

WEEKLY LESSON PLAN

S. H. Mathews

Name of Course: ROMANSSemester Week: 1 Date: _____**I. Romans 1:1-7- the Gospel of God: A Summary**

- a. Two elements- vs. 2-4
 - i. Prophesied in the OT (example, the *protoevangelion* in Gn. 3:15)
 - ii. Focus on the Son
 - 1. His humanity
 - 2. His deity (c.f. Col. 2:9)
 - 3. Spirit of Holiness = Holy Spirit
 - 4. Declared by the resurrection
 - 5. Vs. 3-4 may be an early creed that Paul is reciting
- b. Two realities- vs. 5 (key verse)
 - i. Obedience (that consists of....)
 - ii. Faith- not just intellectual knowledge, but personal commitment
 - iii. Implication of the obedience of faith: lordship salvation. Can you call Jesus “Savior”, but not call Him “Lord”?
- c. Two callings- vs. 1, 6
 - i. Paul’s calling as an apostle

ii. The Romans' call to salvation- God took the initiative

II. The Gospel is a debt- vs. 8-15

a. A debt of prayer- vs. 8-13

i. Thanksgiving and faith

ii. Focus- visit to Rome for encouragement and an evangelistic harvest

iii. The goal was God's blessing

iv. The key here is God's will- everything revolves around it.

b. A debt to preach- vs. 14-15. "Debt" = "joyful obligation"

i. Because of Paul's commission- he must be obedient

ii. Because of peoples' needs

iii. The debt is to all men, regardless of stature

III. The Power of the Gospel- vs. 16-17

a. Gospel equals power- it is not mere advice; it changes lives

i. The meaning of salvation- to be safe eternally

ii. Universal- to Jew and Greek

iii. Conditional- upon faith

iv. Because the gospel is power, we preach expecting something to happen!

b. Gospel equals righteousness

i. Conformity to norm- Roman view of righteousness

ii. God's activity- saving power, right standing

iii. Man's receptivity

iv. "From faith to faith"- "from beginning to end"

- v. Habakkuk 2:4- “the just shall live by faith” may be better read in Heb. and Gk. as “The just by faith shall live.”

IV. No excuses for God’s rejection- vs. 18-21

- a. A revealed wrath
 - i. Definition- not like our wrath; it is consistent. It is God’s personal, constant reaction and aversion to sin.
 - ii. Expresses holiness- God is without sin, and will not tolerate sin.
 - iii. Expresses love- God punishes sin because of the effect sin has on our lives
- b. Objects of wrath- two particular categories of sin mentioned:
 - i. Ungodliness- lack of reverence for God
 - ii. Unrighteousness- outward acts of ungodliness
- c. The revelation of God-
 - i. Seen and understood- physical and spiritual perception (natural theology)
 - ii. Purpose for revelation- man is without excuse

V. Effects of man’s response

- a. Man-made religion- vs. 22-23
 - i. Begins with pride- vs. 22, *moros*
 - ii. Exchange of glory- God’s for man’s, nature’s. (Illustrations: Protagoras- ancient Greek philosopher who said “Man is the measure of all things.” Mathews went to the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History in D.C. and found that it was a shrine to evolution. The displays were not about the animals, but about the process of evolution.)
- b. Wrath revealed against lifestyle- vs. 24-25

- c. Wrath revealed against sexual perversion- vs. 26-27
 - i. Means of wrath- God gave them over to sin- punishment for sin is more sin. The law of sowing and reaping is illustrated here.
 - ii. There is a connection between idolatry and sexual perversion.
 - iii. Idol- anything you must seek approval from before you obey God.
 - iv. Both idolatry and sexual perversion are an exchange of the things of God for the things of man.
 - v. Homosexuality: 1.) contrary to nature; 2.) brings a penalty
- d. Wrath revealed against attitudes- 28-32
 - i. Their minds rejected Him so He gave their minds over to sin
 - ii. Results of sinful attitudes: more sin
 - 1. Unrighteousness
 - 2. Wickedness- a desire to inflict harm
 - 3. Greed- aggressive desire to have more
 - 4. Evil- ill will, evil intentions
 - 5. Envy- jealousy of position, power, possessions
 - 6. Murder- killing
 - 7. Strife- disunity, inability to get along
 - 8. Deceit- attempt to bait and trap another
 - 9. Malice- worst interpretation of others' intentions
 - 10. Gossip- spreads lies secretly
 - 11. Slander- spread lies openly
 - 12. Haters of God- see Him as a barrier to their good

13. Pride- focus on self
14. Arrogance- better than God and others
15. Without understanding- self-explanatory
16. Unloving- break down in family
17. Unmerciful- refuse reconciliation
18. Boastful- no glory to God
19. Faithless- cannot please God (Heb. 11:6)
20. Heartless- no compassion
21. Ruthless- intent on causing pain

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Name of Course: ROMANSSemester Week: 2 Date: _____**I. God's Judgment of All People- Romans 2:1-10**

- a. Paul's approach in this text: diatribe. Pick on an imaginary opponent
- b. Theme is judgment- mentioned 10 times in ch. 2. Emphasis is judgment based in the truth.
- c. Judging others- vs. 1-3. Only God can judge rightly.
- d. A different standard?- vs. 4- God's kindness is to bring us to repentance
- e. Hardness and wrath- vs. 5- God's wrath is both current and eschatological
 - i. Hardness = *skleriov*, from which we get "sclerosis".
- f. The basis of judgment- vs. 6- each man according to his deeds. See Jer. 17:10; II Corinthians 5:10; I Peter 1:17, Rev. 20:12
- g. Two goals, two destinies- vs. 7-10
 - i. Goals: Glory or selfishness
 - ii. Destinies: eternal life or wrath and indignation
- h. Judgment begins in this life- vs. 9- tribulation means "pressure"- internal and external
- i. Priority in judgment- the same as priority for salvation "to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."
- j. A few terms:

- i. Glory = doxa- God's fame, heaviness, manifestation
- ii. Honor- for God
- iii. Immorality- life without corruption
- iv. Eternal life- both quantitative and qualitative
- v. Selfish: lives for self
- vi. Judgment begins in God's house; privilege = Responsibility. Greater knowledge = greater responsibility.

II. God's lack of favoritism in judgment- Romans 2:11-13

- a. Meaning of "partiality"- "to receive face"
- b. Same standard of judgment for Jews and Greeks- revelation received.
- c. Distinctions in judgment- Gentiles are judged without the law; Jews are judged under the law.
- d. Doers/hearers- vs. 13- having the law is not enough- obedience is mandatory.

III. Jewish advantages do not negate Jewish guilt- Romans 2:14-27

- a. The law of the Gentiles- vs. 14-16—natural law
 - i. Conscience
 - ii. Creation
 - iii. Cosmos
- b. The meaning of conscience- it accuses us of wrongdoing. We have a moral awareness of right and wrong. "Conscience" comes from two words:
 - i. "Con", meaning "with" or "together"
 - ii. "science", meaning "knowledge"
 - iii. Conscience means to know with God what He knows

c. Three characteristics of judgment

i. Eight benefits- 2:18-20

1. Know God's will
2. Approve the things that are essential
3. Instructed out of the law
4. Confidence as a guide to the blind
5. Light to the darkness
6. Corrector of the foolish
7. Teacher of the immature
8. The embodiment of knowledge and of the truth

ii. Eight boasts- reliance on nomov, or law- confidence in God's word.

1. Bear the name "Jew"
2. Rely on the law
3. Boast in God
4. Teach
5. Preach honesty
6. Faithfulness (no adultery)
7. Faithfulness (no idolatry)
8. Boast in the law

iii. Jewish inconsistency- Five questions- vs. 21-24

1. Do you teach yourself?
2. Do you steal?
3. Do you commit adultery?

4. Do you rob temples?

5. Do you dishonor God?

iv. True meaning of circumcision- internal, of the heart

IV. True Judaism is a matter of the heart- Romans 2:28-29

a. True circumcision- symbolizes ownership by God

i. Not outward

ii. Inward, of the heart, not the flesh

iii. Spiritual, not of the law

b. True Jew- Paul uses a pun here. The word “Jew” comes from the tribe of Judah, which means “praise”. A true Jew is one who is circumcised in the heart, praises God, and is praised by God.

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Name of Course: ROMANSSemester Week: 3 Date: _____I. **Advantage, Faith, Fairness, Guilt- Romans 3:1-18**

- a. Advantaged Jews- vs. 1-2-
 - i. God's blessings do not make us superior to others
 - ii. Jews were advantaged because they were entrusted with the oracles of God (OT canon)
 - iii. "entrusted" indicates keeping for another.
 - iv. The Jews' advantage was not that they had special privileges, but special responsibilities.
- b. Is God Faithful? – vs. 3-6
 - i. Man's sin does not nullify God's faithfulness
 - ii. Is God unrighteous? No.- vs. 5-6
- c. Is God Fair- vs. 7-8- Yes, He is fair.
- d. We are Guilty- vs. 9-18
 - i. In 10-18, Paul uses several OT quotes to demonstrate that we are slaves to sin:
 - 1. Ecc. 7- none is righteous
 - 2. Psalm 14- No one seeks God or understands

3. Psalm 14- we have left God's path and become useless

ii. In vs. 18, Paul speaks of the body

1. Throat, mouth lips- 13-18

a. Throats are open graves (Psalm 5:9)-

b. Tongues keep deceiving- setting a trap

c. Lips contain poison

d. Mouths are full of cursing

2. Feet- swift to destroy

3. The reason: no fear of God in our eyes

II. We are accountable to God- vs. 19-20

a. The Law of God:

i. Closes every mouth

ii. Makes all the world accountable to Him

iii. Brings full knowledge of sin.

III. But Now!- vs. 21-ff- Paul introduces the gospel

a. God's Remedy for man's sin- vs. 21-26

i. The revelation of past righteousness- vs. 21

1. Present revelation- 1:17

2. Jewish understanding of righteousness- the law

3. Past revelation- vs. 21

4. Meaning of righteousness: having an account paid; no more debt

5. Witnessed by the law and the prophets

b. Description of God's kind of Righteousness- vs. 22-24

- i. Relationship with a living person- Jesus Christ
- ii. Universally available- “for all”
- iii. Freely given
- c. Description of Sin- vs. 23
 - i. Meaning of Sin- singular picture
 - ii. Meaning of “come short”- continual
 - iii. Meaning of “glory”- God’s splendid attributes, character

IV. The Richness of God’s Righteousness- 24-26

- a. Three analogies
 - i. Courtroom- justification- no longer liable before the law
 - ii. Market- redemption- a slave purchased and set free
 - iii. Sacrificial system- propitiation- cost Jesus His blood, His life

V. Results of Righteousness- vs. 27-31

- a. Three questions:
 - i. Who can boast?- No one. God does the work of salvation
 - ii. For Jews only?- No, also gentiles (*eqnov*, “nations”)
 - iii. Does grace nullify law?- No, the law makes us aware of our need for grace.

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Name of Course: ROMANSSemester Week: 4 Date: _____Key word of chapter four: “reckon”. *Logizoumai*. A financial term. See Philemon 18.**I. Abraham was Justified by Faith, not Works- Romans 4:1-5**

- a. Everyone is living by one of two approaches to religion: faith or works.
- b. Paul asserts that justification by faith is an Old Testament concept, not a new idea.
- c. What is the basis of Abraham’s justification? Faith. – vs. 2
- d. Origin: *“Faith relies on the grace of the justifier. Works rely on the justice of the rewarder. When I consider the greatness of Paul’s speech, by which he says that the worker receives what is due to him, I can hardly persuade myself that there is any deed which could claim a reward from God as its due... Therefore, it seems that Paul is really referring here to evil deeds, of which Scripture frequently says that they get their due reward.”* (Bray 1998: 107)
- e. Quote from Genesis 16 is combined with account from Genesis 22. This reinforces the concept of progressive revelation.
- f. Vs. 3 is a “contrary to fact” statement in the Greek- a common rhetorical device.
“It’s not X, but let’s suppose that it is X.”
- g. Vs. 3 quotes Genesis 15:6
- h. “seed” in Genesis is singular, and refers to Christ
- i. Galatians 3:6

- j. Abraham did not earn righteousness; God bestowed it on him.
- k. Augustine: “*God makes the ungodly man godly, in order that he might persevere in this godliness and righteousness. For a man is justified in order that he might be just, not so that he might think that it is all right to go on sinning.*” (Bray 1998: 108)

II. The Blessings of Forgiven Sin- vs. 6-8

- a. The example of forgiven sin is Davis
- b. Vs. 7-8 quotes Psalm 32
- c. Description of sin: “lawless deeds”- deliberate passing of a boundary
- d. Threefold blessedness:
 - i. Lawless deeds forgiven
 - ii. Sins covered
 - iii. Sin not credited to our account
- e. Forgiveness in the Greek- “to send away” (i.e., the scapegoat sent into the wilderness)
- f. “Covered” = “Concealed”
- g. “not take into account”- not written in ledger book

III. Who receives these blessings?- vs. 9

- a. Jew only or Gentiles also? Gentiles also.

IV. When was Abraham made righteous?- vs. 10

- a. Before circumcision

V. Abraham is the father of all believers- vs. 11-12

- a. All the faithful, regardless of circumcision

- b. The promise was not received through the law.
- c. Galatians 3:17- the Mosaic Law was given 430 years after Abraham.
- d. Law and promises are opposites
- e. The purpose of the law is not to bring salvation, but wrath to show us our need of a savior.
- f. Origen: “After believing, Abraham received circumcision as a sign of the faith which he already had... which is how he can also be the father of those who are circumcised, provided that they share the same faith which he had while he was still uncircumcised.” (Bray 1998: 112)

VI. The promise is guaranteed by faith- vs. 16-25

- a. God’s promise is trustworthy.
- b. God’s character guarantees the promise- God’s character is the highest good in the universe. Euthyphro’s dilemma (from Plato): is something good because God says so, or does God say it’s good because it is? Christians answer this question by proposing a third horn: something is good insofar as it conforms to the character of God. The Greek philosopher Protagoras said that “Man is the measure of all things.” Christians say that God’s character is the measure of all things.
- c. Two great evidences of God’s power: resurrection; creation *ex nihilo*
- d. Augustine: “Everything which God did not beget of himself but made through his Word he made not out of things which already existed but out of what did not exist at all, i.e., out of nothing.” (Bray 1998: 117)
- e. Faith is only as good as the object of faith. Example: confederate money.

- f. Obstacles to faith: physical infirmities- 2 aspects of deadness
- g. Faith grows for the glory of God- vs. 20
- h. A definition of faith: fully assured that God is able- vs. 21
- i. The actions of God to secure justification:
 - i. Jesus delivered to death for our sins
 - ii. Jesus raised for our justification

VII. Stuart Brisco's characterization of Abraham's faith (for preaching)

- a. Contrary to hope (humanly speaking)
- b. Conversant with the problems
- c. Consistent in its progress
- d. Convinced of the promises
- e. Source: Briscoe, Stuart, *Romans*, in Ogilvie, Lloyd J. (ed.), *The Communicator's Commentary* (Waco: Word, 1982)

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Name of Course: ROMANS

Semester Week: 5 Date: _____

Adapted from Stott, John R. W., *Romans* (Downer's Grove, InterVarsity, 1994), pp. 138-ff.

I. The Results of Justification- Romans 5:1-11

- a. We have peace with God- vs. 1
- b. We are standing in grace- vs. 2
- c. We rejoice in our hope of the glory of God- vs. 2b
- d. We also rejoice in suffering- vs. 3-8
 - i. Suffering is the path to glory
 - ii. Suffering leads to maturity
 - iii. Suffering is the best context in which to become assured of God's love.
 - 1. The pouring out of the Holy Spirit – vs. 5b
 - a. The Holy Spirit is God's gift to all believers
 - b. The Holy Spirit is given at conversion
 - c. One of the Holy Spirit's ministries is to pour God's love into our hearts
 - 2. The death of Christ on the cross- vs. 8
 - a. For sinners in their sin
 - b. At just the right time
 - c. For God's enemies

- d. For those powerless to rescue themselves from sin
- e. We shall be saved through Christ- vs. 9-10
 - i. Saved from God's wrath- vs. 9
 - ii. Saved through Christ's life –vs. 10
- f. We rejoice in God- vs. 11
 - i. "It seems clear from this paragraph, then, that the major work of justified believers is joy, especially joy in God himself. We should be the most positive people in the world. For the new community of Jesus Christ is characterized not by a self-centered triumphalism but by a God-centered worship." (Stott, 148)

II. The two humanities: in Adam and in Christ- vs. 12-21

- a. Two links between Romans 5:1-11 and 5:12-21
 - i. Reconciliation and salvation are attributed to Jesus Christ, sin and death to Adam- vs. 9-10
 - ii. Both sections conclude with the phrase "through our Lord Jesus Christ" - vs. 11 and 21.
- b. Adam and Christ: an introduction- vs. 12-14
 - i. Sin entered through one man.
 - ii. Death entered the world through sin.
 - iii. Death came to all men, because all sinned.
 - iv. The trend is from universal sin to universal death.
- c. Adam and Christ Contrasted- vs. 15-17
 - i. The nature of their actions were different- vs. 15

- ii. The immediate effect of their actions was different- vs. 16
- iii. The ultimate effect of their actions was different- vs. 17
 - 1. Death reigned under Adam
 - 2. We will reign in Christ
- d. Adam and Christ compared- vs. 18-21
 - i. The verbiage here changes from “not like” and “how much more” (vs. 15-17), to “just as... so also” (vs. 18,19,21).
 - ii. The immediate results of their actions- paralleled: one trespass led to sin; one act of obedience led to life.- vs. 18
 - iii. Christ’s obedience is the fulfillment of Adam’s disobedience- vs. 19
 - iv. “Look at yourself in Adam; though you had done nothing you were declared a sinner. Look at yourself in Christ; and see that, though you have done nothing, you are declared to be righteous. That is the parallel.”
(Lloyd Jones, cited in Stott, p. 156-157)
 - v. A digression- What about Moses and the Law?- vs. 20
 - 1. Adam and Christ are the two types. Moses and the law were given to reveal sin in Adam and the need for Christ.
 - 2. An abundance of sin leads to an abundance of grace.

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Name of Course: ROMANSSemester Week: 6 Date: _____Adapted from Stott, John R. W., *Romans* (Downer's Grove, InterVarsity, 1994), pp. 166-ff.**I. United to Christ and Enslaved to God: Introduction- Romans 6:1-23**

- a.** Paul's previous discussion seems to have jumped from justification to glorification. What about sanctification? Sanctification is addressed here.
- b.** The charge: Paul's gospel of grace, rather than works, seems to lead to more sin.
- c.** The best of both worlds- more sin, and more grace?
- d.** The theme of Romans 6 is that God's grace does more than justify: it also sanctifies.
- e.** Two halves of Romans 6
 - i.** Grace unites us to Christ (1-14)
 - ii.** Grace enslaves us to God (15-23)
 - iii.** Vs. 1 and 15 both introduce their sections by asking the question "Shall we sin?"
 - iv.** This question is answered with an emphatic negative in vs. 2 and 15
 - v.** These questions are based on ignorance: "don't you know..." in vs. 3 and 16.
 - vi.** The sections each teach a radical discontinuity between pre-conversion life and the Christian life, by posing counter-questions: vs. 2 and 16.

II. United to Christ, or the Logic of our Baptism- vs. 1-14

- a.** Outline of the argument in Romans 6:1-14 in eight steps:
 - i.** We died to sin. How can we live in sin? (vs. 2)
 - ii.** How did we die to sin? Our baptism (act of faith) united us to Christ in His death. (vs. 3)
 - iii.** Having shared in His death, Christ wants us to share in his resurrection life (vs. 4)
 - iv.** Our former self was crucified with Christ so that we may be free from slavery to sin (vs. 6-7)
 - v.** Christ's death and resurrection were decisive events: he died to sin once and for all, but lives continuously unto God (vs. 8-10)
 - vi.** We are now what Christ is- dead to sin, alive to God (vs. 11).
 - vii.** Being alive from death, we offer our bodies to God as instruments of righteousness (12-13)
 - viii.** Sin will not be our master, because our position has changed- from under sin to under grace. Grace does not encourage sin; it outlaws it.
- b.** We died to sin (vs. 2)
 - i.** This is not a statement of the literal impossibility of living in sin, but the moral incongruity of doing so.
 - ii.** A popular misconception: when we are saved, we no longer want to sin. This is called Christian perfectionism.
 - 1.** This implies that Jesus was once subject to sin, but is no longer so, since He died to sin (vs. 10)

2. Paul exhorts Christians to be holy. He seems to assume that they can sin.
3. This is not compatible with Christian experience. We all want to sin.

c. We were baptized into Christ's death (vs. 3)

- i. This is a reference to water baptism. Baptism in the scripture is water baptism unless otherwise indicated.
- ii. Baptism symbolizes union with Christ, crucified, buried, and risen.
- iii. Baptism signifies, it does not secure. Baptism does not make anything happen; it represents what has happened.

d. God intends us to share in Christ's resurrection (vs. 4-5)

- i. The resurrection of Christ is not only an historical event and a Christian doctrine, but a personal experience to be entered into.
- ii. Baptism probably had greater meaning to Paul than to most Christians.

e. Our old self was crucified with Christ (vs. 6-7)

- i. Something happened, so that something else could happen, so that a third thing could happen.
- ii. We were crucified with Christ, so that the body of sin might be done away with, so that we should no longer be slaves to sin.
- iii. The "body of sin" is not "the sinful body." The body is not inherently sinful or worldly. A better reading would be "the sinful self".
- iv. How has this happened? By crucifixion with Christ (i.e., Galatians 5:24)

v. Justification demands a penalty for sin. The penalty is death. The only way to be justified is to pay the penalty. By participating in Christ's death, we pay the penalty. Or more accurately, he pays it for us.

vi. Having died with Him, we are called upon to live in Him.

f. We believe that we will live with Christ (vs. 8-10)

i. Two ways to read this:

1. Logical- sharing Christ's life now
2. Chronological- sharing Christ's resurrection on the last day
3. Paul probably has both in mind here.
4. "Life is resurrection anticipated; resurrection is life consummated."

(Stott p. 178)

g. We must count ourselves dead to sin, but alive to God (vs. 11)

i. This is a reference to the Christian's mindset- remember who you are.

ii. It is possible to live like a non-Christian, but why would you?

h. We must therefore offer ourselves to God (vs. 12-14)

i. The word "therefore" introduces the conclusion of Paul's argument.

ii. Paul's exhortation has positive and negative aspects.

1. Negative: do not let sin reign in your mortal body; don't obey the desires of sin (vs. 12)

2. Positive: offer yourself to God (vs. 13b)

iii. The basis for Paul's exhortation is that we have been brought from death to life (vs. 13b)

iv. A further reason: Sin shall not be your master (vs. 14)

1. This is an assurance or a promise, not a command

III. Enslaved to God, or the logic of our conversion (vs. 15-23)

- a. The Principle: self-surrender leads to slavery (vs. 16)

- i. This applies to sin, which leads to death; and to obedience, which leads to righteousness.
 - ii. “Slaves of obedience”, rather than “slaves of Christ”? Surrender to Christ “demands a total, radical, exclusive obedience.” (Stott 183)

- b. The Application of the Principle: Conversion involves an exchange of slaveries (vs. 17-18)

- i. First stage: You used to be slaves of sin (17a)
 - ii. Second stage: You wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted (17b)
 - iii. Third stage: You have been set free from sin (18a)
 - iv. Fourth stage: You have become slaves to righteousness (18b)

- c. The Analogy: Both Slaveries Develop (19)

- i. An analogy: “just as... so now”
 - ii. Slavery is dynamic, not static. They both grow with time and effort.
 - iii. An illustration: an old American Indian once told his grandson that there were two wolves fighting within him; fighting to control him. One would make him a good man, and one would make him a bad man. The boy asked “which one will win, grandfather?” The old man replied: “the one you feed.”

- d. The paradox: slavery is freedom and freedom is slavery (vs. 20-22)

- e. The conclusion: the ultimate antithesis (vs. 23)
 - i. Those who are in Adam serve sin, those in Christ serve God.
 - ii. A stark dichotomy: death or eternal life.
 - iii. Sin pays wages (death), but God gives a free gift (life)

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Name of Course: ROMANSSemester Week: 7 Date: _____**I. Romans 7:1-25- God's law and Christian discipleship**

- a.** This chapter raises questions about Christian holiness:
 - i.** Who is the 'wretched man' of vs. 24?
 - ii.** Is he delivered? How is he delivered? (vs. 25)
 - iii.** Is he normal, abnormal, immature, or backsliding?
- b.** "Paul's preoccupation is more historical than personal. He is not answering questions put to him in a holiness convention, but rather struggling with the place of the law in God's purpose."- Stott, 189
- c.** The question of the chapter: "What is the place of the law in Christian discipleship, now that Christ has come and inaugurated the new era?"- Stott, 189
- d.** What has Paul said so far in Romans about the law?
 - i.** Perfect obedience to the law is not possible.
 - ii.** Law bears witness to the grace in the gospel.
 - iii.** There are two antitheses between law and gospel: justification and sanctification.
- e.** Three possible attitudes to the law (Paul rejects the first two, and accepts the third)

- i.** Legalism
 - ii.** Antinomianism
 - iii.** ‘Law-fulfilling freedom’ (Stott, 191)
- II.** Outline of the first half of Romans 7:
 - a.** Legalism- vs. 1-6
 - b.** Antinomianism- vs. 7-13
 - c.** Law-fulfilling freedom- vs. 14-15
- III.** Release from the Law: A marriage metaphor (1-6)
 - a.** This is the third time Paul asked “do you not know?”
 - i.** 6:1- the meaning of baptism
 - ii.** 6:16- the implication of slavery
 - iii.** 7:1- the law only applies to the living
 - b.** The legal principle- vs. 1
 - i.** The law only applies to people while they are alive- “til death do us part”.
 - ii.** Death annuls the law.
 - c.** The domestic illustration- vs. 2-3
 - i.** The law binds a woman to her husband, but if he dies, she is free to marry again.
 - ii.** The implication is that since we died to sin with Christ, we are not bound by the law. We are free to attain righteousness through Christ, not through the law.
 - d.** The theological application- vs. 4
 - i.** How did we die? Through the body of Christ.

- ii. What does it mean that we died to the law? Dying to sin and dying to the law are the same thing, because dying to sin is paying the penalty dictated by the law.
- iii. The immediate purpose of our dying to sin (and to the law) is that we are free to belong to Christ.
- iv. The ultimate purpose of dying to sin and being united to Christ is that we might bear fruit to God. The analogy of fruit signifies bearing children in marriage, continuing the analogy.

e. The fundamental antithesis- vs. 5-6

- i. This is an antithesis between “two ages, the two covenants, or the two dispensations” (Stott, 196)
- ii. In the old life, we were dominated by flesh, law, sin, and death.
- iii. In our new life, we are released from the law, and are slaves to God through Christ.
- iv. “The Christian life is serving the risen Christ in the power of the Spirit.” (Stott, 197)
- v. This is the last reference to the Holy Spirit in Romans 7.

IV. A defense of the law: a past experience- vs. 7-13)

a. Is the law sin? No. Paul's previous questions in this pattern were about grace- does grace lead people to sin? This question is about the law- is the law the origin of sin and death?

- b. In Romans 6, Paul defends grace against charges that it leads to more sin; in Romans 7, he defends the law- it is not the cause of sin and death; rather, our fallen nature is to blame, and the law points to grace, which is the solution.
- c. Paul’s view of the law: holy, righteous, good, spiritual- vs. 12, 14)
- d. Who is “I” in Romans 7?
 - i. Paul, pre-conversion
 - ii. Paul, as a pre-conversion Pharisee
 - 1. Six parallel stages in the history of Adam and Paul (Stott, 200)
 - a. Paul’s “alive apart from the law” could correspond to Adam before the fall.
 - b. Paul: “the commandment came”; Adam was commanded by God not to eat from the tree.
 - c. Paul: “sin sprang to life”, seized the opportunity afforded by the commandment”; the serpent in the garden leads Adam and Eve to sin.
 - d. Paul: “sin deceived me”; Eve complained that Satan deceived her.
 - e. Paul was awakened to sin due to the prohibition on coveting (vs. 7); Adam and Eve sinned through covetousness.
 - f. Disobedience to the commandments of God brought death to Paul and Adam.

g. “Thus, the sequence of law-sin-death, so prominent in Romans, is evident in Genesis also.” (Stott 200).

iii. “I” is Israel (Douglas Moo).

1. The law throughout Romans 7 is the law of Moses, so a reference to Adam is anachronistic.
2. Vs. 9 is a reference to the giving of the 10 commandments on Sinai.
3. Vs. 9-10 (life-commandment-sin-death) describes Israel’s history.
4. Moo concedes that “I” may not be Israel, but Paul in solidarity with Israel.

e. Is the law sin? (vs. 7-12)

- i. The law reveals sin (7)
- ii. The law provokes sin (8)
- iii. The law condemns sin (9)
- iv. “commandment is used 6 times in verses 9-11, always in relation to death.”
- v. The law deceives us when we think it will bring life.

f. Did the law become death to me? (vs. 13)

- i. The law does not cause sin, it exposes and condemns it.
- ii. “The extreme sinfulness of sin is seen precisely in the way it exploits a good thing (the law) for an evil purpose (death).” (Stott, 204)
- iii. The law is not to blame, but sin which exploits the law.

V. The weakness of the law: an inner conflict- vs. 14-25

- a. Just as the law did not cause sin, it also cannot make us holy.

- b.** Is this “I” regenerate or unregenerate?
 - i.** Most of the church fathers rejected the idea that Paul is referring to himself here. “They could not accept that a regenerate and mature believer like Paul could describe himself” in these terms.
 - ii.** They conclude that Paul is impersonating an unregenerate person.
 - iii.** Augustine was the first major theologian to see this as a reference to Paul’s personal struggle with sin.
 - 1.** Paul demonstrates spiritual humility that is characteristic of a Christian.
 - 2.** Paul’s attitude toward the law is consistent with the rest of Romans.
 - 3.** Paul demonstrates a longing for final deliverance.
 - iv.** D. Martin Lloyd-Jones believes that this is a reference to people who hear the gospel, and struggle with it.
 - v.** Mathews’ interpretation: Paul is referring to his current, mature, regenerate experience. Like all Christians, Paul is caught between the “already” of salvation and the “not yet” of sanctification.
- c.** The law and the flesh in believers- vs. 14-20
 - i.** Paul repeats himself for emphasis, in 14-17 and 18-20
 - ii.** Each section begins with a frank acknowledgement of sinfulness. They begin with self-knowledge of the flesh.
 - iii.** Each section continues with a vivid description of the conflict between the Spirit and the flesh.

- iv. Each section ends by saying that indwelling sin is responsible for the failures and defeats.
- v. These sections highlight a disconnect between will and deed.
 - 1. I agree that the law is good
 - 2. Sin living in me is responsible.
- d. The double reality in believers under the law- vs. 21-25
 - i. There are two “I’s”- the “I” who wants to do good, and the “I” who wants to sin.
 - ii. There are two laws: - in my inner being, I delight in God’s law; but there is another law, the law of sin, in my body.
 - iii. There are two cries from the heart: one expresses the wretchedness of sin; the other thanks God for His deliverance through Jesus Christ.
 - iv. There are two slaveries- in my mind, I am a slave to God’s law, but in my flesh, I am a slave to the law of sin.

S. H. Mathews

Name of Course: ROMANS

Semester Week: 8 Date: _____

I. Romans 8: Introduction

- a. Romans 7 is about the law; Romans 8 is about the Spirit.
- b. The law is mentioned 31 times in Romans 7, and the Spirit is mentioned once.
- c. The Spirit is mentioned by name 19 times in 27 verses in Romans 8.
- d. “Thus the Christian life is essentially life in the Spirit, that is to say, a life which is animated, sustained, directed and enriched by the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit true Christian discipleship would be inconceivable, indeed impossible.” (Stott, p. 216)
- e. The theme of Romans 8 is that Christians are secure because of the work of God in the Holy Spirit.

II. Romans 8:1-17- The Ministry of God's Spirit

- a. Blessings of salvation: (1-4)
 - i. No condemnation. There is a parallel between the first verses of Rom. 8 and of Rom. 5. Justification = no condemnation.
 - ii. Freedom from sin and death (2-4).
 - iii. “No condemnation” is a negative approach; freedom from sin and death is a positive approach. Our liberation is the basis of our justification.
- b. What God did: five expressions

- i. Sending of His own son.
 - ii. The incarnation in the “likeness of sinful man”.
 - iii. God sent His Son as a sin offering.
 - iv. God “condemned sin in sinful man.”
 - v. The goal of God’s condemning sin is that we might fulfill the righteous requirements of the law.
- c. Verse 4 is essential for our understanding of Christian holiness:
 - i. Holiness is the ultimate purpose of the incarnation and the atonement.
 - ii. Holiness consists in fulfilling the just requirements of the law.
 - iii. Holiness is the work of the Holy Spirit.
- d. The Mind of the Spirit- (5-8)
 - i. Defining the flesh:
 - 1. “our fallen, ego-centric human nature” (Cranfield, quoted in Stott, 222)
 - 2. “deeply curved in on itself” (Luther, quoted in Stott, 222)
 - ii. Our mindset expresses our basic nature as Christians or non-Christians.
 - iii. Our mindset has eternal consequences.
 - iv. Our mindset concerns our fundamental attitude to God.
 - v. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.
 - vi. Summary:
 - 1. 2 categories of people: unregenerate and regenerate
 - 2. 2 perspectives: mind of the flesh, mind of the Spirit

3. 2 patterns of conduct: living according to the flesh, living

according to the Spirit.

4. 2 spiritual states: death, enmity; life, peace

e. The indwelling of the Spirit (9-15)

i. Verse 9 is essential for our understanding of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit

1. The hallmark of the authentic believer is the possession or
indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

2. Several different expressions are synonyms.

a. Being in the Spirit = Spirit being in us.

b. The Spirit of Christ = Spirit of God.

3. Two consequences of the indwelling of the Spirit:

a. Life- 10-11

b. Debt- 12-13

ii. The mortification of the flesh

1. Defining mortification

a. It is not masochism (taking pleasure in pain)

b. It is not asceticism (resenting and rejecting natural

appetites)

c. It is a rejection of evil as evil, a “decisive and radical
repudiation of it” (Stott, 228)

2. How does mortification take place?

a. It is something we have to do. It is an action, not a
condition.

b. It is portrayed by the imagery of putting a man to death.

c. It is in the mind and the body.

3. Why should we practice mortification?

a. Obligation- vs. 12

b. The death of mortification leads to life- vs. 13

f. The Witness of the Spirit- vs 14-17

i. In each of these four verses, God's people are referred to as "sons" or "children", and this status is attributed to the Holy Spirit.

ii. The Spirit leads us into holiness (14)

iii. The Spirit leads us into rich new life

iv. The Spirit replaces fear with freedom in our relationship with God (15)

v. The Spirit prompts us in our prayers to call God our "Father".

vi. The Spirit is the firstfruits of our inheritance (17, 23)

vii. These things are qualified by the expression "if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory."

III. The Glory of God's Children (vs. 18-27)

a. Four general introductory remarks

i. Sufferings and glory are inseparable.

ii. Suffering and glory represent two ages or aeons; the present age and the age to come.

iii. Sufferings and glory cannot be compared to each other.

iv. Suffering and glory concern both God's creation, and God's children.

b. The sufferings and glory of God's creation (20-22)

- i. Sin has affected all of creation. It is subjected to frustration. (20a)
- ii. Creation will be liberated (21a)
 - 1. Negatively- liberated from bondage to decay
 - 2. Positively- into the glorious freedom of the children of God
- iii. The present state of creation is compared to a pregnant woman- waiting for deliverance. The suffering of the moment will be redeemed in the future.

c. The sufferings and glory of God's children (23-27)

- i. We are in a "half-saved condition" – Stott, 242
 - 1. We have the firstfruits of the Spirit (23a)
 - 2. We groan inwardly (23b)
 - 3. We wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies (23c)
 - 4. We are saved in hope (24a). We have not yet been released from the flesh, nor from the judgment of God for sin.
 - 5. We wait patiently (25b). We are confident that God will deliver on His promise, and finish what He started.

IV. The Steadfastness of God's Love (28-39)

- a. Five unshakeable convictions (28):
 - i. We know that God is at work in our lives.
 - ii. We know that God is working for our good, but not necessarily for our comfort.
 - iii. We know that God works for good in all things, including suffering.

iv. We know that God works in all things for the good of those who love Him.

v. Those who love God are those who are called according to His purpose.

b. Five undeniable affirmations (29-30)

i. God foreknew. God's foreknowledge is the basis of our salvation, rather

than a response to it. "knowing" is not purely intellectual, but is also relational.

ii. The ones God foreknew, He predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son. Salvation is God's decision before it is ours.

iii. The ones God predestined, He called. God works in our lives to bring about His eternal purpose.

iv. The ones God called, He justified. All that has been said previously in Romans about justification applies.

v. The ones God justified, he glorified.

vi. An important omission here- the step of sanctification, between justification and glorification. This is assumed here, on the basis of Paul's previous discussion of sanctification.

V. Five Unanswerable Questions (31-39)

a. If God is for us, who can be against us?

b. If God gave us His Son, what will He not give us?

c. Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen?

d. Who can condemn us, in light of Christ's intercession for us?

e. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

S. H. Mathews

Name of Course: ROMANS

Semester Week: 9 Date: _____

I. Romans 9: Election

S. H. Mathews

Name of Course: ROMANS

Semester Week: 10 Date: _____

I. Romans 10: God's Dismay Over Israel's Sin

- a. Israel's ignorance of the righteousness of God- 1-4.
 - i. Paul begins ch. 10 as ch. 9- with a personal statement of his affection for Israel.
 - ii. Paul asserts that Israel demonstrates both zeal and ignorance.
 - iii. Paul asserts two negatives:
 - 1. Israel did not know the righteousness that comes from God
 - 2. Israel did not submit to God's righteousness
 - iv. Israel sought its own righteousness- that is righteousness distinct from other nations.
 - v. Paul validates Israel's sincerity, but not her righteousness.
- b. Alternative ways of righteousness- vs. 5-13
 - i. Three antitheses so far:
 - 1. Faith and works: 9:32
 - 2. God's righteousness and man's righteousness: 10:3-4
 - 3. Righteousness by faith and righteousness by law: 10:5-6
 - ii. Being "justified" is the same as being "saved"- 10:9-10
 - iii. The universality of the Gospel: 10:11-13

1. The gospel is for “all”, “anyone”, and “everyone”.
2. Paul does not see the fact of election and predestination as invalidating the presentation of the gospel to all.

c. The necessity of evangelism- vs. 14-15

- i. The doctrine of election does not preclude evangelism.
- ii. Paul asks four consecutive questions:
 1. How can they call on the one they have not believed in?
 2. How can they believe in the one they have not heard of?
 3. How can they hear without a preacher?
 4. How can they preach unless they are sent?
- iii. Just as God has elected certain individuals to salvation, He has elected that the means of salvation includes the preaching of the gospel.

d. The reason for Israel’s unbelief- vs. 16-21

- i. Two false and one true explanation
 1. Did they not hear? Of course they did!
 2. Did they not understand? Paul’s quote of Moses assumes that Israel understood.
 3. Paul’s answer: Israel is simply stubborn.

e. Divine sovereignty and human free will- the question still unanswered

- i. In Romans 9, Paul asserts that Israel’s unbelief is due to God’s election.
- ii. In Romans 10, Paul asserts that Israel’s belief is due to stubbornness.

S. H. Mathews

Name of Course: ROMANS

Semester Week: 11 Date: _____

I. Romans 11: Israel's Future

- a. Paul starts with two questions:
 - i. Did God reject His people?
 - ii. Have they fallen too far?
- b. Evidence that God has not rejected Israel (1-10)
 - i. Personal evidence- Paul is a Jew.
 - ii. Theological evidence- God foreknew His people.
 - iii. Biblical evidence- God retains a remnant for Himself.
 - iv. Contemporary evidence- Jewish Christians in Paul's day.
- c. Israel's Future (11-32)
 - i. A chain with three links:
 - 1. Israel's fall brings salvation to the gentiles.
 - 2. Gentile salvation brings Israel to envy.
 - 3. Israel's restoration will bless the world.
 - ii. "Life from the dead"- Three interpretations
 - 1. Literal
 - 2. Spiritual
 - 3. Figurative

- iii. Two metaphors indicate that if God owns a representative piece of something, He owns it all.
- d. The allegory of the olive tree (17-24)
 - i. Basic meaning of the allegory: some Gentiles have been grafted into Israel, and are children of Abraham.
 - ii. Warning: do not boast over the branches. Gentiles are not superior to Jews
 - 1. Engrafted branches are dependent on the root.
 - 2. Engrafted branches are held to the tree by faith.
 - 3. Fear, rather than arrogance, should motivate engrafted branches to humility. If God has cut off some branches, will He cut me off?
 - 4. Meditate on the character of God.
- e. The divine mystery (25-32)
 - i. Three stages
 - 1. Israel has experienced a hardening
 - 2. The full number of gentiles will come in
 - 3. All Israel will be saved.
 - ii. “All Israel will be saved” may mean “Israel as a whole, but not every Jew”.
 - iii. Two distinct affirmations:
 - 1. God’s election is irrevocable.
 - 2. God has a future for His people based on His mercy.
- f. A four-fold doxology (vs. 33-36)

- i. An astonished exclamation.- 33
- ii. Two rhetorical questions- vs. 33-35
- iii. A theological affirmation- vs. 36a
- iv. A final ascription of glory to God- vs. 36b

S. H. Mathews

Name of Course: ROMANS

Semester Week: 12 Date: _____

I. Romans 12: The Will of God for Changed Relationships

- a. Two general aspects of Paul's ethic in Romans 12-ff.
 - i. Paul "integrates creed and conduct, insisting on both the practical implications of his theology and on the theological foundations of his ethic." (Stott, 317)
 - ii. Paul makes repeated references to the moral teaching of Jesus. Jesus' teaching formed the basis of Paul's morality. (Stott, 318-319)
 - iii. Paul's moral teaching focuses on relationships, both with God and with each other.

II. Our Relationship to God: Consecrated Bodies and Renewed Minds – Romans 12:1-2

- a. The basis for moral behavior is the mercy of God
- b. Morality concerns both the body and the mind. Paul rejects two heresies:
 - i. The first is that the body is irrelevant to holiness. Some people, following Plato, believed that what happens in the body does not affect the soul.
 - ii. The second is that simple conformity to the law is sufficient for holiness.

As a Pharisee, Paul previously thought that obedience to the law in the body made one pure or holy.

- c. For Paul, Christian ethics is a matter of Christian worship- Godly living is worship. The presentation of the body is a spiritual act.
- d. Paul argues against conformity (plastos) to the pattern of the world. Plastos is the basis of our word “pliers” and “pliable”. It indicates something that can be manipulated to take a specific shape. John Bunyan had a character named “pliable” in the *Pilgrim’s Progress* to illustrate this.
- e. The word for “transformed” here is the same word Matthew and Mark use to describe the transfiguration of Christ (metamorphuo).
- f. Two value systems, this world and God’s will, are incompatible.
- g. The means of transformation is the renewing of the mind.

III. Our Relationship to Ourselves: Thinking Soberly About Our Gifts (3-8)

- a. The key word here is “sober”.
- b. Christian ethics begins with a right perspective on one’s place in the world.
- c. We measure ourselves by the gospel and by God’s gifts (charisma).
- d. The distribution of spiritual gifts is a matter of God’s grace and God’s wisdom.
- e. Prophesying- a reference to the biblical prophets
- f. In the grammatical construction, prophets are secondary to apostles.
- g. Words of the prophets were to be “weighed and tested”, whereas the words of the apostles were to be “believed and obeyed”. (Stott, 327)
- h. “The inspiration of the apostles was abiding”, whereas “the inspiration of the prophets was occasional and transitory” (Hodge, cited in Stott, 327)
- i. Six other more mundane gifts are listed: serving, teaching, encouraging, giving, leadership/government, mercy.

j. This is an incomplete list of spiritual gifts. There are also two lists in 1 Corinthians 12 which list 9 and 8 gifts, respectively, and five are listed in Ephesians 4:11.

k. Three principles arise from all these lists:

- i. The source of the gifts is God.
- ii. The purpose of the gifts is the edification of the body of Christ.
- iii. There is a wide variety of gifts.

IV. Our relationship to Each Other: Love in the Family of God (vs. 9-16)

- a. Paul's logic in Romans 12 resembles that in I Corinthians 12-13. Paul was familiar with his thought on this matter.
- b. The key word is agape- love.
- c. Agape is the essence of Christian discipleship.
- d. Agape love has 12 components:
 - i. Sincerity
 - ii. Discernment
 - iii. Affection
 - iv. Honor
 - v. Enthusiasm
 - vi. Patience
 - vii. Generosity
 - viii. Hospitality
 - ix. Good will
 - x. Sympathy

xi. Harmony

xii. Humility

V. Our Relationship to Our Enemies: Not Retaliation but Service (17-21)

a. Four negative imperatives

i. Do not curse (vs. 14)

ii. Do not repay anyone evil for evil (vs. 17)

iii. Do not take revenge (vs. 19)

iv. Do not be overcome by evil (vs. 21)

b. Four positive counterparts

i. Bless, rather than curse.

ii. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone.

iii. Leave room for God's wrath. Show active mercy to your enemies.

iv. Overcome evil with good.

S. H. Mathews

Name of Course: ROMANS

Semester Week: 13 Date: _____

I. Romans 13:1-7- Our Relationship to the State: Conscientious Citizenship

- a. Romans 12- four relationships: to God (1-2), to ourselves (3-8), to one another (9-16), to our enemies (17-21).
- b. Romans 13- three more relationships- to the state (1-7), to the law (8-10), to the day of the Lord's return (11-14)
- c. A pivotal question- who are the “authorities”- exousiai.
 - i. This has historically been understood to be civil powers
 - ii. Beginning with Martin Dibelius in 1909, there is a thought that it may have a double reference- physical and spiritual powers.
 - iii. Paul believes in and understands the existence of supernatural “principalities, powers, rulers, authorities”. Paul often uses exousiai to refer to spiritual powers.
 - iv. Four historical approaches to church/state relationships:
 1. Erastianism- the state controls the church
 2. Theocracy- the church controls the state
 3. Constantinianism- a compromise in which the state favors the church and the church accommodates to the state to retain its favor.

4. Partnership- the state and the church recognize and encourage each other's distinct, God-given roles.

II. The authority of the state- 1-3.

- a. The state's authority is derived from God- Paul expresses this in three ways.
 - i. There is no authority except that which God has established (1b)
 - ii. The authorities that exist have been established by God (1c)
 - iii. He who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted (2a)
- b. Paul affirms the God-given authority of the state, but he does not claim that Herod or Nero was personally hand-picked by God, nor that God is responsible for their actions.
- c. This text has been used to justify tyranny and to suppress the church.
- d. “The Gospel is equally hostile to tyranny and anarchy.” (Charles Hodge, cited in Stott, 343).

III. The ministry of the state- 4-7

- a. Just as Paul affirmed the authority of the state three times, he affirms the ministry of the state three times:
 - i. He is God's servant to do you good (4a)
 - ii. He is God's servant, an angel of wrath, to bring punishment (4c)
 - iii. The authorities are God's servants (6)
- b. The primary ministry of the state is restraint and punishment of evil, and the promotion of good.

- c. “The punishment of evil is God’s prerogative, and during the present age He exercises it through the lawcourts” (Stott, 345)
- d. States are to promote good- to preserve social values.
- e. Paul discusses taxation- there are some functions which the state should provide, and Christians should pay taxes to support these ministries.
- f. Paul does not support the idea of a welfare state- such a state would have been foreign to him.

IV. Our Relationship to the Law- Neighbor-love as the fulfillment of the Law- 13:8-10

- a. Love is an unpaid debt.
- b. Love is the fulfillment of the law.
- c. Love does no harm to one’s neighbor.

V. Our Relationship to the Day- Living in the “already” and the “not yet”. 13:11-14

- a. Understanding the Time- 11-12a
 - i. The hour has come to wake up from your slumber (11b)
 - ii. Our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed (11c)
 - iii. The night is well advanced and is nearly over the day is almost here (12a)
- b. Understanding what is appropriate to the time (12b-14)
- c. Three appeals:
 - i. Let us put aside deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light (12b)
 - ii. Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in drunkenness, sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. (13)
 - iii. Clothe yourself with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature (14)

S. H. Mathews

Name of Course: ROMANS

Semester Week: 14 Date: _____

I. Romans 14:1-15:13: Our Relationship the Weak: welcoming, not despising, judging, or offending them

- a. Paul names two groups- the “strong” and the “weak”.
- b. Strength and weakness here do not refer to moral or character traits, but to faith.
- c. Who were the weak and the strong in Rome? Four theories:
 - i. The weak were ex-idolaters. They were over-scrupulous because they were revolting strongly against what they previously accepted. There is a parallel between this chapter and I Corinthians 8.
 - ii. The weak were ascetics. There were Jewish ascetics (Essenes) and pagan ascetics (Pythagoreans, Stoics). There is very little evidence for this view.
 - iii. The weak were legalists. The weak in faith “regarded their observances and abstentions as good works necessary for salvation “ (Stott, 356). In Galatians, Paul aggressively refutes this view, but he is quite gentle here, so this is probably not the correct view.
 - iv. The weak were Jewish Christians, and their weakness consisted in their commitment to Jewish regulations. Paul’s approach here is consistent with the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15, which allows Jewish and Gentile

Christians to practice their faith in accordance with their cultural preferences.

II. The positive principle- vs. 1

a. Two parts:

- i. First, accept the weak in faith. It is clear that the weak in faith are weak, but are to be accepted in spite of their weakness.
- ii. Second, having accepted the weak, we do so without passing judgment on disputable matters.
- iii. Many disputable matters exist which cause needless division in the church: tongues, styles of worship, modes of baptism, church governance, eschatology, etc.

III. Negative consequences- vs. 2-15:13

a. Four admonitions:

- i. Do not despise or condemn the weak.
 1. Welcome him because God has welcomed him.
 2. Welcome him because Christ died and rose to be the Lord. Do not interfere with the relationship between Master and servant.
 3. Welcome him because he is your brother
 4. Welcome him because we will all stand before God's judgment seat.
- ii. Do not offend or destroy the weak
 1. Welcome him because he is your brother for whom Christ died-14-16.

2. Welcome him because the kingdom of God is more important than food – 17-21. It is more important than anything else.
- iii. Do not please yourselves (15:1-13)
 1. The strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak- 1a.
 2. We who are strong ought not to please ourselves.- 1b.
 3. Each of us should please his neighbor for his good.- 2-ff
 - a. Because Christ did not please Himself- 3-4
 - b. Because Christ is the way to united worship- 5-6
 - c. Because Christ accepted you.- 7
 - d. Because Christ has become a servant.- 8-13

WEEKLY LESSON PLAN

S. H. Mathews

Name of Course: ROMANSSemester Week: 15 Date: _____**I. Romans 15:14-22- Paul's Apostolic Ministry**

- a.** Paul begins by expressing his confidence in his readers- vs. 14.
 - i.** He has written to remind them of his teaching- 15a.
 - ii.** He has written because he is the apostle to the gentiles- 15b.
- b.** Three salient features of Paul's ministry:
 - i.** Paul's ministry was a priestly ministry- vs. 16-17
 - ii.** Paul's ministry was a powerful ministry- vs. 18-19a
 - iii.** Paul's ministry was a pioneer ministry- vs. 19b-22 (Stott, p. 379-381)

II. Romans 15:23-33- Paul's Travel Plans

- a.** His plan to visit Rome- vs. 23-24
- b.** His plan to visit Jerusalem- vs. 25-27
- c.** His plan to visit Spain- vs. 28-29
- d.** Paul's request for prayer for his visiting ministry- 30-32

III. Romans 16:1-16- Paul's Commendations and Greetings

- a.** A Commendation of Phoebe- vs. 1-2
 - i.** Phoebe was a woman who served the church at Cenchrea.
 - ii.** "Servant" here may refer to the office of deacon.

- iii. Paul's description of her ministry may indicate a formal ministry, such as a deacon would perform.

- b. **Greetings to Many Friends- 16:3-16**

- i. Paul's list of greetings includes a broad diversity of classes, races, and genders.

- c. **Paul's Warnings, Messages, and Doxology- 16:17-27**

- i. Warnings- vs. 17-20
 - 1. Vigilance against divisions
 - 2. Separation from those who deliberately depart from the faith
 - 3. Growth in moral discernment
 - 4. Stott's three questions:
 - a. Does it agree with Scripture?
 - b. Does it glorify the Lord Jesus Christ?
 - c. Does it promote goodness?
 - ii. Paul's Messages- vs. 21-24
 - iii. Paul's Doxology- vs. 25-27