

**Reading Together**  
**New Testament Bible Reading**  
**September 19 – September 25**

**Monday, September 19 – Romans 2: 17 – 29**

Now Paul turns his attention to the Jews. Rather than putting their faith in God, the Jews put their faith in the Law and in their ability to keep the Law. The problem is, as Paul points out in verses 21-24, even though the Jews have the Law they don't keep the Law, as God intended for them to keep it. For the Jews to be circumcised meant that they were with God, but Paul makes the point in verses 28-29 that physical circumcision meant nothing if your heart wasn't circumcised also. **Deuteronomy 30:6** The LORD your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live.

True circumcision is circumcision of the heart which means we repent of our sins and evil desires to turn to God with all of our hearts.

**Tuesday, September 20 – Romans 3: 1 – 20**

At the end of Romans 1 through all of Romans 2, Paul lays out the case that pagan Gentiles have chosen sin over God, and moral Jews and Gentiles have chosen to judge others and put their faith in the law rather than put their faith in God. In these verses Paul will continue to build his case against all mankind by pointing out that each one of us is sinful and we have not lived up to what we were created to be by God.

Paul starts in verses 1-4, by making the case that even though the Jews have tremendous advantages over the Gentiles, because they have been entrusted with the promises of God, those promises are worthless without faith. Isn't that the same for us? How many people do you know who grew up in a Christian home, knew all of the promises of Christ, and assumed they were part of those promises even though they never developed a real faith of their own? Paul's point in verses 3 and 4 is that those who don't have faith can't assume they are part of the promise, even though God is always faithful to his promise. In other words, those who have faith will see the promises of God fulfilled, while those who only know about the

promises, but don't have a faith of their own, will not see God's promises fulfilled in their own lives. In verses 5-8, Paul tells us that even though our sinfulness makes God's holiness and glory even more evident for all to see that does not excuse our sinfulness. We were not created to glorify God in a backhanded way by sinning to show off his glory, but rather, we were created to glorify God through our worship and lives. Because we don't, we are all worthy of God's judgment.

In verses 9 -20, Paul makes an indictment of all of humanity—Jew and Gentile alike. We are all in the same boat; we are sinners who deserve God's wrath. In verses 10-18, Paul strings together a group of Old Testament quotations to show how sinful all of humanity is. Because we do not obey the Law of God we stand silent and condemned before it.

### **Wednesday, September 21 – Romans 3: 21 – 31**

These verses contain the very core truth of what Christianity is all about. Verse 21 is referring to Jesus, he is the righteousness from God that the Law and the Prophets pointed us to. We make his righteousness our righteousness through faith in him. The cross doesn't just forgive our sins, it also gives us Christ's perfect record of obedience as our own perfect record of obedience. Look at verse 22, righteousness comes by faith in Christ.

In verses 23-26, Paul tells us that Christ took the punishment that we deserved for our sin. God's justice demanded that a sacrifice be made for our sin, either our life or the sinless life of another in our place. Jesus is the sinless Lamb of God who was sacrificed to make atonement (pay the price for) our sins.

Because we are all saved in the same way, and because it is the only way to be saved none of us have anything to boast about on our own, except the cross of Christ.

### **Thursday, September 22 – Romans 4: 1 – 25**

In chapter 4, Paul uses Abraham as an example of what he is talking about. Even though Abraham lived 2000 years before Christ, he too lived his life in faith, and his righteousness came by faith. Abraham

wasn't declared righteous because of what he did. He was declared righteous because he believed God. His actions came as a result of that belief. Before belief came to Abraham he was worshipping the moon-god of his forefathers. But then God came and spoke to Abraham, and made Abraham promises. Abraham believed God and acted on the promises that God made to him (Genesis 12-22). Paul's point in all of this is that it was Abraham's faith in the promises that God had made to him that justified him (declared him to be righteous) in God's sight. In the same way, it is our faith in Christ's death and resurrection that justifies us (makes us righteous) in God's sight. Obedience is not what makes us righteous. Faith in Christ is what makes us righteous and then obedience flows from that faith.

### **Friday, September 23 – Romans 5: 1 – 11**

Verse 1 of chapter 5 is such an important verse for us to remember. Because we have been justified (made righteous) through faith we can now have peace with God. This faith in Christ is the foundation for all that we are. It gives us access to grace (verse 2), it gives us hope (verse 2), and grace and hope are what we need to have in order to persevere through the trials and sufferings of this life (verse 3). When we persevere by faith we develop Godly character (verse 4). It is the work of the Holy Spirit that constantly reminds us of the hope that we have in Christ. It is the Holy Spirit that reminds us that in spite of our sin and our ungodliness, and our unworthiness Christ died for us as a tangible demonstration of God's love for us (verses 6-8). If God has loved us this much when we were enemies, how much more will He love us as his friends because of the gift of righteousness Christ has given us through the cross?

### **Saturday, September 24 – Romans 5: 12 – 21**

You might call this passage the tale of two Adams. Our forefather Adam, in the Garden of Eden, when faced with the choice to obey God or eat from the tree, sinned and ate from the tree. As a result of that sin we are all condemned to die (verses 12-14). But the second Adam, Jesus, when faced with his own choice in the Garden of Gethsemane chose to obey God at the cost of his own life. Because of Christ's obedience, we, through faith, can receive his righteousness and life as our own. Verse 19 sums it all up very well. Through the disobedience of Adam we were all made to be sinners, through the obedience of Christ we can all be made righteous.

This is what theologians mean when they speak of Adam and Jesus as our federal head (representative). For each of us the choice is very stark, either we embrace Adam as our federal head, meaning Adam's sin is imputed to us and we are condemned to death, or we embrace Jesus as our federal head, meaning his righteousness is imputed to us, and we live eternally.

### **Sunday, September 25 – Romans 6: 1 – 14**

In Chapter 6 of Romans Paul answers the following question: If our righteous comes by grace through faith and not by what we do, does that mean we should sin more to experience more grace? Is grace just an encouragement to sin? It is somewhat of a crazy question, but it is a question that is sometimes asked because we have such a hard time receiving salvation by grace alone—oftentimes we think we have to add our own good works to it. But there is nothing we can add to the righteousness that comes from Christ, because his righteousness is perfect. In these verses, Paul makes the point that when we attach our lives to what Christ did on the cross through faith, it means we have died to sin with Christ, and since Christ has been raised to new life, so have we (verse 4). In response to the grace, mercy, and love we have experienced to Christ, Paul urges us to count ourselves dead to sin and alive in Christ. Always remember that obedience follows faith and faith comes only as we experience the grace of Christ.