their knowledge of the material increases, their ability to prejump earlier also improves.

### Study Tip: General Review

After studying one-fourth of the chapters, take time out for a general review of all the chapters they've covered. Test them in each of the following areas:

1. Have them read through each chapter again. If there is time, they may even want to use a repetition method (Read chapter 1, then read chapters 1 and 2, then read chapters 1, 2, and 3, etc.)

2. Have them write out either a chapter-by-chapter outline, or a list of what events are in each chapter.

3. Have them review all the underlined phrases that they thought they might not remember in a quiz. Test them to see how well they still remember those verses. If they've forgotten any of the phrases, spend some more time studying with them.

4. Work with the prejump list of memory verses, and test their ability to complete each verse and give the reference.

Repeat this general review after completing one-half, then three-fourths, then all of the chapters. In each case, review all the chapters they've covered.

#### Study Tip: Using a Concordance

Have you ever noticed how some quizzers always seem to be able to jump way before your quizzers do? And how you could say almost any word in the material and they can tell you exactly what verse it's in? Chances are that those quizzers have been using a concordance.

What is a concordance? A concordance is a type of index—you know, those lists in the back of books that tell you where a certain subject is mentioned. A biblical concordance will tell you where and how many times any word is used in the Scripture. (Would it surprise you to know that the word “the” is used 55,728 times throughout the Bible?!) There are several types of these concordances: entire Bible, Old Testament, New Testament, and individual book concordances.

How can you use a concordance to help your quizzers in their study? Each year, youthquiz.com makes available a Quizzer's concordance that covers only the material being covered dur-

ing that quiz year. This resource will tell you where and how many times each word is used in this book. Of special help to a quizzer is the list of “Unique Words.” These are words that are used only once in the material.

Being familiar with these words can be invaluable to a quizzer. A quizzer knowing that a particular word is used only once throughout an entire year's material will more quickly direct them toward the right passage when answering a question. Once they've acquired a concordance, find the unique word list, or go through the entire list of words and note those that are used only once. Have them mark these words with a certain color of marker or colored pencil—blue, perhaps. Then have them take their Scripture portion or Bible and locate each of these “blue” words and mark them. Now as they read and study the Scripture, they will be able to note when they come across a “blue” word. Many quizzers use the same approach with words used two or three times throughout the material, marking them with a different color, such as red and green.

Now, as soon as they hear one of these unique words, they should be able to recognize it as a key word, remember the reference, and quickly go there mentally to form their question and answer. You will find that knowing these key words will greatly enhance your quizzer's ability to prejump. (You can also tailor this system as it suits their study style).

However you decide to have your quizzers use a concordance, be sure they have a good understanding of the material, as well as of the individual words. The concordance should supplement a good study plan—don't let them rely on it to solve all of their study problems.

Knowing the Scripture in this way will also help

them in the future. It may help them find a verse that they need when speaking to a person seeking God. The Holy Spirit will bring that verse they learned years ago to memory at the appropriate time.

#### Study Tip: Variety in Your Study

Throughout this book the quizzers will find many different study methods for use in individual study times. Chances are no one study method is right for everyone. What works best for one may not work for teammates. Just as important, however, is that their knowledge and recollection of the material will improve if they vary the study methods they use. Have them try a new method every now and then so they don't get bored and frustrated using the same technique over and over.

## PRE-ANNOUNCING KEY

Remember that all questions will be “preannounced” in actual quizzing competition. In order to prepare your quizzers for this practice (and in case your team decides to use these questions in practice), we've included the preannouncing codes in this book as well.

## PRE-ANNOUNCING KEY

(Code=Question Type)

G = General

X = Context

A = According to

S = Situation

I = In What Book and Chapter

Memory: Q = Quote;

V = Finish this (these) verse(s) (no reference);

R = Finish this (these) verses and give the reference

# PRACTICE

## QUESTIONS

### Romans 1

A According to Romans, chapter 1, verse 1, what was Paul called to be?

A. An apostle (Romans 1:1)

G Who was set apart for the gospel of God?

A. Paul (Romans 1:1)

G How did God promise the gospel beforehand?

A. Through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures (Romans 1:2)

A According to Romans, chapter 1, verse 3, what was God's Son?

A. A descendant of David as to his earthly life (Romans 1:3)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord"?

A. Romans 1 (Romans 1:4)

G From what does obedience come?

A. Faith (Romans 1:5)

G Who are among those Gentiles who are called to belong to Jesus Christ?

A. You (all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people) (Romans 1:6)

G To whom is grace and peace?

A. All in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people (Romans 1:7)

A According to Romans, chapter 1, verse 8, what does Paul do first?

A. Thank his God through Jesus Christ for all of you (Romans 1:8)

G Whom does Paul thank through Jesus Christ for all of you?

A. His God (Romans 1:8)

G Who constantly remembers you in his prayers at all times?

A. Paul (Romans 1:9)

G How does Paul constantly remember you?

A. In his prayers at all times (Romans 1:9-10)

G When does Paul constantly remember you in his prayers?

A. At all times (Romans 1:10)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong"?

A. Romans 1 (Romans 1:11)

G By what may you and Paul be mutually encouraged?

A. Each other's faith (Romans 1:12)

G What has Paul been prevented from doing until now?

A. Coming to you (all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people) (Romans 1:13)

G Who has had a harvest among the other Gentiles?

A. Paul (Romans 1:13)

G To whom is Paul obligated?

A. Both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish (Romans 1:14)

G To whom is Paul so eager to preach the gospel?

A. You who are in Rome (Romans 1:15)

G What brings salvation to everyone who believes?

A. The power of God [OR the gospel] (Romans 1:16)

G Who will live by faith?

A. The righteous (Romans 1:17)

G Who suppress the truth by their wickedness?

A. People (Romans 1:18)

G Why is the wrath of God being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people?

A. Since what may be known about God is plain to them (because God has made it plain to them) (Romans 1:18-19)

G Who has made what may be known about God plain to people?

A. God (Romans 1:19)

X Complete, in essence, the following: “For since the creation of ...”

A. “... the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse” (Romans 1:20)

A According to Romans, chapter 1, verse 21, what did their thinking become?

A. Futile (Romans 1:21)

G Whose foolish hearts were darkened?

A. People’s (Romans 1:21)

G What did people claim to be?

A. Wise (Romans 1:22)

G What were made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles?

A. Images exchanged for the glory of the immortal God (Romans 1:23)

G With whom did people degrade their bodies?

A. One another (Romans 1:24)

G Who is forever praised?

A. The Creator (Romans 1:25)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones”?

A. Romans 1 (Romans 1:26)

G With whom did men commit shameful acts?

A. Other men (Romans 1:27)

G Whose knowledge did they not think it worthwhile to retain?

A. The knowledge of God (Romans 1:28)

G Of what are they full?

A. Envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice (Romans 1:29)

A According to Romans, chapter 1, verse 30, whom do they disobey?

A. Their parents (Romans 1:30)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “they disobey their parents”?

A. Romans 1 (Romans 1:30)

G Who deserve death?

A. Those who do such things (Romans 1:32)

## Romans 2

A According to Romans, chapter 2, verse 1, who do the same things?

A. You who pass judgment (Romans 2:1)

G Whose judgment against those who do such things is based on truth?

A. God’s (Romans 2:2)

X When might you think you will escape God’s judgment?

A. When you pass judgment on someone else and yet do the same things (Romans 2:3)

G What is God’s kindness intended to do?

A. Lead you to repentance (Romans 2:4)

G For what are you storing up wrath against yourself?

A. The day of God’s wrath (Romans 2:5)

G Whom will God repay according to what they have done?

A. Each person (Romans 2:6)

G Who will give eternal life to those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality?

A. God (Romans 2:7)

G For whom will there be wrath and anger?

A. Those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil (Romans 2:8)

G For whom will there be glory, honor and peace?

A. Everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile (Romans 2:10)

A According to Romans, chapter 2, verse 11, what does God not do?

A. Show favoritism (Romans 2:11)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law”?

A. Romans 2 (Romans 2:12)

G Who are not righteous in God’s sight?

A. Those who hear the law (Romans 2:13)

G How do Gentiles do things required by the law?

A. By nature (Romans 2:14)

G What are sometimes accusing them?

A. Their (Gentiles’) thoughts (Romans 2:15)

G What will God judge through Jesus Christ?

A. People’s secrets (Romans 2:16)

G On what do you rely?

A. The law (Romans 2:17)

A According to Romans, chapter 2, verse 18, by what are you instructed?

A. The law (Romans 2:18)

G What are you convinced that you are for the blind?

A. A guide (Romans 2:19)

G Of what do you have the embodiment in the law?

A. Knowledge and truth (Romans 2:20)

X In Romans, chapter 2, who teach themselves?

A. Those who teach others (Romans 2:21)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?”?

A. Romans 2 (Romans 2:22)

G In what do you boast?

A. The law (Romans 2:23)

G Where is God’s name blasphemed?

A. Among the Gentiles (Romans 2:24)

A According to Romans, chapter 2, verse 25, what if you break the law?

A. You have become as though you had not been circumcised (Romans 2:25)

G What if those who are not circumcised keep the law’s requirements?

A. Will they not be regarded as though they were circumcised? (Romans 2:26)

G Whom will the one is not circumcised physically and yet obeys the law condemn?

A. You who, even though you have the written code and circumcision, are a law-breaker (Romans 2:27)

G What is circumcision not merely?

A. Outward and physical (Romans 2:28)

G By whom is circumcision of the heart?

A. The Spirit (Romans 2:29)

G Why are you convinced that you are an instructor of the foolish?

A. Because you have in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth (Romans 2:19-20)

### Romans 3

G In what is there much advantage?

A. Being a Jew (Romans 3:1-2)

G With what have the Jews been entrusted?

A. The very words of God (Romans 3:2)

G What if some were unfaithful?

A. Will their unfaithfulness nullify God’s faithfulness? (Romans 3:3)

G Whose faithfulness will their unfaithfulness not nullify?

A. God’s (Romans 3:3-4)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “Let God be true, and every human being a liar”?

A. Romans 3 (Romans 3:4)

G What argument is Paul using?

A. A human argument (Romans 3:5)

G In what is God certainly not unjust?

A. In bringing his wrath on us (Romans 3:5-6)

A According to Romans, chapter 3, verse 6, what if that were so?

A. How could God judge the world? (Romans 3:6)

G Who might argue, “If my falsehood enhances God’s truthfulness and so increases his glory, why am I still condemned as a sinner?”

A. Someone (Romans 3:7)

G What is just?

A. Their condemnation (Romans 3:8)

G What are Jews and Gentiles alike?

A. All under the power of sin (Romans 3:9)

A According to Romans, chapter 3, verse 10, who is righteous?

A. No one, not even one (Romans 3:10)

G Who understands?

A. No one (Romans 3:11)

G Who have turned away?

A. All (Romans 3:12)

G What do their tongues practice?

A. Deceit (Romans 3:13)

X From what Old Testament book does the following quotation come: "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness"?

A. Psalms (Romans 3:14)

G What are their feet swift to shed?

A. Blood (Romans 3:15)

G What is before their eyes?

A. No fear of God (Romans 3:18)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "There is no fear of God before their eyes"?

A. Romans 3 (Romans 3:18)

G What may be held accountable to God?

A. The whole world (Romans 3:19)

G How will no one be declared righteous in God's sight?

A. By the works of the law (Romans 3:20)

G To what do the Law and the Prophets testify?

A. The righteousness of God (Romans 3:21)

G What is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe?

A. This righteousness (Romans 3:22)

G Of what do all fall short?

A. The glory of God (Romans 3:23)

G By whose grace are all justified freely?

A. God's (Romans 3:24)

G As what did God present Christ?

A. A sacrifice of atonement (Romans 3:25)

G Who did this to demonstrate his righteousness?

A. God (Romans 3:25)

G When did God demonstrate his righteousness?

A. At the present time (Romans 3:26)

G Why is boasting excluded?

A. Because of the law that requires faith (Romans 3:27)

G By what is a person justified?

A. Faith (apart from the works of the law) (Romans 3:28)

X Is God the God of Jews only?

A. No (Romans 3:29)

G Why is God the God of Gentiles too?

A. Since there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith (Romans 3:29-30)

G Through what will God justify the uncircumcised?

A. That same faith (Romans 3:30)

G What do we uphold?

A. The law (Romans 3:31)



## Romans 4

A According to Romans, chapter 4, verse 1, what is Abraham?

A. Our forefather according to the flesh (Romans 4:1)

G What if Abraham was justified by works?

A. He had something to boast about—but not before God (Romans 4:2)

G Who believed God?

A. Abraham (Romans 4:3)

G How are wages not credited to the one who works?

A. As a gift (Romans 4:4)

G Who justifies the ungodly?

A. God (Romans 4:5)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the one to whom God credits his righteousness apart from works”?

A. Romans 4 (Romans 4:6)

G What are those whose transgressions are forgiven?

A. Blessed (Romans 4:7)

A According to Romans, chapter 4, verse 9, what have we been saying?

A. That Abraham’s faith was credited to him as righteousness (Romans 4:9)

G What was credited before Abraham was circumcised?

A. Abraham’s faith (Romans 4:10)

G As what did Abraham receive circumcision?

A. A sign (Romans 4:11)

G Who also follow in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised?

A. The circumcised (Romans 4:12)

G Through what did Abraham and his offspring not receive the promise that he would be heir of world?

A. The law (Romans 4:13)

G Through what did Abraham and his offspring receive the promise that he would be heir of the world?

A. The righteousness that comes by faith (Romans 4:13)

G When is the promise worthless?

A. If those who depend on the law are heirs (Romans 4:14)

A According to Romans, chapter 4, verse 15, what does the law bring?

A. Wrath (Romans 4:15)

G Where is there no transgression?

A. Where there is no law (Romans 4:15)

G To whom may the promise be guaranteed?

A. All Abraham’s offspring (not only to those who are of the law but also to those who have the faith of Abraham) (Romans 4:16)

G In what is Abraham our father?

A. The sight of God (Romans 4:17)

X Complete, in essence, the following: “Against all hope, Abraham in ...”

A. “... hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, ‘So shall your offspring be’” (Romans 4:18)

G How old was Abraham?

A. About a hundred years old (Romans 4:19)

G Regarding what did Abraham not waver through unbelief?

A. The promise of God (Romans 4:20)

G What power did God have?

A. Power to do what he had promised (Romans 4:21)

G How was it credited to Abraham?

A. As righteousness (Romans 4:22)

G For whom were the words, "It was credited to him" written?

A. Not for Abraham alone, but also for us (Romans 4:23-24)

G Whom did God raise from the dead?

A. Jesus our Lord (Romans 4:24)

G Why was Jesus raised to life?

A. For our justification (Romans 4:25)

## Romans 5

A According to Romans, chapter 5, verse 1, who is our Lord?

A. Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1)

G Into what have we gained access by faith?

A. This grace in which we now stand (Romans 5:2)

G What produces perseverance?

A. Suffering (Romans 5:3)

G Why do we also glory in our sufferings?

A. Because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope (Romans 5:3-4)

G What produces character?

A. Perseverance (Romans 5:3-4)

G How has God's love been poured out into our hearts?

A. Through the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5)

G Who died for the ungodly?

A. Christ (Romans 5:6)

G What might someone possibly dare to do?

A. Die for a good person (Romans 5:7)

A According to Romans, chapter 5, verse 8, what does God demonstrate?

A. His own love for us (Romans 5:8)

G By whose blood have we now been justified?

A. Christ's (Romans 5:9)

G Through what were we reconciled to God?

A. The death of God's Son (Romans 5:10)

G Who also boast in God?

A. We do (Romans 5:11)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned"?

A. Romans 5 (Romans 5:12)

G When was sin in the world?

A. Before the law was given (Romans 5:13)

G What is Adam?

A. A pattern of the one to come (Romans 5:14)

G By what did the gift come?

A. The grace of the one man, Jesus Christ (Romans 5:15)

G What brought justification?

A. The gift (Romans 5:16)

G Who will reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ?

A. Those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness (Romans 5:17)

A According to Romans, chapter 5, verse 18, in what did one righteous act result?

A. Justification and life for all people (Romans 5:18)

G Through what were the many made sinners?

A. The disobedience of the one man (Romans 5:19)

G Why was the law brought in?

A. So that the trespass might increase (Romans 5:20)

G What reigned in death?

A. Sin (Romans 5:21)

## Romans 6

G What shall we by no means do so that grace may increase?

A. Go on sinning (Romans 6:1-2)

A According to Romans, chapter 6, verse 2, what have we done?

A. Died to sin (Romans 6:2)

G Into whose death were all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus baptized?

A. Christ Jesus' (Romans 6:3)

G From what was Christ raised?

A. The dead (Romans 6:4)

G With whom will we certainly also be united in a resurrection like his?

A. Christ (Romans 6:5)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin"?

A. Romans 6 (Romans 6:6)

G From what has anyone who has died been set free?

A. Sin (Romans 6:7)

A According to Romans, chapter 6, verse 8, what if we died with Christ?

A. We believe that we will also live with him (Romans 6:8)

G Why can Christ not die again?

A. Since he was raised from the dead (Romans 6:9)

G Who died to sin once for all?

A. Christ (Romans 6:10)

G Whom should you count alive to God in Christ Jesus?

A. Yourselves (Romans 6:11)

X In Romans, chapter 6, what should you not obey?

A. Sin's evil desires (Romans 6:12)

A According to Romans, chapter 6, verse 14, when shall sin be your master?

A. No longer (Romans 6:14)

G What are we not under?

A. The law (Romans 6:15)

G Of whom are you slaves?

A. The one you obey (Romans 6:16)

G What has now claimed your allegiance?

A. The pattern of teaching you have come to obey from your heart (Romans 6:17)

G To what have you become slaves?

A. Righteousness (Romans 6:18)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “I am using an example from everyday life because of your human limitations”?

A. Romans 6 (Romans 6:19)

G When were you free from the control of righteousness?

A. When you were slaves to sin (Romans 6:20)

X Complete, in essence, the following: “What benefit did you reap ...”

A. “... at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death!” (Romans 6:21)

G Of whom have you become slaves?

A. God (Romans 6:22)

A According to Romans, chapter 6, verse 23, what is death?

A. The wages of sin (Romans 6:23)

## Romans 7

G Over whom does the law have authority only as long as that person lives?

A. Someone (Romans 7:1)

G From what law is a married woman released if her husband dies?

A. The law that binds her to him (Romans 7:2)

G Who is called an adulteress?

A. A married woman who has sexual relations with another man while her husband is still alive (Romans 7:3)

G For whom might we bear fruit?

A. God (Romans 7:4)

G By what were sinful passions aroused?

A. The law (Romans 7:5)

G By what have we been released from the law?

A. By dying to what once bound us (Romans 7:6)

A According to Romans, chapter 7, verse 7, what did the law say?

A. “You shall not covet” (Romans 7:7)

G What opportunity did sin seize?

A. The opportunity afforded by the commandment (Romans 7:8)

G Who was alive once apart from the law?

A. Paul (Romans 7:9)

G Who found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death?

A. Paul (Romans 7:10)

G Whom did sin put to death through the commandment?

A. Paul (Romans 7:11)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good”?

A. Romans 7 (Romans 7:12)

G Why did sin use what is good?

A. To bring about Paul’s death (Romans 7:13)

- G What is spiritual?  
A. The law (Romans 7:14)
- G What does Paul want to do?  
A. What he does not do (Romans 7:15)
- A According to Romans, chapter 7, verse 16, what is the law?  
A. Good (Romans 7:16)
- A According to Romans, chapter 7, verse 17, who no longer does it?  
A. Paul (Romans 7:17)
- G What desire does Paul have?  
A. The desire to do what is good (Romans 7:18)
- G Who wants to do good?  
A. Paul (Romans 7:19)
- G Who keeps on doing the evil he does not want to do?  
A. Paul (Romans 7:19)
- I In what book and chapter is the following: “For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing”?  
A. Romans 7 (Romans 7:19)
- A According to Romans, chapter 7, verse 20, who no longer does it?  
A. Paul (Romans 7:20)
- G What is right there with Paul when he wants to do good?  
A. Evil (Romans 7:21)
- G In what does Paul delight in his inner being?  
A. God’s law (Romans 7:22)

- G What is another law making Paul?  
A. A prisoner of the law of sin at work within him (Romans 7:23)
- I In what book and chapter is the following: “What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death?”  
A. Romans 7 (Romans 7:24)
- X Who will rescue Paul from this body that is subject to death?  
A. God (through Jesus Christ our Lord) (Romans 7:24-25)
- G How is Paul himself a slave to the law of sin?  
A. In his sinful nature (Romans 7:25)

## Romans 8

- G When is there no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus?  
A. Now (Romans 8:1)
- G What has the law of the Spirit who gives life done?  
A. Set you free from the law of sin and death (Romans 8:2)
- A According to Romans, chapter 8, verse 3, why did God send his own Son?  
A. To be a sin offering (Romans 8:3)
- G Why did God condemn sin in the flesh?  
A. In order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us (who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit) (Romans 8:3-4)
- G How might the righteous requirement of the law be met in us?  
A. Fully (Romans 8:4)

G Who have their minds set on what the Spirit desires?

A. Those who live in accordance with the Spirit (Romans 8:5)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace”?

A. Romans 8 (Romans 8:6)

G What does the mind governed by the flesh not do?

A. Submit to God’s law (Romans 8:7)

G Who cannot please God?

A. Those who are in the realm of the flesh (Romans 8:8)

A According to Romans, chapter 8, verse 9, when does anyone not belong to Christ?

A. If they do not have the Spirit of Christ (Romans 8:9)

G What is subject to death?

A. Your body (Romans 8:10)

G When will he who raised Christ from the dead also give life to your mortal bodies?

A. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you (Romans 8:11)

G How do we not have an obligation to the flesh?

A. To live according to it (Romans 8:12)

G When will you live?

A. If by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body (Romans 8:13)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God”?

A. Romans 8 (Romans 8:14)

G To what did the Spirit you received bring about your adoption?

A. Sonship (Romans 8:15)

G Whose children are we?

A. God’s (Romans 8:16)

G What if we are children?

A. Then we are heirs —heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ (Romans 8:17)

G With what are our present sufferings not worth comparing?

A. The glory that will be revealed in us (Romans 8:18)

G How does the creation wait for the children of God to be revealed?

A. In eager expectation (Romans 8:19)

G What was subjected to frustration?

A. The creation (Romans 8:20)

G Why was the creation subjected to frustration?

A. In hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God (Romans 8:20-21)

G What will be brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God?

A. The creation itself (Romans 8:21)

A According to Romans, chapter 8, verse 22, what has been groaning?

A. The whole creation (Romans 8:22)

G For what do we wait eagerly?

A. Our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies (Romans 8:23)

G Who were saved in this hope?

A. We were (Romans 8:24)

X Who hopes for what they already have?

A. No one (Romans 8:24)

G Whom does the Spirit help in our weakness?

A. Us (Romans 8:26)

G What does he who searches our hearts know?

A. The mind of the Spirit (Romans 8:27)

G How have those who love God been called?

A. According to God's purpose (Romans 8:28)

G To whose image did God also predestine those he foreknew to be conformed?

A. The image of his Son (Romans 8:29)

G Why did God also predestine those he foreknew to be conformed to the image of his Son?

A. That he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters (Romans 8:29)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "those he called, he also justified"?

A. Romans 8 (Romans 8:30)

G Who is for us?

A. God (Romans 8:31)

G Whom did God give up for us all?

A. His own Son (Romans 8:32)

A According to Romans, chapter 8, verse 33, what does God do?

A. Justifies (Romans 8:33)

G For whom is Christ Jesus also interceding?

A. Us (Romans 8:34)

X From what shall nakedness not separate us?

A. The love of Christ (Romans 8:35)

X What shall not separate us from the love of Christ?

A. Trouble, hardship, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger or sword (Romans 8:35)

G What do we face all day long for your sake?

A. Death (Romans 8:36)

G Through whom are we more than conquerors?

A. Him who loved us (Romans 8:37)

G What is Paul convinced will not be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord?

A. Death or life, angels or demons, the present or the future, any powers, height or depth, or anything else in all creation (Romans 8:38-39)

G Whom will neither angels nor demons be able to separate from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord?

A. Us (Romans 8:38-39)

A According to Romans, chapter 8, verse 39, in whom is the love of God?

A. Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:39)

## Romans 9

G What confirms Paul is not lying?

A. His conscience (Romans 9:1)

G Who has great sorrow and unceasing anguish in his heart?

A. Paul (Romans 9:2)

G What could Paul wish?

A. That he himself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of his people (those of his own race, the people of Israel) (Romans 9:3)

X Who are Paul's people?  
A. The people of Israel (Romans 9:3-4)

G Whose are the promises?  
A. The people of Israel's (Romans 9:4)

G Who is forever praised?  
A. The Messiah (who is God over all) (Romans 9:5)

G What had not failed?  
A. God's word (Romans 9:6)

I In what book and chapter is the following:  
"It is not as though God's word had failed"?  
A. Romans 9 (Romans 9:6)

X From what Old Testament book does the following quotation come: "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned"?  
A. Genesis (Romans 9:7)

G Who are not God's children?  
A. The children by physical descent (Romans 9:8)

G How was the promise stated?  
A. "At the appointed time I will return, and Sarah will have a son" (Romans 9:9)

A According to Romans, chapter 9, verse 10, who is our father?  
A. Isaac (Romans 9:10)

G What might God's purpose in election do?  
A. Stand (Romans 9:11)

I In what book and chapter is the following:  
"Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God's purpose in election might stand: not by works but by him who calls—she was told, "The older will serve the younger"?  
A. Romans 9 (Romans 9:11-12)

G Who will serve the younger?  
A. The older (Romans 9:12)

I In what book and chapter is the following:  
"Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated"?  
A. Romans 9 (Romans 9:13)

G Is God unjust?  
A. Not at all! (Romans 9:14)

G On whom will God have mercy?  
A. On whom he has mercy (Romans 9:15)

X From what Old Testament book does the following quotation come: "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion"?  
A. Exodus (Romans 9:15)

G On what does it depend?  
A. God's mercy (Romans 9:16)

G What might be proclaimed in all the earth?  
A. God's name (Romans 9:17)

I In what book and chapter is the following:  
"I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth"?  
A. Romans 9 (Romans 9:17)

G Who has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy?  
A. God (Romans 9:18)

G What will one of you say to Paul?  
A. "Then why does God still blame us? For who is able to resist his will?" (Romans 9:19)

X To whom shall what is formed not say, "Why did you make me like this"?  
A. The one who formed it (Romans 9:20)



G Who has the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for special purposes and some for common use?

A. The potter (Romans 9:21)

G What did God bear with great patience?

A. The objects of his wrath (Romans 9:22)

G Who prepared in advance for glory the objects of his mercy?

A. God (Romans 9:23)

G Whom did God also call not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles?

A. Us (Romans 9:24)

A According to Romans, chapter 9, verse 25, what will I call her?

A. "My loved one" (Romans 9:25)

G Where will they be called "children of the living God"?

A. In the very place where it was said to them, 'You are not my people' (Romans 9:26)

G Like what is the number of the Israelites?

A. The sand by the sea (Romans 9:27)

G What does Isaiah cry out concerning Israel?

A. "Though the number of the Israelites be like the sand by the sea, only the remnant will be saved. For the Lord will carry out his sentence on earth with speed and finality" (Romans 9:27-28)

G What will the Lord carry out on earth with speed and finality?

A. His sentence (Romans 9:28)

G Unless what would we have become like Sodom?

A. Unless the Lord Almighty had left us descendants (Romans 9:29)

G Who said previously, "Unless the Lord Almighty had left us descendants, we would have become like Sodom, we would have been like Gomorrah"?

A. Isaiah (Romans 9:29)

A According to Romans, chapter 9, verse 30, who have obtained righteousness?

A. The Gentiles (Romans 9:30)

G What did the people of Israel pursue?

A. The law (as the way of righteousness) (Romans 9:31)

G Who stumbled over the stumbling stone?

A. The people of Israel (Romans 9:32)

G Who lays in Zion a stone that causes people to stumble and a rock that makes them fall?

A. God (Romans 9:33)

G Who will never be put to shame?

A. The one who believes in him (Romans 9:33)

## Romans 10

G Whose heart's desire is that the Israelites may be saved?

A. Paul's (Romans 10:1)

A According to Romans, chapter 10, verse 2, what is not based on knowledge?

A. Their (the Israelites') zeal (for God) (Romans 10:2)

X In Romans, chapter 10, what can Paul testify about the Israelites?

A. That they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge (Romans 10:2)

G What did the Israelites not know?

A. The righteousness of God (Romans 10:3)

G What may there be for everyone who believes?

A. Righteousness (Romans 10:4)

G About what does Moses write: “The person who does these things will live by them”?

A. The righteousness that is by the law (Romans 10:5)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “The person who does these things will live by them”?

A. Romans 1 (Romans 10:5)

A According to Romans, chapter 10, verse 6, what should you not say in your heart?

A. “Who will ascend into heaven?” (Romans 10:6)

G In what should you not say, “Who will descend into the deep?”

A. Your heart (Romans 10:6-7)

G What is in your mouth and in your heart?

A. The word (Romans 10:8)

G With what do you believe and are justified?

A. Your heart (Romans 10:10)

G With what do you profess your faith and are saved?

A. Your mouth (Romans 10:10)

X From what Old Testament book does the following quotation come: “Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame”?

A. Isaiah (Romans 10:11)

G How does the Lord bless all who call on him?

A. Richly (Romans 10:12)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved”?

A. Romans 1 (Romans 10:13)

X In Romans, chapter 10, on whom can they not call?

A. The one they have not believed in (Romans 10:14)

G Whose feet are beautiful?

A. Those who bring good news (Romans 10:15)

G Who accepted the good news?

A. Not all the Israelites (Romans 10:16)

G What is heard through the word about Christ?

A. The message (Romans 10:17)

G What have gone out to the ends of the world?

A. Their words (Romans 10:18)

G Who asks, “Did they not hear?”

A. Paul (Romans 10:18)

G Who says, “I will make you envious by those who are not a nation; I will make you angry by a nation that has no understanding”?

A. Moses (Romans 10:19)

G How does Isaiah say, “I was found by those who did not seek me; I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me”?

A. Boldly (Romans 10:20)

A According to Romans, chapter 10, verse 21, what does he say?

A. “All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and obstinate people” (Romans 10:21)

## Romans 11

G Who is a descendant of Abraham?

A. Paul (Romans 11:1)

G Who appealed to God against Israel?

A. Elijah (Romans 11:2)

G What has Israel torn down?

A. God's [OR the Lord's] altars (Romans 11:3)

G To whom was God's answer, "I have reserved for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal"?

A. Elijah (Romans 11:4)

G By what is there a remnant chosen at the present time?

A. Grace (Romans 11:5)

G What if the remnant were based on works?

A. Grace would no longer be grace (Romans 11:6)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "What the people of Israel sought so earnestly they did not obtain"?

A. Romans 11 (Romans 11:7)

A According to Romans, chapter 11, verse 8, what is written?

A. A spirit of stupor, eyes that could not see and ears that could not hear (Romans 11:8)

G Who gave them ears that could not hear?

A. God (Romans 11:8)

G Who says, "May their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a retribution for them"?

A. David (Romans 11:9)

G What may their backs be?

A. Bent forever (Romans 11:10)

G How did Israel not stumble?

A. So as to fall beyond recovery (Romans 11:11)

G What if Israel's transgression means riches for the world?

A. How much greater riches will their full inclusion bring (Romans 11:12)

G Who is the apostle to the Gentiles?

A. Paul (Romans 11:13)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "Inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I take pride in my ministry in the hope that I may somehow arouse my own people to envy and save some of them"?

A. Romans 11 (Romans 11:13-14)

G Who may somehow arouse his own people to envy?

A. Paul (Romans 11:14)

G Whom may Paul somehow arouse to envy?

A. His own people (Romans 11:14)

G Whom may Paul save?

A. Some of his own people (Romans 11:14)

A According to Romans, chapter 11, verse 15, what will their acceptance be?

A. Life from the dead (Romans 11:15)

G What if their rejection brought reconciliation to the world?

A. What will their acceptance be but life from the dead? (Romans 11:15)

G When is the whole batch holy?

A. If the part of the dough offered as first-fruits is holy (Romans 11:16)

X Two-part question: when is the whole batch of dough holy, and when are the branches holy?

A. 1) If the part of the dough offered as firstfruits is holy 2) If the root is holy (Romans 11:16)

G Who have been grafted in among the other branches?

A. You (though a wild olive shoot) (Romans 11:17)

G When should you not consider yourself to be superior to those other branches?

A. If some of the branches have been broken off and you have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root (Romans 11:17-18)

G Whom does the root support?

A. You (Romans 11:18)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "You do not support the root, but the root supports you"?

A. Romans 11 (Romans 11:18)

G What were broken off?

A. Branches (Romans 11:19)

G How do you stand?

A. By faith (Romans 11:20)

G Who did not spare the natural branches?

A. God (Romans 11:21)

A According to Romans, chapter 11, verse 22, in what should you continue?

A. God's kindness (Romans 11:22)

X In Romans, chapter 11, when is God's kindness to you?

A. If you continue in his kindness (Romans 11:22)

G When will they be grafted in?

A. If they do not persist in unbelief (Romans 11:23)

G Contrary to what were you grafted into a cultivated olive tree?

A. Nature (Romans 11:24)

G What is wild by nature?

A. The olive tree you were cut out of (Romans 11:24)

G Until when has Israel experienced a hardening in part?

A. Until the full number of the Gentiles has come in (Romans 11:25)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in, and in this way all Israel will be saved"?

A. Romans 11 (Romans 11:25-26)

A According to Romans, chapter 11, verse 26, who will come from Zion?

A. The deliverer (Romans 11:26)

G When is this my covenant with them?

A. When I take away their sins (Romans 11:27)

G What are they as far as the gospel is concerned?

A. Enemies for your sake (Romans 11:28)

G What is God's call?

A. Irrevocable (Romans 11:29)

G To whom were you disobedient at one time?

A. God (Romans 11:30)

G What may they too now receive as a result of God's mercy to you?

A. Mercy (Romans 11:31)

G Why has God bound everyone over to disobedience?

A. So that he may have mercy on them all (Romans 11:32)

G Whose paths are beyond tracing out?

A. God's (Romans 11:33)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?"

A. Romans 11 (Romans 11:34)

X Who has known the mind of the Lord?

A. No one (Romans 11:34)

A According to Romans, chapter 11, verse 36, what are through him?

A. All things (Romans 11:36)

G When be the glory to God?

A. Forever (Romans 11:36)

## Romans 12

G As what does Paul urge you to offer your bodies?

A. A living sacrifice (holy and pleasing to God) (Romans 12:1)

G By what should you be transformed?

A. The renewing of your mind (Romans 12:2)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind"?

A. Romans 12 (Romans 12:2)

G Who has distributed faith to each of you?

A. God (Romans 12:3)

G Who has one body with many members?

A. Each of us (Romans 12:4)

G How do we, though many, form one body in Christ?

A. Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function (Romans 12:4-5)

G To what does each member belong?

A. All the others (Romans 12:5)

G According to what do we have different gifts?

A. The grace given to each of us (Romans 12:6)

G When should you serve?

A. If your gift is serving (Romans 12:7)

A According to Romans, chapter 12, verse 8, how should you give?

A. Generously (Romans 12:8)

G When should you give generously?

A. If your gift is giving (Romans 12:8)

G To what should you cling?

A. What is good (Romans 12:9)

G How should you be devoted to one another?

A. In love (Romans 12:10)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord"?

A. Romans 12 (Romans 12:11)

G In what should you be patient?

A. Affliction (Romans 12:12)

G With whom should you share?

A. The Lord's people who are in need (Romans 12:13)

G Whom should you bless?

A. Those who persecute you (Romans 12:14)

G With whom should you rejoice?

A. Those who rejoice (Romans 12:15)

A According to Romans, chapter 12, verse 16, what should you be willing to do?

A. Associate with people of low position (Romans 12:16)

G In whose eyes should you be careful to do what is right?

A. The eyes of everyone (Romans 12:17)

G At what should you live with everyone if it is possible?

A. Peace (Romans 12:18)

G For what should you leave room?

A. God's wrath (Romans 12:19)

G On what will you heap burning coals in doing this?

A. Your enemy's head (Romans 12:20)

X From what Old Testament book does the following quotation come: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head"?

A. Proverbs (Romans 12:20)

G What should you overcome with good?

A. Evil (Romans 12:21)

## Romans 13

A According to Romans, chapter 13, verse 1, what is there?

A. No authority except that which God has established (Romans 13:1)

G Who should be subject to the governing authorities?

A. Everyone (Romans 13:1)

G What is whoever rebels against the authority doing?

A. Rebelling against what God has instituted (Romans 13:2)

G For whom do rulers hold no terror?

A. Those who do right (Romans 13:3)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended"?

A. Romans 13 (Romans 13:3)

G What do rulers bring on the wrongdoer?

A. Punishment (Romans 13:4)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer"?

A. Romans 13 (Romans 13:4)

G Why is it necessary to submit to the authorities?

A. Not only because of possible punishment but also as a matter of conscience (Romans 13:5)

A According to Romans, chapter 13, verse 6, what do the authorities do?

A. They give their full time to governing (Romans 13:6)

G What if you owe honor?

A. Then pay honor (Romans 13:7)

G What should you pay if you owe respect?

A. Respect (Romans 13:7)

G What has whoever loves others fulfilled?

A. The law (Romans 13:8)

G How should you love your neighbor?

A. As yourself (Romans 13:9)

G Of what is love the fulfillment?

A. The law (Romans 13:10)

A According to Romans, chapter 13, verse 11, what has already come?

A. The hour for you to wake up from your slumber (Romans 13:11)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “And do this, understanding the present time: The hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed”?

A. Romans 13 (Romans 13:11)

G What is almost here?

A. The day (Romans 13:12)

X Two-part question: what should we put aside, and what should we put on?

A. 1) The deeds of darkness 2) The armor of light (Romans 13:12)

G What desires should you not think about how to gratify?

A. The desires of the flesh (Romans 13:14)

## Romans 14

G Whom should you accept without quarreling over disputable matters?

A. The one whose faith is weak (Romans 14:1)

G What does another, whose faith is weak, eat?

A. Only vegetables (Romans 14:2)

G With what must the one who eats everything not treat the one who does not?

A. Contempt (Romans 14:3)

G Who will stand?

A. Servants (Romans 14:4)

G In what should each person be fully convinced?

A. Their own mind (Romans 14:5)

G Who should be fully convinced in their own mind?

A. Each person (Romans 14:5)

G To whom does whoever eats meat do so?

A. The Lord (Romans 14:6)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “For none of us lives for ourselves alone, and none of us dies for ourselves alone”?

A. Romans 14 (Romans 14:7)

A According to Romans, chapter 14, verse 8, to whom do we belong?

A. The Lord (Romans 14:8)

G To what did Christ return?

A. Life (Romans 14:9)

G How do you treat your brother or sister?

A. With contempt (Romans 14:10)

G Before whom will every knee bow?

A. The Lord (Romans 14:11)

G To whom will each of us give an account of ourselves?

A. God (Romans 14:12)

G On whom should we stop passing judgment?

A. One another (Romans 14:13)

G How is nothing unclean?

A. In itself (Romans 14:14)

G How are you no longer acting if your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat?

A. In love (Romans 14:15)

A According to Romans, chapter 14, verse 16, what should you not do?

A. Let what you know is good be spoken of as evil (Romans 14:16)

G Of what is the kingdom of God not a matter?

A. Eating and drinking (Romans 14:17)

G Why is the kingdom of God a matter of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit?

A. Because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and receives human approval (Romans 14:17-18)

G Who receives human approval?

A. Anyone who serves Christ in this way (Romans 14:18)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification"?

A. Romans 14 (Romans 14:19)

G What is clean?

A. All food (Romans 14:20)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother or sister to fall"?

A. Romans 14 (Romans 14:21)

G What should you keep between yourself and God?

A. Whatever you believe about these things (Romans 14:22)

G When is whoever has doubts condemned?

A. If they eat (Romans 14:23)

## Romans 15

G With what ought we who are strong to bear?

A. The failings of the weak (Romans 15:1)

G Whom should each of us please for their good?

A. Our neighbors (Romans 15:2)

G What have fallen on me?

A. The insults of those who insult you (Romans 15:3)

A According to Romans, chapter 15, verse 4, how might we have hope?

A. Through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide (Romans 15:4)

G What may the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you?

A. The same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had (Romans 15:5)

G With what may you glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ?

A. One mind and one voice (Romans 15:6)

G Whom did Christ accept?

A. You (Romans 15:7)

G What should you bring to God?

A. Praise (Romans 15:7)

A According to Romans, chapter 15, verse 8, what might be confirmed?

A. The promises made to the patriarchs (Romans 15:8)



G Who has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth?

A. Christ (Romans 15:8)

G Why has Christ become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth?

A. So that the promises made to the patriarchs might be confirmed and, moreover, that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy (Romans 15:8-9)

G Of what will I sing the praises?

A. Your name (God's) (Romans 15:9)

X From what two Old Testament books does the following quotation come: "Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles; I will sing the praises of your name"?

A. 1) 2 Samuel 2) Psalms (Romans 15:9)

G With whom should you Gentiles rejoice?

A. His (God's) people (Romans 15:10)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people"?

A. Romans 15 (Romans 15:10)

G Whom should all you Gentiles praise?

A. The Lord (Romans 15:11)

A According to Romans, chapter 15, verse 12, who will rule over the nations?

A. The Root of Jesse (Romans 15:12)

G What will the Root of Jesse arise to do?

A. Rule over the nations (Romans 15:12)

G Who will hope in the Root of Jesse?

A. The Gentiles (Romans 15:12)

G Who may fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him?

A. The God of hope (Romans 15:13)

A According to Romans, chapter 15, verse 14, of what are you yourselves full?

A. Goodness (Romans 15:14)

G Whom are you competent to instruct?

A. One another (Romans 15:14)

G On what has Paul written you quite boldly?

A. Some points (Romans 15:15)

G Who gave Paul grace?

A. God (Romans 15:15)

G What did God give Paul grace to be?

A. A minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles (Romans 15:15-16)

G What duty did God give Paul?

A. The priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God (Romans 15:16)

G Who gave Paul the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God?

A. God (Romans 15:16)

G In what does Paul glory in Christ Jesus?

A. His service to God (Romans 15:17)

A According to Romans, chapter 15, verse 18, what will Paul not do?

A. Venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through him in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what he has said and done (Romans 15:18)

G Who will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through him in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what he has said and done?

A. Paul (Romans 15:18)

A According to Romans, chapter 15, verse 19, what has Paul fully proclaimed?

A. The gospel of Christ (Romans 15:19)

G Whose gospel has Paul fully proclaimed from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum?

A. The gospel of Christ (Romans 15:19)

G When has it been Paul's ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known?

A. Always (Romans 15:20)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "Those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand"?

A. Romans 15 (Romans 15:21)

X From what Old Testament book does the following quotation come: "Those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand"?

A. Isaiah (Romans 15:21)

G To whom has Paul often been hindered from coming?

A. You (all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people) (Romans 15:22)

G For how long has Paul been longing to visit you?

A. Many years (Romans 15:23)

G Whom does Paul plan to visit when he goes to Spain?

A. You (all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people) (Romans 15:23-24)

A According to Romans, chapter 15, verse 24, what does Paul hope to do?

A. See you while passing through (Romans 15:24)

G When does Paul hope to see you?

A. While passing through (Romans 15:24)

G In whose service is Paul on his way to Jerusalem?

A. The service of the Lord's people there (Romans 15:25)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "Now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem in the service of the Lord's people there"?

A. Romans 15 (Romans 15:25)

G Who were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the Lord's people in Jerusalem?

A. Macedonia and Achaia (Romans 15:26)

G Who owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings if they have shared in the Jews' spiritual blessings?

A. The Gentiles (Romans 15:27)

A According to Romans, chapter 15, verse 28, where will Paul go?

A. To Spain (Romans 15:28)

G Whom will Paul visit on the way to Spain?

A. You (all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people) (Romans 15:28)

G When will Paul come in the full measure of the blessing of Christ?

A. When he comes to you (Romans 15:29)

G By what does Paul urge you to join him in his struggle?

A. Praying to God for him (Romans 15:30)

G From whom should you pray that Paul may be kept safe?

A. The unbelievers in Judea (Romans 15:31)

A According to Romans, chapter 15, verse 32, what may Paul be?

A. Refreshed in your company (Romans 15:32)

G Who may be refreshed in your company?

A. Paul (Romans 15:32)

## Romans 16

G What is Phoebe?

A. A deacon of the church in Cenchrea (Romans 16:1)

G Whom does Paul ask you to give any help she may need from you?

A. Phoebe (Romans 16:2)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my co-workers in Christ Jesus”?

A. Romans 16 (Romans 16:3)

G What did Priscilla and Aquila risk for Paul?

A. Their lives (Romans 16:4)

G Where was Epenetus the first convert to Christ?

A. In the province of Asia (Romans 16:5)

G For whom did Mary work very hard?

A. You (all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people) (Romans 16:6)

G Among whom are Andronicus and Junia outstanding?

A. The apostles (Romans 16:7)

A According to Romans, chapter 16, verse 8, whom should you greet?

A. Ampliatus (Romans 16:8)

G Whose dear friend is Stachys?

A. Paul’s (Romans 16:9)

G What has stood the test?

A. Apelles’ fidelity to Christ (Romans 16:10)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “Greet Herodion, my fellow Jew”?

A. Romans 16 (Romans 16:11)

G How has Persis worked in the Lord?

A. Very hard (Romans 16:12)

A According to Romans, chapter 16, verse 13, who is chosen in the Lord?

A. Rufus (Romans 16:13)

G Who has been a mother to Paul too?

A. Rufus’ mother (Romans 16:13)

A According to Romans, chapter 16, verse 14, whom should you greet?

A. Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas and the other brothers and sisters with them (Romans 16:14)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas and all the Lord’s people who are with them”?

A. Romans 16 (Romans 16:15)

G Whom should you greet with a holy kiss?

A. One another (Romans 16:16)

G Who urges you to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned?

A. Paul (Romans 16:17)

G Who deceive the minds of naïve people by smooth talk and flattery?

A. Those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned (Romans 16:17-18)

G What are such people serving?

A. Their own appetites (Romans 16:18)

A According to Romans, chapter 16, verse 19, what does Paul want you to be?

A. Wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil (Romans 16:19)

G Who wants you to be wise about what is good and innocent about what is evil?

A. Paul (Romans 16:19)

G When will the God of peace crush Satan under your feet?

A. Soon (Romans 16:20)

G To whom does Timothy send his greetings?

A. You (all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people) (Romans 16:21)

G What did Tertius write down?

A. This letter (Romans 16:22)

G Whom does Tertius greet in the Lord?

A. You (all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people) (Romans 16:22)

G What does Paul and the whole church here enjoy?

A. Gaius' hospitality (Romans 16:23)

G In accordance with what is he able to establish you?

A. My (Paul's) gospel (Romans 16:25)

G Through what is the mystery hidden for long ages past now revealed and made known?

A. The prophetic writings (Romans 16:25-26)

A According to Romans, chapter 16, verse 26, what comes from faith?

A. Obedience (Romans 16:26)

## James 1

G Who are scattered among the nations?

A. The twelve tribes (James 1:1)

G Why should you consider it pure joy whenever you face trials of many kinds?

A. Because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance (James 1:2-3)

G What does the testing of your faith produce?

A. Perseverance (James 1:3)

G What should you let finish its work?

A. Perseverance (James 1:4)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you"?

A. James 1 (James 1:5)

G Like what is the one who doubts?

A. A wave of the sea (blown and tossed by the wind) (James 1:6)

G Who is double-minded and unstable in all they do?

A. The one who doubts (James 1:6, 8)

G From whom should the one who doubts not expect to receive anything?

A. The Lord (James 1:7)

G What ought believers in humble circumstances to do?

A. Take pride in their high position (James 1:9)

A According to James, chapter 1, verse 10, what should the rich do?

A. Take pride in their humiliation (James 1:10)

G Why should the rich take pride in their humiliation?

A. Since they will pass away like a wild flower (James 1:10)

G What is the plant's beauty?

A. Destroyed (James 1:11)

G Who will fade away even while they go about their business?

A. The rich (James 1:11)

G What has the Lord promised to those who love him?

A. The crown of life (James 1:12)

G Whom does God not tempt?

A. Anyone (James 1:13)

X Complete, in essence, the following: "For God cannot be tempted ..."

A. "... by evil, nor does he tempt anyone" (James 1:13)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed"?

A. James 1 (James 1:14)

G When does sin give birth to death?

A. When it is full-grown (James 1:15)

G How does the Father of the heavenly lights not change?

A. Like shifting shadows (James 1:17)

A According to James, chapter 1, verse 18, what did he choose to give us?

A. Birth (through the word of truth) (James 1:18)

G What should everyone be quick to do?

A. Listen (James 1:19)

G What does God desire?

A. Righteousness (James 1:20)

G What can save you?

A. The word planted in you (James 1:21)

G What should you humbly accept?

A. The word planted in you (James 1:21)

G What should you not merely do?

A. Listen to the word (James 1:22)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like"?

A. James 1 (James 1:23-24)

G Like whom is anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says?

A. Someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like (James 1:23-24)

G In what will whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it, be blessed?

A. What they do (James 1:25)

A According to James, chapter 1, verse 26, what is worthless?

A. The religion of those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues (James 1:26)

## James 2

G What must believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ not show?

A. Favoritism (James 2:1)

G Among whom have you discriminated if you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the poor man, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet"?

A. Yourself (James 2:3-4)

A According to James, chapter 2, verse 4, what have you done?

A. Discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts (James 2:4)

G Who has chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith?

A. God (James 2:5)

G Who are dragging you into court?

A. The rich (James 2:6)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court?"

A. James 2 (James 2:6)

G What is the royal law found in Scripture?

A. "Love your neighbor as yourself" (James 2:8)

G As what are you convicted by the law if you show favoritism?

A. Lawbreakers (James 2:9)

G When is whoever keeps the whole law guilty of breaking all of it?

A. If they stumble at just one point (James 2:10)

X From what two Old Testament books does the following quotation come: "You shall not commit adultery"?

A. 1) Exodus 2) Deuteronomy (James 2:11)

G How should you speak and act?

A. As those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom (James 2:12)

G Why should you speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives Freedom?

A. Because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful (James 2:12-13)

G What will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful?

A. Judgment without mercy (James 2:13)

A According to James, chapter 2, verse 15, what should you suppose?

A. A brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food (James 2:15)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "If one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,' but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it?"

A. James 2 (James 2:16)

G What is dead if it is not accompanied by action?

A. Faith (by itself) (James 2:17)

G By what will James show you his faith?

A. His deeds (James 2:18)

X Complete, in essence, the following: “Show me your faith without ...”

A. “... deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds” (James 2:18)

G Who believe that there is one God and shudder?

A. Even the demons (James 2:19)

A According to James, chapter 2, verse 20, what is faith without deeds?

A. Useless (James 2:20)

G For what was our father Abraham considered righteous?

A. For what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar (James 2:21)

G Whom did our father Abraham offer on the altar?

A. His son Isaac (James 2:21)

G What was Abraham’s faith made by what he did?

A. Complete (James 2:22)

G What says, “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness”?

A. The scripture (James 2:23)

G What is a person considered by what they do and not by faith alone?

A. Righteous (James 2:24)

G What did Rahab give to the spies?

A. Lodging (James 2:25)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she

did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction?”

A. James 2 (James 2:25)

A According to James, chapter 2, verse 26, how is faith without deeds dead?

A. As the body without the spirit is dead (James 2:26)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead”?

A. James 2 (James 2:26)

X Two-part question: what is the body without the spirit, and what is faith without deeds?

A. 1) Dead 2) Dead (James 2:26)

### James 3

G How will we who teach be judged?

A. More strictly (James 3:1)

G Who is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check?

A. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say (James 3:2)

X Complete, in essence, the following: “When we put bits into ...”

A. “... the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal” (James 3:3)

G How are ships steered?

A. By a very small rudder (James 3:4)

G By what is a great forest set on fire?

A. A small spark (James 3:5)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts”?

A. James 3 (James 3:5)

G Among what is the tongue a world of evil?

A. The parts of the body (James 3:6)

G What is itself set on fire by hell?

A. The tongue (James 3:6)

G What have been tamed by mankind?

A. All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures (James 3:7)

A According to James, chapter 3, verse 8, what can no human being do?

A. Tame the tongue (James 3:8)

G Who can tame the tongue?

A. No human being (James 3:8)

G Who have been made in God's likeness?

A. Human beings (James 3:9)

G Out of what come praise and cursing?

A. The same mouth (James 3:10)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring?"

A. James 3 (James 3:11)

G What cannot bear olives?

A. A fig tree (James 3:12)

A According to James, chapter 3, verse 13, how are deeds done?

A. In the humility that comes from wisdom (James 3:13)

G What should those who are wise and understanding among you do?

A. Show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom (James 3:13)

G What should you not deny?

A. The truth -- that you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts (James 3:14)

G What is demonic?

A. Such "wisdom" (James 3:15)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice"?

A. James 3 (James 3:16)

G Of what is the wisdom that comes from heaven full?

A. Mercy and good fruit (James 3:17)

G Who reap a harvest of righteousness?

A. Peacemakers who sow in peace (James 3:18)

#### James 4

G What battle within you?

A. Your desires (James 4:1)

G Why do you not have?

A. Because you do not ask God (James 4:2)

A According to James, chapter 4, verse 3, how do you ask?

A. With wrong motives (James 4:3)

G On what may you spend what you get?

A. Your pleasures (James 4:3)

G What does friendship with the world mean?

A. Enmity against God (James 4:4)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God"?

A. James 4 (James 4:4)

A According to James, chapter 4, verse 5, what does Scripture say?

A. That he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us (James 4:5)



- G What does God show to the humble?  
A. Favor (James 4:6)
- I In what book and chapter is the following:  
“But he gives us more grace”?  
A. James 4 (James 4:6)
- G To whom should you submit yourselves?  
A. God (James 4:7)
- G What if you come near to God?  
A. He will come near to you (James 4:8)
- X Complete, in essence, the following: “Come near to God and ...”  
A. “... he will come near to you” (James 4:8)
- G What should you change to mourning?  
A. Your laughter (James 4:9)
- A According to James, chapter 4, verse 10, who will lift you up?  
A. The Lord (James 4:10)
- G Against what does anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speak?  
A. The law (James 4:11)
- I In what book and chapter is the following: “Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another”?  
A. James 4 (James 4:11)
- G What is the one Lawgiver and Judge able to do?  
A. Save and destroy (James 4:12)
- A According to James, chapter 4, verse 13, who should listen?  
A. You who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money” (James 4:13)
- G What appears for a little while and then vanishes?  
A. A mist (James 4:14)
- G What will we do if it is the Lord’s will?  
A. Live and do this or that (James 4:15)
- G When will we live and do this or that?  
A. If it is the Lord’s will (James 4:15)
- G What is all such boasting?  
A. Evil (James 4:16)
- G In what do you boast?  
A. Your arrogant schemes (James 4:16)
- G What if anyone knows the good they ought to do and doesn’t do it?  
A. It is sin for them (James 4:17)
- James 5
- A According to James, chapter 5, verse 1, what should you rich people do?  
A. Weep and wail (because of the misery that is coming on you) (James 5:1)
- G Who should weep and wail?  
A. You rich people (James 5:1)
- G What have eaten your clothes?  
A. Moths (James 5:2)
- G Whose wealth has rotted?  
A. Rich people’s (James 5:2)
- G How will your gold’s and silver’s corrosion eat your flesh?  
A. Like fire (James 5:3)
- G What will eat your flesh like fire?  
A. Your (rich people’s) gold’s and silver’s corrosion (James 5:3)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days”?

A. James 5 (James 5:3)

A According to James, chapter 5, verse 4, what have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty?

A. The cries of the harvesters (James 5:4)

G What have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty?

A. The cries of the harvesters (James 5:4)

X Complete, in essence, the following: “The cries of the harvesters ...”

A. “... have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty” (James 5:4)

G Who have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence?

A. Rich people (James 5:5)

G Who have condemned and murdered the innocent one?

A. Rich people (James 5:6)

G Whom was the innocent one not opposing?

A. Rich people (James 5:6)

A According to James, chapter 5, verse 7, until when should you be patient?

A. The Lord’s coming (James 5:7)

G What should you be until the Lord’s coming?

A. Patient (James 5:7)

G Whose coming is near?

A. The Lord’s (James 5:8)

G Why should you too be patient and stand firm?

A. Because the Lord’s coming is near (James 5:8)

A According to James, chapter 5, verse 9, when will you be judged?

A. If you grumble against one another (James 5:9)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “Don’t grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!”?

A. James 5 (James 5:9)

G As what should you take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord?

A. An example of patience in the face of suffering (James 5:10)

A According to James, chapter 5, verse 11, whom do we count as blessed?

A. Those who have persevered (James 5:11)

G Whom do we count as blessed?

A. Those who have persevered (James 5:11)

G By what should you not swear?

A. Heaven or earth or anything else (James 5:12)

G What if anyone is happy?

A. Let them sing songs of praise (James 5:13)

G Who should sing songs of praise?

A. Anyone who is happy (James 5:13)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise”?

A. James 5 (James 5:13)

G Over whom should the elders of the church pray?

A. Anyone among you who is sick (James 5:14)

G Whom should anyone among you who is sick call to pray over them and anoint them with oil?

A. The elders of the church (James 5:14)

A According to James, chapter 5, verse 15, what will the Lord do?

A. Raise the sick person up (James 5:15)

G Whom will the prayer offered in faith make well?

A. The sick person (James 5:15)

G To whom should you confess your sins?

A. Each other (James 5:16)

G Why should you confess your sins to each other and pray for each other?

A. So that you may be healed (James 5:16)

A According to James, chapter 5, verse 17, what was Elijah?

A. A human being (even as we are) (James 5:17)

G Who was a human being, even as we are?

A. Elijah (James 5:17)

G What was Elijah?

A. A human being (even as we are) (James 5:17)

G What did the heavens give?

A. Rain (James 5:18)

G What produced its crops?

A. The earth (James 5:18)

G What if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring that person back?

A. Remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from death and cover over a multitude of sins (James 5:19-20)

G When should you remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from death and cover over a multitude of sins?

A. If one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring that person back (James 5:19-20)

G What will whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way do?

A. Save them from death and cover over a multitude of sins (James 5:20)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from death and cover over a multitude of sins"?

A. James 5 (James 5:20)

## Memory Verse List

### Romans

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### James

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5:20

# NAZARENE YOUTH BIBLE QUIZZING SCORE SHEET

ROUND \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_ Winner \_\_\_\_\_

| TEAM:                           |                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |              |              |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|--------------|--------------|
| NO.                             | NAME OF QUIZZER | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | OT | TOTAL POINTS | TOTAL ERRORS |
| 1                               |                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |              |              |
| 2                               |                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |              |              |
| 3                               |                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |              |              |
| 4                               |                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |              |              |
| S                               |                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |              |              |
| <b>BONUS AND PENALTY POINTS</b> |                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |              |              |
| <b>RUNNING SCORE</b>            |                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |              |              |

| TEAM:                           |                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |              |              |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|--------------|--------------|
| NO.                             | NAME OF QUIZZER | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | OT | TOTAL POINTS | TOTAL ERRORS |
| 1                               |                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |              |              |
| 2                               |                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |              |              |
| 3                               |                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |              |              |
| 4                               |                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |              |              |
| S                               |                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |              |              |
| <b>BONUS AND PENALTY POINTS</b> |                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |              |              |
| <b>RUNNING SCORE</b>            |                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |              |              |

20pts for each correct "jump" answer  
 10pts for each correct bonus answer

10pts bonus for 3rd, 4th, 5th quizzer correct "jump" answer  
 10pts bonus for quiz-out with no error

10pt penalty for error-out  
 10pt penalty on errors after question 15

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