

Romans 1

1:1) Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, called (as) Apostle, having been set apart unto the Gospel of God.

1. Paul: See Acts 9:1-10; 13:9; 22:1-21. R.C.H. Lenski holds that Paul, a Jew born a Roman citizen (See Acts 22:27-28), was given both a Hebrew name (Saul) and a Roman name (Paul) at his circumcision. Some hold Saul was renamed Paul by Christ at his conversion, as were Jacob/Israel and Simon/Peter. On this the Scripture is silent. The name Saul is used for Paul after his conversion. The name Paul occurs for the first time in Scripture in Acts 13:9.

2. A Slave: See Matthew 19:30; 20:26-27; 23:8-12; 2 Corinthians 11:22-30; Galatians 1:8-12; 2 Timothy 1:8.

3. Of Christ Jesus: John 17:1; Acts 2:36

4. Called: Matthew 4:19; Ephesians 4:11-13

5. Apostle: Matthew 10:2-4; Luke 6:13-16; 22:14; Matthew 28:16-20;

Apostle is the Office *par excellence* in the Christian Church. Why? What is the difference between the choosing of the Apostles and the choosing of Matthias in Acts 1:15-26? What were the criteria used? Distinguish between the “immediate” and “mediate” call. The Office of Pastor is derived from the Office of Apostle, not from the Office of the Old Testament Priest. Why?

6. Having been set apart: Exodus 13:12; 33:12; 1 Chronicles 23:1; Psalm 4:3; Acts 13:2

7. Unto the Gospel of God: Mark 1:1; Acts 20:17; Romans 1:16-17

1:2) Which (Gospel) was promised before (and) through His prophets in (by means of) Holy Scriptures.

8. See Genesis 3:15; 49:9; Numbers 24:17; Deuteronomy 18:15; Psalm 22; 110:1-4; Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Micah 5:2; Isaiah 61:1/Luke 4:18; Acts 10:43; Hebrews 1:1-2

Consider Paul's former life, and his education and station. The Gospel Paul preached was not something "new." What implications did that have for his Ministry? Consider Luke 24:27-32.

1:3) Concerning His Son, the One begotten out of the Seed of David according to Flesh.

9. See Genesis 17:9; 21:12-13; 26:3-4; 2 Samuel 7:11b-16; 22:50-51; Psalm 89:33-37; 132:11; Isaiah 9:1-7; John 7:42; 2 Timothy 2:8; Galatians 3:16; Romans 9:4-5.

1:4) the One designated Son of God in power according to the Spirit of Holiness out of the resurrection of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.

10. See Matthew 3:17; 16:16; 17:5; 26:63-64; John 11:27; Acts 2:36.

5) Through whom we received grace and Apostleship into (purpose) the obedience (which consists) of faith in all the gentiles on behalf of His Name,

11. Grace: See John 1:14-18;

12. Apostleship: Ephesians 4:7-13;

13. The obedience which consists of faith: A major theme. See Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 3:27-28; 16:24-27; Galatians 2:16; 3:2; . Not a Jewish obedience to the Law, but "faith's obedience" (Lenski), the response of faith to the Gospel.

14. Paul's salutation is especially appropriate during Epiphany. "in all the gentiles" extends the salvation of the Promised Messiah to non-Jews.

15. The Name of Jesus is the sum of His attributes, "all the blessed realities revealed about each Person," "the revelation by which we know and apprehend the Person indicated." (Lenski) See Romans 9:17, 1 John 5:13. See also 2 Chronicles 20:7-9, Luther's explanation to the First Petition of the Lord's Prayer. See John 5:43, 16:24, 17:6, 20:31. The believer bears the Name.

6) In (among) whom you also are called (ones) of Jesus Christ.

16. In verse 1 St. Paul refers to himself as "called (as) Apostle, having been set apart unto the Gospel of God." In verse 6 he uses the same adjective, but now in the plural, to refer to the Christians in Rome as "called ones". While the Christians in Rome are not called as Apostles, still they are called.

17. How does Romans 8:28-30 help us understand what Paul means by "called?" This involves the doctrine of "election." See Romans 9:24-27. What synonym does Paul use for "called?" See Galatians 5:6-8. Now read Matthew 22:3. The verb for "call" occurs twice in this verse. Which words does your version use? How does Matthew 22:3 relate to Romans 1 and 8?

7) To all the ones (being) in Rome, beloved of God, called saints, grace to you and peace from God our Father and (the) Lord Jesus Christ.

18. Here St. Paul describes the Church in Rome: they are the beloved of God, those who are called saints. Paul greets the Roman Christians with "grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Compare with Galatians 1:3, 1 Corinthians 1:1-3.

19. How does Pastor begin the sermon each week? "Grace, mercy and peace be unto you from God the Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." See 1 Timothy 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:2; Titus 1:4; 2 John 1:3. Note the "catholicity" of this liturgical inclusion.

8) First, on the one hand, I give thanks to my God through Jesus Christ concerning all of you, because your faith is being proclaimed in the whole world.

20. Here St. Paul changes the subject, his Pastoral greeting complete. He now addresses the external reporting of the condition of the Roman congregation and his response to it. As any Pastor would, St. Paul thanks God for the reports of the faithfulness of the Roman believers.

9) For my witness is God, whom I serve in my spirit in the Gospel of His Son, as constantly remembrance of you I am make

21) Paul believes in prayer. Although He is not with the Roman Christians, He regularly remembers them before God, who will testify that Paul does as he says. But note how St. Paul further defines God: the same God of whom he is slave (vs. 1), set apart to serve the Gospel (vs 1), specifically the Gospel of His Son. This is a restatement of verses 1-4. Paul's continued salutation is structured: "I congratulate you on your knowledge of the Gospel, and I wish that this knowledge may increase in you. Thereafter the proposition of the introduction follows: I desire to instruct you face to face." (Melanchthon)

10) Always in my prayers imploring if (some)how at last {it will go well for me}¹ in the will of God to come to you.

22) Paul followed the Spirit's direct guidance (God's will) in his work as slave of Christ. See Acts 16:4-10 as an example. Where do we learn God's will today?

11) For I yearn to see you in order that I may share some spiritual gift with you for the purpose of your strengthening.

23) The Greek word translated "share" literally means to give away without giving up. Even the most generous sharing of the Gospel does not "impoverish" the preacher of the same confidence of salvation – God's economy is not like man's economy. The Gospel is a gift that increases when given. By sharing the Gospel of Christ, the main theme of the Epistle and the high point of this chapter (verses 16, 17) both preacher and hearer are edified, and richer for the exchange – this is the nature of the Gospel of Christ. See John 7:38. The following verse confirms this.

24) Paul has collected offerings from the churches of Asia Minor, and taken material gifts to the church in Jerusalem to help during the famine (see Acts 11:27-30 and our

¹ This is one word in the Greek

study of the life of Paul). What kind of gifts does he bring to the church in Rome? What is the intended result of this gift?

12) And this is for the purpose of being mutually encouraged by you through one another's faith, both yours and also mine.

25) Verse 12 further explains the purpose St. Paul expresses in verse 11. What is the purpose revealed by combining these two thoughts?

13) On the other hand I do not desire you to be ignorant, brothers, that repeatedly I intended to come to you, but I was prevented until *now* (thus far), in order that I have some fruit also among you just as among the remainder (the rest) of the gentiles (nations).

26) Paul discusses this more fully in 15:18-25. He intends, according to God's will, to stop in Rome on his way to Spain. On "prevented," see notes on verse 10 and Acts 16.

27) The "fruit" St. Paul so desires is the conversion of more in Rome – a spiritual crop.

14) To the Greeks and also to the Barbarians, to wise and also to foolish, a debtor I am,

28) The versification between 13 and 14 is artificial, and interrupts a single thought. Read 13 and 14 together to see the unity of thought between them.

29) The Greeks were those of the predominant culture in Paul's day. The Barbarians are those who were not fortunate enough to belong to this great culture. See acts 28:2, where the same word (Barbarians) is used.

30) "Greeks" and "Barbarians" further defines "gentiles" in verse 13. Lenski says that St. Paul is not differentiating here between Greeks and Jews (see verse 13), and thus verse 13 should read "nations". While I am Lenski's student, I disagree. See Galatians 2:7 and Romans 3:29 (where the same word is used.)

15) (I am) thus according to my eagerness, also to you the ones in Rome, to preach the Gospel.

31) St. Paul speaks of debt (vs. 14). He is a slave of Christ (vs. 1), a servant of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (9). His "debt" is the Apostolic debt, the duties of his Office, by virtue of his Divine Call he "owes" them to preach Christ to them. So too the Christian Pastor proclaims "in the stead, and by the command, of my Lord Jesus Christ..."

16) For I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is power of God unto salvation to all who believe, to Jew first also to Gentile. 17) For a righteousness of God is revealed in it by faith unto faith (*literally: out of faith into faith*), just as it has been written, “the one who is just by faith he shall live.”

32) In these two verses is the theme of the entire Epistle. First, let us hear the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther on this text:

“Meanwhile in that same year, 1519, I had begun interpreting the Psalms once again. I felt confident that I was now more experienced, since I had dealt in university courses with St. Paul's Letters to the Romans, to the Galatians, and the Letter to the Hebrews. I had conceived a burning desire to understand what Paul meant in his Letter to the Romans, but thus far there had stood in my way, not the cold blood around my heart, but that one word which is in chapter one: "The justice of God is revealed in it." I hated that word, "justice of God," which, by the use and custom of all my teachers, I had been taught to understand philosophically as referring to formal or active justice, as they call it, i.e., that justice by which God is just and by which he punishes sinners and the unjust.

But I, blameless monk that I was, felt that before God I was a sinner with an extremely troubled conscience. I couldn't be sure that God was appeased by my satisfaction. I did not love, no, rather I hated the just God who punishes sinners. In silence, if I did not blaspheme, then certainly I grumbled vehemently and got angry at God. I said, "Isn't it enough that we miserable sinners, lost for all eternity because of original sin, are oppressed by every kind of calamity through the Ten Commandments? Why does God heap sorrow upon sorrow through the Gospel and through the Gospel threaten us with his justice and his wrath?" This was how I was raging with wild and disturbed conscience. I constantly badgered St. Paul about that spot in Romans 1 and anxiously wanted to know what he meant.

I meditated night and day on those words until at last, by the mercy of God, I paid attention to their context: "The justice of God is revealed in it, as it is written: "The just person lives by faith." I began to understand that in this verse the justice of God is that by which the just person lives by a gift of God, that is by faith. I began to understand that this verse means that the justice of God is revealed through the Gospel, but it is a passive justice, i.e. that by which the merciful God justifies us by faith, as it is written: "The just person lives by faith." All at once I felt that I had been born again and entered into paradise itself through open gates. Immediately I saw the whole of Scripture in a different light. I ran through the Scriptures from memory and found that other terms had analogous meanings, e.g., the work of God, that is, what God works in us; the power of God, by which he makes us powerful; the wisdom of God, by which he makes us wise; the strength of God, the salvation of God, the glory of God.

I exalted this sweetest word of mine, "the justice of God," with as much love as before I had hated it with hate. This phrase of Paul was for me the very gate of paradise. Afterward I read Augustine's "On the Spirit and the Letter," in which I found what I had not dared hope for. I discovered that he too interpreted "the justice of God" in a similar way, namely, as that with which God clothes us when he justifies us. Although Augustine had said it imperfectly and did not explain in detail how God imputes justice to us, still it pleased me that he taught the justice of God by which we are justified."²

16) For I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is power of God unto salvation to all who believe, to Jew first also to Gentile.

33) First, St. Paul is not ashamed of the Gospel. He is not ashamed of it, rather "I will also speak of Your testimonies before kings, and shall not be ashamed." (Psalm 119:46) See Luke 9:26. Paul is bold about the Gospel. Even after beatings, arrests and imprisonment (see 2 Corinthians 11:19-12:9; 2 Timothy 1:8), St. Paul is not ashamed of the Gospel, rather he is eager to preach it publicly in Rome, in the time of St. Paul the greatest city in the world.

34) Having stated his eagerness to preach the Gospel, St. Paul now defines what the Gospel is: the power of God unto salvation. See 1 Corinthians 1:18-24; 1 Thessalonians 5:9-11;

R.C.H. Lenski writes: "The gospel is God's power of love and grace toward sinners. It is wholly unmerited by them and is embodied in the gift of his only-begotten Son, John 3 :16. It has been well said that love is the strongest power in the world, and God's love in Christ Jesus is the greatest love of all. All this power of love and grace is found in the gospel. God himself and all his love and his grace are ever in the gospel. God and his saving Word cannot possibly be separated from each other. Even omnipotence cannot save sinners, but God's power of grace in the gospel can and does save them. God's grace produced the gospel as the one means by which to reach the sinner's heart in order to bestow salvation upon him.

Because the gospel is "news," tells about God's love in Christ Jesus, teaches and informs us, we might think of it as being only a message, something composed of words only that the mind should retain. Such an estimate of the gospel must be revised upward. We must think of the gospel in terms of power. The gospel is no less than the power by which God saves every believer. It is thus the very opposite of the impotency of all the means to which men resort in seeking salvation by their own efforts." (pg. 73)

² Preface to the Complete Edition of Luther's Latin Works (1545) by Dr. Martin Luther, 1483-1546 Translated by Bro. Andrew Thornton, OSB. from the "Vorrede zu Band I der Opera Latina der Wittenberger Ausgabe. 1545" in vol. 4 of *Luthers Werke in Auswahl*, ed. Otto Clemen, 6th ed., (Berlin: de Gruyter. 1967). pp. 421-428. From Project Wittenberg. Used here by permission, thanks to the Rev. Robert Smith, Fort Wayne, IN.

35) Hence the Gospel is a “means of grace,” which is to say that it is a vehicle by which God bestows the benefit of Christ’s saving death and resurrection upon a sinner, and thus works salvation and life where there was before only death. This occurs by hearing: see Romans 10:8-13. So the Gospel saves “everyone who believes,” making faith the organ that receives the Gospel. Review the chief article of the Christian faith in Augustana IV – it is present here in Romans 1 clearly as the central theme of the Epistle.

36) The Gospel is for the Jews first: See Matthew 15:22-26; John 4:22; Acts 3:25-26, 13:45-49, 18:5-6. But note Matthew 22:1-14; John 4:3-26. Paul’s special calling was to take the Gospel to the Gentiles. See Galatians 2:7-9.

17) For a righteousness of God is revealed in it by faith unto faith (*literally: out of faith into faith*), just as it has been written, “the one who is just by faith he shall live.”

38) The word “righteousness,” translated by Luther as “justice,” means uprightness or blamelessness before God. To be “just” is to be “right” or “upright.” The declaration of righteousness made by God of the believer is a forensic declaration. Another way to say this is that St. Paul uses “legal” language to talk about a verdict of innocent. It is Christ who is innocent. By God’s grace, through faith in Christ, we are declared innocent. This is the very heart of the Gospel. Luther has explained above that this righteousness is an attribute of God imputed to man, freely, by grace, through faith. See Romans 3:19-24, 10:1-11; 1 Corinthians 1:27-30; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Galatians 2:19-21, 3:21-22; 2 Peter 1:1.

39) “is revealed in it” – the referent is the Gospel. Note that this is passive – the revealing is done for us by God.

40) God’s righteousness (another way to say the righteousness of God) is revealed in the Gospel “from faith to faith,” or “by faith unto faith,” or “out of faith unto faith.” How does your translation handle this construction? These words “by faith unto faith” reveal that the Gospel is known “by faith,” and its revelation is directed to, aimed at, and intended for faith. More, the Gospel itself works faith – it gives the very faith it requires.

41) “the one who is just by faith he shall live.” Check your translation of Habakkuk 2:4, where we read **וְצַדִּיק בְּאֱמוּנָתוֹ יַחֲיֶה:** (Pastor will help a little with this one). First take this in the context of the whole verse (Habakkuk 2:4). Note the opposites presented in this verse. See Colossians 2:8-14.

Read Romans 1:18-32.

42) How has the tone of St. Paul's Epistle changed? What is the theme of this section?

Consult the outline to Romans - verses 1: 18-32 are titled "Wrath against unrighteousness without the Law, 2:1-3:20 "Wrath against so-called righteousness by the Law." Is this section Law or Gospel?

43) In verse 17 what is revealed? In verse 18 what is revealed?

44) What is the wrath of God? See 2:5-11; 3:5-6,4:13-15; 5:9; 9:22-24; 12:19; 13:4-5; Ephesians 2:3; Ephesians 5:6, Colossians 3:5; 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10; 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:9.

God has promised his wrath upon sinners beginning with the fall. Still God's full wrath has yet to be revealed - it comes on the great Day of the Lord promised of old. Jesus Christ Himself drank "the cup of God's wrath" It is in Christ that we see the justice natural to God being executed - by His stripes we are healed.

45) Against what is the wrath of God revealed? We have been saved from the damning last Day wrath of God through Christ. The wrath of God is visible now, however, and clearly functioning in the Law. On the last Day God's wrath will be visited on all men who do not have Christ, those who do not believe.

Verses 19 & 20

46) Here St. Paul treats of natural revelation - all men, even those who deny the one true God, know that there is a God. According to verse 20, how do they know? Do they have an excuse for rejecting God?

Verse 21

46) What is the result of man's denial of God?

Verses 22-23

47) What sin is described in verses 22-23? Which Commandments does this break?

Verse 24

48) What is God's response to unrepentant sin in verse 24? We will learn more about this in verses 26-32.

Verse 25

49) This verse restates the sin of verses 21-23. What is the sin? What are some manifestations of this sin today?

Verses 26-27

50) In these what specific sin is cited? From what does this sin result? Based on this text and Genesis 1 :27, Matthew 19:4-6, is anyone born a homosexual? See Exodus 20: 15. What specific sin is cited? Now read 20:6 - God, in His mercy, justifies sinners by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. This includes homosexuals. All sin separates men from God. Still, we must be clear that homosexuality is sin, and like any other lifeconsuming sin, harms the souls of those who choose this perverse lifestyle.

Verses 28 - 31

51) How does verse 28 identify the sin of homosexuality? Here St. Paul expands on this - the denial of the Truth about God fills lives with all manner of sin - which he lists in verses 29-31. Read the list. What does the world say about these behaviors? What does God say? Who is right?

Verse 32

52) St. Paul cites God's "righteous ordinance." Where is this found? (hint: See Exodus 20, Deuteronomy 5) Consider God's instructions to the Israelites in Deuteronomy 6:1-8. Christ fulfilled the Law for us. For the Christian, God's wrath is spent on Christ. Does this mean that the Christian may live a libertine and profligate life? See Matthew 5: 1-7:27; Leviticus 18:1-5. How can these verses be reconciled with Galatians 3:10-14?

Read Romans 2: 1-11

53) This section continues the thought of 1:18-32. Reread 2:1-4. Then hear our Lord in Matthew 7:1-5. Now read the continuation of our Lord's Words in 7:15-20. Describe the "judging" that is condemned. How is the church to relate to those who promulgate false doctrine or live contrary to the Word? See Romans 16:17-19. How does that relate to the "judging" St. Paul writes of in Romans 2: I-II? See 1 John 4: 1. Are we to judge?

Verse 2 - Who is it that will finally judge?

Verse 3 - Now we see more of the "judging" St. Paul is talking about. How would you describe it?

Verse 4 – What does God want from us?

Verses 5-11 –

What behavior in us merits God's wrath?

When is that wrath administered?

How is it true that “there is no partiality with God”?

Read Romans 2:12-16

Verses 12-13 – According to verse 10, which two groups is Paul discussing here? Why is this important (remember 1:16-17!)?

Verse 14 – Verses 14 and 15 are a parenthetical explanation. Paul finishes the thought of verse 13 in verse 16. Here, in 14-15, Paul refers to the “natural knowledge” of the Law which he explains in 1:18-20, 32.

Verse 15 – See Jeremiah 31:31-34. In the context of the Epistle to the Romans, why is this such a pivotal truth?

Verse 16 – This verse continues the thought of verse 13. See Peter's sermon in Acts 10:42. St. Paul calls this “gospel.” Why is it Gospel? Why not Law?

Read Romans 2:17-29.

Verse 17-24 – Here Paul continues the thought begun in 2:1. Reading 2:17-23 closely, how does it relate to the Second Commandment? Consider our Lord's Words in Matthew 23:1-35.

Verses 25-29 – Why does St. Paul focus on circumcision here? Which circumcision is pleasing to God? See Deuteronomy 30:6, Colossians 2:11-14.

Read Romans 3:1-8

Verse 1 – How does 3:1 state the central theme of this section (2:17ff)?

Verse 2 - What is the first advantage that St. Paul cites?

Verse 3 – What has verse 3 to do with verse 2? What is St. Paul’s point? How does this relate to 1:16-17? 1:18-2:29?

What two parts of God’s Word does St. Paul implicitly contrast in 3:1?

Verse 4 – With this quote from Psalm 51, what does St. Paul assert? What is the context of Psalm 51? See 2 Samuel 11:2 – 12:25? How does St. Paul apply Psalm 51 in Romans 3:4?

Summarize **verses 5-8**. What method of argument does St. Paul use?

Read Romans 3:9-20

Verse 9 – Who is “we?” How does verse 9 help us understand the theme of this section?

Verses 10-18 – St. Paul cites eight sections of Scripture here – Psalm 14:1-3; Psalm 53:1-3; Ecclesiastes 7:20, Psalm 5:9; Psalm 140:3; Psalm 10:7; Isaiah 59:7-8; Psalm 36:1. These sections he weaves together to create the strongest Law. How would you summarize this section?

Who is righteous?

Who has turned away?

What have all become?

Who does good?

What sins do vs. 13-14 name?

What sin do vs. 15-17 name? What is the temporal consequence?

Verse 18 – Ultimately, from what do these sins stem? Is this Law or Gospel? What words of our Catechism does this bring to mind?

Read verses 19-20

Verse 19 – What is the effect of the Law? (Hint: remember S.O.S)

Verse 20 – Here St. Paul teaches the purpose of the Law. What are the three uses of the Law? Are any of them salutary?

Read verses 21-26. Here we meet the theological high-point, and center, of the Epistle to the Romans. Everything that came before builds to this point. Everything that follows explains this section. Verses 25-26 are the apex.

Verse 21 – Put one finger on 3:21, and one on 1:17. Read 1:17, then continue with 3:21. St. Paul picks up the thought of 1:17 in 3:21. The intervening Scripture deals with Law.

What is the central theme of verse 21?

What is the significance of the construction “apart from *the* Law righteousness of God”?

Who bears testimony to this “righteousness of God”?

The “Law and the Prophets” is shorthand for the Old Testament. Why is this significant?

Verse 22 – We have seen that the Law can not make man righteous, rather that by the Law we become aware of our sins. How is this righteousness of God given?

The versification of this section is awkward. The next thought, the main thought of verse 23, begins in 22: Read from “For there is no difference.... through the end of verse 24.

Verse 23 – The word “sin” in the original language means literally “to miss the mark.” Who has sinned? Who has fallen short, missed the mark, of God’s glory? What does this mean? What does glory mean in English?

Consider these definitions:

1. Praise, honor, admiration, or distinction, accorded by common consent to a person or thing; high reputation; honorable fame; renown.
[1913 Webster]

Glory to God in the highest. --Luke ii. 14.
[1913 Webster]

2. That quality in a person or thing which secures general praise or honor; that which brings or gives renown; an object of pride or boast; the occasion of praise; excellency; brilliancy; splendor.
[1913 Webster]

Pastor will explain the words for “glory” in Hebrew and in Greek. Consider Exodus 16:9, 24:15; Exodus 33:18-23; Leviticus 9:6; Isaiah 6:1-6. In the Scriptures, the Glory of the Lord is a physical manifestation of God, a theophany. Like the Name of the Lord, it is the presence of the sum of His attributes.

So in Romans 3:23, to fall short of God’s glory is to be less than holy, sinless, perfect and just.

Verse 24 – Although all have fallen short of sinlessness, how are men justified? What word would you use to define “justified”?

Is the word “justified” in Romans 3:24 active or passive? What does this mean?

What is the chief article of the Christian faith? What are the four *Solas*?

How does verse 24 relate to Romans 1:16-17?

Article excerpted from Braden, Mark. *Christ Jesus the Mercy Seat: Ιλαστήριον in Romans 3:25*. Academic paper presented at the 2005 Exegetical Symposium, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne.

Who is Jesus?

This Twentieth Exegetical Symposium seeks to answer the question "Who is Jesus?" by examining the Church's response to Christological controversies. St. Paul was steeped in Christological controversy. Inside the Church he faced converts backsliding into Judaism, an affront to the Gospel rooted in the question "Who is Jesus?" A synergistic soteriology always stems from an errant Christology. From outside of Christendom the Jews persecuted the nascent Church with zeal. Clearly their answer to the question "Who is Jesus?" differed from Paul's. How did the Apostolic Church respond? Perhaps the most striking statement of "who Jesus is" is found in Paul's Epistle to the Romans.

Jesus in Romans

The third Chapter of Romans is the heart of the Epistle that is for Luther "the chief part of the New Testament, and is truly the purest gospel."³ It is here that Paul expounds on the Christological salutation and opening volley of his first chapter "δικαιοσύνη γὰρ θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ ἀποκαλύπτεται ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν, καθὼς γέγραπται, Ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται." The two intervening chapters focus on the wrath of God and the work of the Law in accusing the sinner. It is in the third chapter, in the twenty first verse, that St. Paul returns to his discussion of righteousness and faith. It is from this heart that the lifeblood of Augustana IV courses through the veins and arteries of the Epistle.

“Νυνὶ δὲ χωρὶς νόμου δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ πεφανέρωται μαρτυρουμένη ὑπὸ τοῦ νόμου καὶ τῶν προφητῶν, δικαιοσύνη δὲ θεοῦ διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς πάντας

³ Luther, Prefaces to the New Testament, pg. 365.

τοὺς πιστεύοντας. οὐ γάρ ἐστιν διαστολή, πάντες γὰρ ἥμαρτον καὶ ὑστεροῦνται τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ· δικαιοῦμενοι δωρεὰν τῆ αὐτοῦ χάριτι διὰ τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ· But “who is Jesus,” and what did He do? It is here, in the twenty fifth verse, that St. Paul answers this fundamental question.

This verse, which I hold to be the theological center of the Epistle⁴, reads (Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) ὃν προέθετο ὁ θεὸς ἱλαστήριον διὰ [τῆς] πίστεως ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι εἰς ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ διὰ τὴν πάρεσιν τῶν προγεγονότων ἀμαρτημάτων. Translation of most of this verse is not difficult: “whom God set forth ἱλαστήριον, through faith in His blood, in order to show His righteousness through the passing over of the sins which have previously occurred.”

The reader of the Holy Scriptures in English finds a remarkable diversity, however, exhibited in the translation of ἱλαστήριον⁵.

A propitiatory sacrifice: Conybeare
 A propitiatory covering: Rotherham
 A propitiation: AV, RV, NASB, Cunningham, Weymouth
 The means of propitiation: Phillips
 Propitiation: Expositor’s Bible
 The propitiator: Kramer’s translation of Melanchthon
 A sacrifice of atonement: NIV
 An offering of Atonement: Montgomery
 To take the punishment for our sins and to end
 all God’s anger against us: TLB
 An expiation: RSV
 A means of expiation: NEB
 The means by which his people’s sins are forgiven: TEV
 Through whose sacrificial death sin can be forgiven: Barclay
 So as to win reconciliation: The Jerusalem Bible
 A means of reconciliation: The Twentieth Century NT
 Dying as a sacrifice of reconciliation: The Complete Bible
 To take away sins: Beck’s AAT

⁴ See also Morris, 1956; pg. 38.

⁵ A summary of the various translations can be found in Fryer, pg. 99.

Why the variety? Dr. Daniel Bailey, whose 1999 Cambridge dissertation is on the word ἱλαστήριον, writes:

“Unfortunately, past studies of ἱλαστήριον have often allowed theological considerations to overshadow lexicography. Hence it was the doctrine of propitiation rather than the actual occurrences of the term ἱλαστήριον in ancient sources that dominated the English-language discussion of Romans 3:25 in the twentieth century”⁶

So it is not exegesis, but dogmatics, that drives the myriad of renderings of a single Greek word. This can be plainly seen in A. Andrew Das’ paper included in the recently published *The Law in Holy Scripture*. Referring to ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25, Das writes:

My own preference is “propitiation” but not because of Rom. 1:18-3:20. “Propitiation” functions better in this context as a demonstration of “the righteousness of God.”⁷

So neither lexical nor exegetical considerations undergird the amazing variety of translations of ἱλαστήριον, rather the word is rendered in a seemingly random fashion based on the definition that best fits the translator’s existing dogmatic system. If Christ is ἱλαστήριον as St. Paul says, then the definition of ἱλαστήριον is inseparably wedded to Christology and soteriology. What we see in the list above is a variety of soteriologies. For some Christ is a propitiation, a votive offering that quells the wrath of God. For others He is an expiation, a covering or shield that protects from wrath. Both of these can be seen in Scripture, and to be sure solid exegesis employs *Scriptura Scripturam*

⁶ Bailey, pg. 155.

⁷ Das, pg. 170, n. 70.

Inerpretatur, but this principle does not allow the equivocation seen in the list of definitions above. What we do see, of course, is an example of eisegesis - the definition wagging the noun. ἱλαστήριον is defined in a way convenient to a preconception of Christ's Person and work.

Further research reveals that there is even disagreement on which part of speech ἱλαστήριον is. Some hold ἱλαστήριον to be a neuter noun, others an adjective. Kittle maintains it is a neuter noun from the adjective ἱλαστήριος, and defines it "means or place of expiation."⁸ BAGD offers the definition "that which expiates or propitiates."⁹

David Greenwood writes:

"Grammatically the word may be a masculine adjective or a neuter noun. If it is an adjective, Christ is the expiatory agent or object; if it is a noun, he is the locus of God's mercy and forgiveness. Both interpretations yield a satisfactory sense."¹⁰

Compounding the confusion is fact that the word is anarthrous – it lacks the definite article. What to do? How should ἱλαστήριον be best translated? Again Nico Fryer:

It is scarcely possible that a consensus of opinion will be reached before the end of time on the question as to how the word *hilasterion* is to be translated in Rom. 3:25.¹¹

What of *Sensus Literalis Unus Est*? Can it be that there is no one, satisfactory translation for ἱλαστήριον? To quote St. Paul again, "μὴ γένοιτο."

⁸ Vol. III, pgs. 318-322.

⁹ Pg. 375.

¹⁰ Greenwood, pg 316.

¹¹ Fryer, pg. 111.

Having studied Romans 3:25 in some depth, now read Romans 3:21-31.

Verse 25 – Summarize what Paul says in your own words –

How was Jesus Christ “set forth?” This word can mean to “show publicly” or “to place ahead of time”.

Review what propitiation, expiation, and Mercy Seat mean.

How would you paraphrase “as a Mercy Seat in His Blood through faith?” How does this link with verses 21-22? Romans 1:16-17?

Recall our discussion of “the Righteousness of God”, and Luther’s treatment of it. How is God’s righteousness “demonstrated” in Christ?

What does “passed over the sins previously occurring” mean? (hint: the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies pointed to Christ, see Revelation 13:8)

Verse 26 – Here again St. Paul centers the verse on the righteousness of God. How is it that we are justified? Is this active or passive? How does this relate to Romans 1:16-17?

Verse 27 – Having discussed the Law, then introduced a righteousness “apart from the Law,” St. Paul now returns to those who think they can keep the Law. How is man justified? Don’t forget verses 21-16! On “the law of faith” see Matthew 25:35-40; James 2:14-26.

Verse 28 – See Ephesians 2:8-10, Galatians 3:1-14.

Verses 30-31 – What two groups is Paul describing? How does this relate to the structure of the first three chapters? Verses 29-31 summarize the Epistle thus far. On the nullification of the Law, see Matthew 5:17-18. How does this relate to Habakkuk 2:4?

Read Romans 4:1-12

In this section St. Paul speaks of Abraham. What is the significance of Abraham? See Genesis 15:5, 17:5; Luke 1:55; John 8:38-40; Galatians 3:16.

In verses 1-3, how was Abraham justified?

Is “declared righteous” or “justified” active or passive?

What is St. Paul’s proof in verses 4-5?

In verse 6 St. Paul speaks of David. What would be the significance of this?

In verses 7 and 8, is the man blessed by reward for his works? If not, how? Is this active or passive?

Read Psalm 32. Do you recognize any parts of this Psalm? What is the main point of the Psalm? How does this reinforce St. Paul's argument?

In verse 9 which two groups is St. Paul referring to? What is the significance of this reference? See also Galatians 2:7; Colossians 3:11.

In verse 10 and 11 St. Paul bases his argument on a chronological fact. See Genesis 17:1-14. Is Abraham declared righteous before or after he is circumcised? What is the significance of this? What then was the purpose of circumcision? See verse 11, and Romans 2:25-29.

What is true of both groups of people St. Paul discusses in verses 11 and 12?

Read Romans 4:13-25

Verse 13 – Read Genesis 15:4-6, 17:4-7. Did Abraham receive the Promise through the Law? Abraham was born in approximately 2166 B. C. When is the Law given? Through what then did Abraham receive the Promise?

Verses 14 & 15 – What does the Law bring? Why can the Law not save?

Verses 16 & 17 – How does the Promise come? What does it mean when St. Paul writes “Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace”? See Ephesians 2:8-10. How does this relate to Romans 1:16-17? Romans 3:25? What is the central doctrine of both Testaments of Scripture? (Hint: See the Fourth Article of the Augsburg Confession)

Verses 18-21 – What is the example here of Abraham's faith? Of God's grace? See Joshua 24:2-3. Read Hebrews 11:8-12, 17-19.

Verse 22 - St. Paul writes “it was accounted to him for righteousness.” How would you put this in your own words? Is it active, or passive? See Galatians 3:14

Verses 23-24 – For whom is the Promise written?

To whom is the righteousness of God reckoned (credited, accounted)?

Verse 25 – For what was Christ “delivered up”? (See John 3:14-15)

For what was Christ raised? (See Isaiah 52:1-12, Matthew 12:38-40)

What does the word “justification” mean?

Luther writes: “Christ’s death is the death of sin, and His resurrection is the raising up of righteousness. For by His death Christ has atoned for our sins, and through His resurrection He has procured for us righteousness. Christ’s death does not merely signify, but has effected the remission of our sins. Christ’s resurrection is not merely the pledge of our righteousness, but also its cause.” *Commentary on Romans*, trans. J.T. Mueller. 1976. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications. pg. 87.

How is Genesis 3:15 related to Romans 4:25?

Read Romans 5:1-11

On Romans 5 Luther writes “...In the whole Bible there is hardly another chapter which can equal this triumphant text...” *ibid*, pg. 88.

Verse 1 - How are we justified?

What is the result of our justification?

Verse 2 – Read John 14:6, and compare our Lord’s Words there with verse 2.

In what does the Christian rejoice?

Verse 2, cont. “...rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” See Romans 3:23-26. In chapter 5 St. Paul writes of the accomplishment of this redemption, and the resulting joy of the Christian.

Verses 3-5 – Read John 15:18-21, 16:1-3. What does our Lord foretell of those with Him in the upper room? Now read Romans 5:3-5. What “chain reaction” does our Lord describe here?

How does this relate to the statement “...we rejoice in hope of the glory of God?” (see especially vs. 5)

Read Romans 2:5, 2:29. What does St. Paul write of the heart? Compare this with verse 5. What now fills the heart?

Verse 6 – Did Christ die for us because we were worthy? What were we?

Verses 7-8 – What is Paul’s point in verse 7? How is God different than we are?

What does God “show” us in Christ?

What were we “still” when Christ died for us?

Verse 9 – Compare to Romans 3:21-25. St. Paul discusses the wrath of God – where have we met that concept before in Romans? (see 1:18)

Verse 10 – What imagery does St. Paul use to describe our relationship with God:

Before?

After?

Verse 11 – There is great joy in the salvation Christ won for us. How does St. Paul describe this here?

Read Romans 5:12-20

Verse 12 – Sin is generally divided into two “types”: original, and actual. What type of sin is St. Paul describing here? See Genesis 6:5-6; Job 14:1-4; Psalm 51:3-5; John 3:6;

Verses 13-14 – Earlier St. Paul had made an argument based on the chronology of Abraham’s faith and the giving of the Law. Now St. Paul teaches that even before the Law was given, death reigned, because all men are sinful from birth.

“... Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.” Holy Scripture offers “types” and “antitypes”. A type is something or someone that predicts or foreshadows someone or something that is to come. An antitype is the fulfillment of that type. For example, see Galatians 4:22-26. Who are the types? Who are the antitypes? Holy Scripture uses specific Greek and Hebrew words to denote types. We must be careful not to create types where they are not given us by Scripture. For instance, Scripture nowhere identifies the sacrifice of Isaac as a type. What might be the danger of doing so?

“... Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.” Here St. Paul employs negative typology. **Verses 15-19** explain. How was Adam a “type” of Christ?

Verse 15 – What is the “gift?” What is the “trespass?” How is the gift unlike the trespass?

Verses 16-19 – What is the result of Adam’s sin? What is the result of the gift of God’s grace in Christ Jesus?

Verse 20 – Here St. Paul resumes the thought of verse 14. Why was the Law added? See Romans 3:20. What does the Law do? How much greater is God’s grace? God promised Adam “but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” Who dies the required death? What do we receive in Christ?

Read Romans 6:1-14

Verse 1 – What is Paul’s question?

Verse 2 – What is the answer? The death and life implications of salvation are treated in the next 12 verses. Where did we die to sin?

Verse 3 – Into what are we baptized? What is the significance of this?

Verse 4 - How is this related to 4:25?

Verse 5 – If we die with Christ in baptism, what is also true of us?

Verses 6-7 – What happens to the “old man” in Holy Baptism? To what result?

Verses 8-10 – What does it mean to “live with Christ?” How is our life different after Baptism?

Verse 11 – How are we to consider ourselves?

Verse 12 – The Baptized have power. We may say “No!” to sin. Those without faith sin even when they do what look like good works. They have no choice. Their “will is bound.” The Christian, however, does have a choice.

Verse 13 – What type of language does St. Paul employ here? (hint: think Temple, see 1 Peter 2:5; Psalm 51:15-17) Read Hebrews 10:1-10.

Verse 14 – See Galatians 3:22-29.

Read Romans 6:15-25

Verse 15 – How does Paul’s rhetorical question relate to the previous section? His answer in Greek is the strongest possible “No!”

Verse 16 – What metaphor does Paul use here? How does he identify himself in 1:1? The word for “servant” and “slave” is the same word in the Greek. What examples of “slavery” to sin come to your mind?

Verse 17 – If the Romans “obeyed from the heart”, why does St. Paul thank God here?

Verse 18 – To what is the Christian “enslaved”? How is this not slavery at all?

Verse 19 – In this verse St. Paul provides the explanation.

Verse 20 – To what were the Romans “enslaved”? To what were they “free”? What two parts of God’s Word are clearly distinguished here?

Verse 21 – See Galatians 5:16-26, and Matthew 7:15-21. Is Matthew 7:1 still true? See 1 John 4:1. What is the end of the fruits of sin?

Verse 22 – How is it, in the context of Romans 6, that we are “set free from sin?” What are the implications for the Christian?

Verse 23 – What are contrasted in this verse?

Read Romans 7:1-6

Verses 1 & 2 – This section is a natural extension of the thought in chapter 6. What is Paul’s first point? What example does he give?

Verse 3 – What proof, under the Law, does St. Paul give?

Verse 3, cont. – See Deuteronomy 25:5-6; Matthew 22:23-28; 1 Corinthians 7:39.

Verse 4 – How is it that we “died to the Law?” Based on verses 1-3, how does this change our relationship to the Law? Is the Law removed?

Verses 5-6 – When were we “controlled by the flesh?” What fruit did we then bear? How do we now “serve?”

Read Romans 7:7-13

Verse 7 – Put this verse in your own words. What is St. Paul saying?

Verse 8 – When the sinful flesh hears the Law, what is the result? What is the relationship between the Law and sin?

Verse 9 – Remember the study we did on the life of St. Paul. In verse 9 Paul is describing a “before and after”. What was before? What was after?

Verse 10 – What does the Law do? See Galatians 3:19.

Verse 11 – What is the relationship between the Law and sin?

Verse 12 – Compare verse 12 with verse 7. Is the Law sin?

Verse 13 – What are the three functions of the Law? Which function is described here?

Read Romans 7:14-25

Verse 14 – See John 3:6, 6:63. “Slave to sin”: Recall Paul’s argument in Romans 6:15-18.

A distinct teaching of Holy Scripture is that fallen man, redeemed in Christ, living out his life on this earth in faith, is at once “saint and sinner”, *simul justus et peccator*. Consider 1 John 1:8-10; 2:1-2, 15-17, 28. This doctrine of *simul justus et peccator* is especially clear here in Romans 7.

What implications does this have for daily Christian life? (See Small Catechism, Baptism, *The Significance of Baptizing with Water*: “What does such baptizing with water signify? It signifies that the Old Adam in us should, by daily contrition and repentance, be drowned and die with all sins and evil lusts and, again, a new man daily come forth and arise, who shall live before God in righteousness and purity for ever. Where is this written? St. Paul writes, Romans, chapter sixth... ‘We are buried with Christ by Baptism into death, that, like as He was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.’”

Consider also the first of the 95 Theses: “When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said “Repent!”, He willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance.” (AE 31.25) See Matthew 4:17.

What impact does the doctrine of *simul justus et peccator* have on Christian preaching?

Verse 14 – The Law is spiritual. The Law is of God. Paul distinguishes here between the Law of God (written in our hearts and minds, Jer. 31:31ff), and the laws of men, which are civil, carnal, and external to us (Melanchthon). Here Luther writes “For it is characteristic of a spiritual and wise man to know that he is carnal and displeasing to himself, to hate himself and to approve the law of God because it is spiritual. On the other hand, it is characteristic of a foolish and carnal man to know that he is spiritual, to be well pleased with himself, and to love his life in this world.” (AE 25.328-9)

Verse 14 – “...sold as a slave to sin.” See 6:16.

Verse 15 – Here St. Paul speaks in the first person, “I”. He speaks personally of his own experience with the truth that the Christian is *simul justus et peccator*. If St. Paul, who received a personal appearance of the risen Christ, and Apostleship from the Lord Himself, is *simul justus et peccator*, how much we must confess and hold true this critical Christian doctrine.

“For what I am doing, I do not understand . . .” Inasmuch as St. Paul is regenerate, saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, the temple of God’s Spirit, his will is in accord with God’s will. The sin one commits is truly shocking to the Christian, scandalous and shameful. Indeed according to the new man we “do not understand” our daily sinful acts.

“For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do.” Speaking of himself as saint and sinner, Paul uses three different Greek words for “do” in this verse: to “accomplish or produce”, to “continually practice”, and “to do or make”. Can you, with St. Paul, confess this?

Verse 16 – The Law is good, because it shows us our sin. As we do what we do not want, the Law is there reflecting our sinful works back to us, reminding us of the perfect works we ought to do.

Verse 17 – The new man, the baptismal man, speaks here as “I”.

Verse 18 – “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells...” The old man, the unregenerate son of Adam, is here called “flesh”. What is Paul’s proof that nothing good dwells in him?

Verse 19-20 – Here Paul reiterates what he stated in verses 15-18. As long as we have flesh, we have sin. We should not fall into the Gnostic trap of flesh=bad, spirit=good, however. Jesus Christ took on Flesh. God became Man to redeem men, body and soul. Job can say “in my flesh I shall see God.” (19:26). At the resurrection, we will be raised, bodily. Then we will receive a transformed body. Still, in this life, while we have flesh, we have sin. The process of sanctification is one that occurs in this body.

Verse 21 – It is by the Law that Paul knows that evil is with him. How?

Verse 22-23 – Again here we have “new man” “old man” talk. How does St. Paul refer to the “new man?” The “old man?”

Verse 24 – The Law shows us our sin. That is the only work of the Law, in any of its functions. *Lex semper accusat*. What is St. Paul’s response, as a believer, to the Law? What would be the response of the unregenerate? (See Luther’s comments on verse 14).

Verse 25 – The Law has convicted us, and convinced us of our unworthiness. Are we then without hope? Christ Jesus saves us from this body of death by becoming death for us – by dying in our stead. He “rescues” us.

Verse 25 – The Christian, justified by God’s grace through faith in Jesus Christ, must live out this life, where we still have our flesh. Where is God’s Law written? See Romans 6:22-23.

Read Romans 8:1-11

Verse 1 – Why is there “no condemnation”? Note the KJV or NKJV text here on the reading of verse 1.

Verse 2 – St. Paul ends chapter 7 with a discussion of slavery. What is the opposite of slavery? How is that manifest in verse 2? Which two “Laws” are contrasted?

Read 7:22-23 – and then 8:2 The use of the word “law” is in the wide sense here. It can be read “teaching” or “ruling” or “leading.” See John 1:16-17.

Melanchthon writes “Therefore he makes a contrast. He sets faith and knowledge of Christ over against that which is properly called Law, as if he said: ‘Faith and the knowledge of Christ takes away the Law which accuses and condemns.’ Thus he says later [8:2]: ‘He has set me free from the Law of sin and death.’ Therefore, the sum and substance of his statement is that for the justified there is no condemnation, not because they have fulfilled the Law, but because they have been made alive by faith in Christ and set free from the curse of the Law and from damnation.”

Verse 3 – What could the Law “not do?” Why? Recall St. Paul’s discussion in 7:11ff. What did God do? Why is the incarnation of Christ important?

Verse 4 – How is the requirement “fulfilled in us?”

Verse 5 – Again here we have “old man” “new man” talk. Which is which? What are the implications of verse 5 for Christian life?

Verse 6-8 – Why is to be carnally minded “death”? Can those “of the flesh” please God? Does this mean that all men are condemned?

Verse 9 – Are we of the flesh? Where do we receive the Spirit?

Verse 10 – How is the body of a Christian dead? Is there life?

Verse 11 – How is it that we receive life?

Read Romans 8:12-17

Verse 12 – How is the concept of debtors related to the slavery Paul discusses in 6:16?

Verse 13 – How does the Christian “put to death the deeds of the body?”

Verse 14 – What is significant about the term “sons of God?” See Genesis 6:1, Luke 20:36, Galatians 3:23-27.

Verse 15 – How are we no longer slaves? See John 20:17.

Verse 16-17 – What is the significance of the word “heirs”? What role does a Testament have in this? Who was the heir in Biblical times?

Read Romans 8:18-27

Verse 18 - How does this thought link what went before to what follows? What hope does this offer the suffering Christian?

Verse 19 – When will this happen? See 1 John 3:1-2.

Verse 20 – When was the creation “subjected to futility”? See Genesis 3:16-19. Why was this done?

Verse 21 – See 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Revelation 21:1-5

Verse 22 – What image or parable does St. Paul use? What does this mean?

Verse 23 – How does this relate to Romans 7:14-24? What does “Firstfruits” of the Spirit mean? When are our bodies “redeemed”?

Verses 24-25 – To which “hope” does St. Paul refer? See Hebrews 11:1. How is “patient waiting” manifest in the life of the Christian? See Philippians 1:21-23.

Verses 26-27 – Here St. Paul returns to a discussion of the Holy Spirit begun in verse 23. Read Ephesians 1:7-14. Discuss the implications of verse 26 on the doctrine of prayer. See Ephesians 6:17-18.

Read Romans 8:28-39

Verse 28 – How does verse 28 relate to verse 27? The “call” St. Paul refers to here is the general call to salvation of all Christians. He will discuss this more in verse 30. How does being “called according to His purpose” in verse 28 relate to verse 27?

Verse 29 – Here St. Paul presents the doctrine of “election”. The Formula of Concord reads “The eternal election of God, however, or predestination, that is, God’s ordination to salvation, does not extend at once over the godly and the wicked, but only over the children of God.” (F.C. S.D., XI.5). “There is no counterpart, such as a predestination to damnation.” (Koehler pg. 182).

See 2 Timothy 1:9; Ephesians 1:3-6; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2; Acts 13:48. From these pericopes we can establish:

1. Election is an act of God – He chooses us before we are born.
2. Our election is based solely in God’s grace, not in our merit or worth.
3. Objective justification is not denied in the confession of subjective justification.
4. The elect are predestined to be called through the Gospel to conversion.

Synergism and the doctrine of predestination to damnation are contrary to God’s Word.

Review Formula of Concord, Epitome, XI

Verse 29 – “conformed to the image of His Son” – the Greek word for “image” is literally “icon.” See Genesis 1:27; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Philippians 3:20-21,

– “the Firstborn among many brothers” – See Luke 2:7; Colossians 1:15-18; Hebrews 1:6, 2:10-11, 12:22-23; Revelation 1:4-5.

Verse 30 – “Called” here refers to calling one to faith through the Gospel, as in verse 28.

- “Justified” – to declare righteous, a forensic act. See Isaiah 53:11; Rom. 4:25.

- “Glorified” – All those predestined to salvation, even those not yet born, will receive glory. Here St. Paul speaks as if it has already happened. See 2 Corinthians 3:18, Romans 9:23. Lenski writes “Paul sees God’s whole work complete, complete from eternity to eternity, all ‘these’ from the first saint to the last, from God’s foreknowledge ere time began to the glory of these saints when time shall be no more.”

Verses 29-30 – Now consider these two verses together. What is the “chronology” of salvation? How does this apply to you? How are you being “being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord”?

Verse 31 – Here is the unquenchable hope of the Christian: “If God is for us, who can be against us?”

Verse 32 – God willingly gave His Firstborn, His Only-begotten. What will He withhold?

Verse 33-34 – Who is it that “brings charges” against God’s elect? See Revelation 12:10. What is Jesus’ role? See Psalm 110:1 (Mt. 22:41-46), 1 John 2:1

Verses 35-36 – In verses 33-34 St. Paul references spiritual dangers, charges brought against the elect of God. In verses 35-36 he references physical dangers. How does St. Paul reconcile these piercing afflictions with our salvation? See Psalm 44:22. What is the context of the Psalm? How does St. Paul use this verse? Here we meet the doctrine called the “theology of the cross.” If we are faithful, this world can treat us no differently than it treated our Lord. The opposite teaching, common today especially in so-called “church growth” settings, is the “theology of glory.” This false teaching maintains that if we are faithful, we will be blessed materially and physically. This is also known as the “health, wealth and prosperity gospel.” This false teaching is also regularly applied to faith: “if you believe hard enough, it will happen. If it didn’t happen, you didn’t believe hard enough.” What is clearly absent here is God’s will. As Scripture and the Confessions teach “the good and gracious will of God is done indeed without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it be done among us also.”

Verse 37 – In which things are we conquerors? How?

Verses 38-39 – Here St. Paul combines both the physical and the spiritual, eliminating every “created thing” as the source of separation from the love of God.

God’s love is not a “warm fuzzy” or an emotional experience or simply a concept. God’s love has physical form and is definite. Where does God show us His love? Hint: “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For thus God loved the world, that ...” How is the translation of John 3:14-16 presented here different from the translation you memorized? How does this relate to Romans 8:39?

Read Romans 9:1-9

In chapter 9 St. Paul changes the subject. He leaves the joyous discussion of God’s love in Jesus Christ, and expresses sorrow. What is the cause of Paul’s sorrow?

Verse 1 – Paul stresses the veracity of his testimony. What does he use as proof?

Verse 2 – How does St. Paul describe what he feels?

Verse 3 – Paul uses a “contrary to fact” conditional sentence, continued in verse 6. How are these thoughts connected?

Verses 4-5 – Recall Romans 4. In these verses St. Paul delivers a list, the contents of which all pointed to Christ. How did each point to Christ?

- Israelite according to the flesh
- The adoption
- The glory
- The covenants
- The giving of the Law
- The Service of God
- The Promises
- The Fathers

Romans 9:5 is perhaps the clearest proclamation of the Divinity of Christ in the Scriptures. How does your translation read?

Verse 6 – What is Paul saying? How is verse 6 related to verse 5? What does it mean that “they are not all Israel who are of Israel?” This theme, “they are not all Israel who are of Israel”, continues through the end of chapter 11. See Galatians 3:29; Philippians 3:3; John 8:53-58. Who is the true Israel?

Verses 7-13 – Here Paul amplifies and expounds on verse 6 – See Gen 21:12; Hebrews 11:17-18. Who was Abraham’s “other son?” Those descended from Ishmael are also descendants of Abraham. Is the Promise for them too? How, and how not? Was Esau also a child of Abraham? What is the scandal of Esau marrying Mahalath (Genesis 28:9, daughter of Ishmael)?

Who is Rebekah? See Genesis 25:21 (Nahor [Genesis 24:10] was Abraham’s brother. see also Genesis 28:2 & 29 for account of Jacob & Rachel. How does this reinforce Paul’s point?)

Verse 14 – here Luther writes “That means: I will have mercy on whom I intended to have mercy, or whom I predestinated for mercy. This is a hard saying for the proud and prudent. But it is sweet to the lowly and humble who despair of themselves. For that reason the Lord has mercy on them. Indeed, there is no other reason for God’s justice, nor can there be any other than His own will.” Here Luther also reminds us that righteousness is an attribute of God – He can not be unrighteous, any more than He can cease being God.

Verse 15 - Note the relationship between Paul’s argument here and the doctrine of election he lays out in 8:29-30.

Verse 16 – Relate this verse to the chief article of the Christian faith.

Verse 17 – St. Paul uses as an example the hardening of the Pharaoh’s heart. The same miracles that worked faith in Israel worked to the hardening of Pharaoh’s heart – his rejection of the one true God. This is another example of “divine election of grace that saves” (Luther). Melancthon says that this verse points to two things: 1) Pharaoh was reprobate; 2) God tolerated him in order that the glory of God might become more conspicuous under persecution. Compare to Romans 8:28.

Read Romans 9:18-29

In this section St. Paul further explains election to grace.

Verse 18 – Reread verse 15.

Verse 19 – Here is the rhetorical question – if God is in control of all things, can unbelievers be faulted for their unbelief? The answer follows.

Verses 20-29: St. Paul establishes: 1) We can not fully know God’s mind or God’s will, just as the pot can not question the mind or will of the potter; 2) all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose;

3) This applies to both Jew and Gentile. What examples from the Old Testament does St. Paul use? How does this point to his assertion that “they are not all Israel who are of Israel”?

Read Verses 30-33

Verse 30 – Paul asks and answers a question in the same sentence. How do the Gentiles attain righteousness?

Verse 31 – How did “Israel” pursue righteousness? Did they receive it? To whom does “Israel” refer in this verse?

Verses 32-33 – Relate this verse to the Fourth Article of the Augsburg Confession:

“We teach that men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works, but are freely justified for Christ’s sake, through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor, and that their sins are forgiven for Christ’s sake, who, by His death, has made satisfaction for our sins. This faith God imputes for righteousness in His sight (Romans 3:21-26; 4:5)”

The “stumbling stone” is not something one simply trips over, but rather something one crashes into and is destroyed (the Greek verb means “to beat against or strike.” See Isaiah 8:13-15 and 28:16. Who is the “stumbling stone”? Why? In the context of Paul’s argument that “they are not all Israel who are of Israel,” what does this mean? How is this similar to the hardening of heart of the Pharaoh? What role does faith have? How does this relate to Paul’s main point?

Read Romans 10:1-13

Verse 1 – How does this verse serve as a transitional thought between chapter 9 and chapter 10? Why would Paul begin by discussing Israel's salvation?

Verse 2 – See Acts 22:3. How does Israel have zeal for God? How is it not according to knowledge? What are some other examples of this today?

Verses 3 & 4 – There are two kinds of righteousness discussed here. Which are they? See Romans 3:19-24. How is Christ the “end of the Law”? See Matthew 5:17.

Verse 5 – See Leviticus 18:5 - What is the purpose of quoting Moses? What does Moses say in this quote? “The Law is the way of life for the redeemed, not the way of salvation for the lost.” Who is “the man who does those things”? Who does not?

Verses 6-8 – Which righteousness is Moses discussing now?

Here St. Paul cites Deuteronomy 30. Read verses 10-14 there. What is the context? What is required for salvation? Marvelous works? Who is it that does marvelous works? What does the Word have to do with it? See Jeremiah 31:31-34; Romans 10:9.

Verses 9-10 – What does “confess” mean? See Matthew 10:32, where the same verb is used. What are we to believe about Jesus? If we believe, what is the result? How are we saved? How does this relate the the theme of chapter 10 thus far?

Verse 10 – What is the relationship between faith and confession? What does it mean to be a Confessional Lutheran?

Verse 11 – See Isaiah 28:16. Why would citing Isaiah reinforce Paul's main point?

Verse 12 – Is salvation then by ethnicity (Seed of Abraham)? Who is the true Israel?

Verse 13 – See Joel 2:28-32. In the context of this verse, how does Paul see the present day?

Verse 13 – How does St. Peter use the same verse (Joel 2:23-32) at Pentecost? See Acts 2:16-21. What is the relationship between “calling on the Name of the Lord” and salvation? Hint – in the Large Catechism Luther writes that your god is where you run in times of trouble.

Read Romans 10:14-21

Verses 14-15 – In the context of ethnic Israel, Paul begins to ask a series of questions meant to teach. The questions work from man (how can they call...) back to God (unless they are sent). In the context of this chapter (salvation of the Israelites, see 10:1), and Paul’s main point in this section of Romans that Israel’s failure to be saved is not God’s fault, answer Paul’s questions concerning Israel:

How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed?
(did they believe?)
And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?
(had they heard of Him?)
And how shall they hear without a preacher?
(did anyone preach to them?)
And how shall they preach unless they are sent?
(did God send preachers? See Matthew 23:37; Mark 12:2-6)

Apply this to those who do not believe today.

“How beautiful...” See Isaiah 52:7. In the greater context of Isaiah 52:5b-10, what is St. Paul saying using this quote?

Verse 16 – See Isaiah 53:1. What is the subject of Isaiah 53?

Verse 17 – See verses 9&10. The “Word of Christ” is the central message of all the Law and the Prophets – see Luke 16:27-31.

Verses 18-19 – St. Paul continues in his presentation of the “evidence”. He continues to use the very Scriptures given to Israel. Here he uses Psalm 19 and Isaiah 65. These were well known to the Israelites.

Read Romans 11:1-10

Verse 1 – Who does Paul use as an example? Why is his argument so strong?

Verses 2-4 – Paul’s language here reminds us of Romans 8, especially the section on foreknowledge.

See 1 Kings 19:1-10- What is the context of this verse? We established above that Israel killed the prophets and stoned those sent to them. Who is it here that desires to kill the Prophet?

Verses 4-6 – What has God’s answer to Elijah to do with Paul’s Epistle to the Romans? How is the Remnant chosen – by ethnic lineage? By their works? How does this relate to the chief article of the Christian faith, Augustana IV?

Verse 7 – See 10:30-32

Verse 8 – How does this verse relate to the context of Deuteronomy 29? To the Epistle to the Romans?

Verses 9-10 – See Psalm 69:22-23. David here prays to God regarding those who hate him “without reason.” Why would this be an especially pointed use of the Psalm when applied to unbelieving Jews?

Read Romans 11:11-24

What is the metaphor that St. Paul uses in this section? Who is the “wild olive shoot?” Who is the “olive root”?

Verses 11-12 – Have the Jews “fallen” beyond redemption? How does Romans 8:28 apply to this section? How is this three chapter section of Romans a natural extension of Paul’s statements at the end of chapter 8?

Verse 13 – Paul is Apostle to the Gentiles – See Acts 9:15-16; Galatians 2:9.

Verse 14 – Why is Paul especially well suited for this ministry?

Verse 15 – How is “their being cast away” the reconciliation of the world? See Matthew 22:8-9. What would their “acceptance” be?

Verse 16 – Firstfruit is an Old Testament concept. See Exodus 23:14-19a; Leviticus 23:9-14. According to 1 Corinthians 15:20, who is the “Firstfruits”? How so?

Verses 17-21 – Why were the branches broken off? Why can gentiles be counted as the true Israel? See John 15:1-7. On root/branch as a Messianic title, see: Jeremiah 23:5-6; Isaiah 11:10-11. The semantics are not unintentional, nor are they lost on the recipients. Our Catechism (Ten Commandments) teaches our children about “fear and love” of God. How is this evident in Romans 11:17-21?

Verse 22 – Can you distinguish here between Law and Gospel? Which is the “alien work” of God?

Verse 23-24 – Is verse 23 Law or Gospel for Israel? What is the summary of this section in verse 24?

Read Romans 11:25-31

Verse 25 – Of which “mystery” is St. Paul referring? The Greek Word here is *μυστήριον*. See Romans 16:25; 1 Corinthians 2:1,7; 1 Corinthians 4:1; Ephesians 1:2-9; Ephesians 3:1-6. How do these explanations of the Divine “mystery” relate to 25:b?

Verses 26-27 – According to the Divine mystery, who is, and who has always been, Israel? See Galatians 6:14-16. See Isaiah 59:15-21. How is the Redeemer described? In verse 20 how does salvation come? In verse 21 what are the marks of the New Testament? How does this relate to Jeremiah 31:31ff? Who is Jacob? (see Isaiah 41:11-14).

Verses 28-32 – How is Israel Israel’s enemy? What part does election have in this? What part do obedience and disobedience have? Finally, in verse 32 – what is the Divine “mystery”?

Verses 33-36 – To the glorious Divine mystery St. Paul responds with a rousing doxology. Consider this pericope anew by taking each verse in its proper context – salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. This verse is used as a Gradual. Why is this verse an appropriate interjection between two Scripture readings?

Read 12:1-5

Verse 1 – This verse begins with a conjunctive “therefore”. What is the linking thought? What exhortation does Paul provide as a response to God’s mercy?

Verse 2 – What is the relationship between the Christian and the world? Which opposites does St. Paul provide as a gauge for us? What is the result? How does this relate to Jeremiah 31ff and Isaiah 59:20-21?

Verse 3 – What is St. Paul’s exhortation here? How does this relate to the transformation of the mind in Christ? What has each received from God?

Verses 4-5 – What metaphor does St. Paul use here for the church? See 1 Corinthians 12:13-27.

Read 12:6-21

Verse 6-8 - This section also begins with a conjunctive “then”. What is the linking thought? All English translations render verse 6 by supplying words not in the Greek text. A literal translation of the Greek reads: “But having different gifts according to the grace given us, whether prophecy – according to the analogy of faith”. Compare this to your translation. What is added?

The Greek word “ἀναλογίαν” is defined as “correspondence in a right relationship”. Our English word is a cognate of the Greek. What other English words derive from this word? What does this say about the prophecy in Romans 12? How does this give meaning to verses 7 & 8?

Verses 9-21 – Like the Book of Proverbs, here St. Paul gives short exhortations on the Christian life. Review these exhortations in the context of sanctification, and in the context of the 3rd function of the Law. How are these exhortations similar to the Beatitudes? This series of exhortations continues through chapters 13 and 14.

Verse 9 – Consider how love and hypocrisy are brought to bear on our relationships inside the church. Pastor will provide a more detailed definition of the word “hypocrisy”. How are we to treat what is evil? What is good? Can both be done in love?

Verse 10 – What does it mean to give preference to another? When would this preference conflict with verse 9?

Verse 11 – What would it mean to “lag in diligence?” Describe “fervent in spirit” in your own words. Who is it that we serve?

Verse 12 – The Christian is continually under attack in this world. What comfort does verse 12 give? From whence is our hope derived?

Verse 13 – As in Acts 2, the Church cares for Her own. On hospitality see Hebrews 13:1-2. The Greek word here occurs only in Romans 12:13 and Hebrew 13:2. It is literally translated “love of strangers.”

Verse 14 – How might we “bless” those who persecute us? Consider verse 12, and Matthew 5:43-48. Have you heard such petitions in our Prayer of the Church?

Verse 15 – How is this an expression of our “oneness” in Christ?

Verse 16 – What are the opposites in this verse? A straight translation of the Greek of the last section of verse 16 reads “stop becoming wise according to yourselves.” How does your translation read? Does this verse say that we should not be wise?

Verse 17 – How does this relate to verse 14? What does it mean to “have regard for good things in the sight of all men”?

Verse 18 – Our Synod is deeply divided doctrinally. Should we put aside our differences and try to live peaceably? Is holding to pure teaching divisive? Is it wrong?

Verses 19-21 – These verses have a common theme. The Christian who speaks the truth will be persecuted, even inside the church. But we are not to “avenge”, “repay”, or be overcome by evil in retaliation for wrongs. What are we rather to do? With what result?

Read Romans 13:1-14

In this section Paul changes from describing how Christians should live together (chapter 12), to describing how the Christian should live in the fallen world. Verses 1-7 deal with our relationship to civil government, verses 8-10 with our relationship to our neighbor, verses 11-13 our own conduct.

Verse 1 – According to Scripture, who places civil authorities? Under which Commandment do Lutherans place obedience to civil authorities? (Hint: See Luther’s explanation to the Fourth Commandment in both Small and Large Catechisms). Under which petition of the Lord’s Prayer do Lutherans place good government? (Hint: See Luther’s explanation to the Fourth Petition in both Small and Large Catechisms). What word does St. Paul use to describe our attitude towards civil authorities? What events in Jesus’ life show perfect submission to civil authority? In the life of St. Paul?

Verses 2-3 – What is the main point of these verses?

Verse 4 – What is the purpose of civil authority? How is this appropriate to Luther’s inclusion of civil government in the Fourth Commandment and the Fourth Petition? The Greek reads “For of God deacon he is to you unto the good.” How does your translation render the Greek word *διάκονός*?

Verse 5 – What two reasons does St. Paul give here for submission to civil authorities?

Verse 6 – See Matthew 17:24-27, 22:20-21. In the first example, how are the authorities civil authorities?

Verse 7 – This verse summarizes the previous section. St. Paul delineates taxes, customs (revenue, as in Matthew 17:25), fear, and honor. To whom are these due?

Verse 8 – The previous section speaks of what we pay. This verse ushers in a new thought – what we owe. What do we owe? How is love the fulfillment of the Law? See Galatians 5:22-23; 1 John 3:11-16.

Verses 9 & 10 – See Matthew 22:37-40; 1 Corinthians 13:13

Verse 11 – What reason does St. Paul give for living as he describes? What does He call the Day?

Verses 12-13 – What time is it? What should we not do? What should we do?

Verse 14 – What imagery does St. Paul employ here? Where does that vesting occur?
See Galatians 3:26-27; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:5-10. In Colossians, what imagery does St. Paul employ?

Read Romans 14:1-8

This section deals with those who have strong faith living with those who have weak faith. The context is the adherence to O.T. dietary and Sabbath laws. The Christian whose faith is strong knows that such observances are unnecessary, since Christ has kept the law for us. Still, among those who believed in Jesus Christ in Rome there were apparently Jewish converts who desired to retain their old customs. St. Paul also had conflict with St. Peter over this. Do you remember what happened? Where is this written? How was this resolved?

Verse 1 – The Greek reads “And the weak one in faith receive, not in order to argue of doubt.” The word for “doubt” is used only 3 times in the New Testament, see 1 Corinthians 12:10 (discerning) and Hebrews 5:14 (discerning). One of the principles of the interpretation of Scripture is *Sensus Literalis Unus Est* (the literal sense is one). How does the use of the Greek word in 1 Corinthians and Hebrews inform our understanding of Romans 14:1? So what does the verse mean? Does this apply to the fundamental doctrines of our faith?

Verse 2 – Here St. Paul elaborates on the strong and the weak. Which is which? What are the two “sides” of the question? See Acts 10:9-16. Why was this such a significant revelation to Peter? To whom was Peter’s ministry?

Verse 3 – What is Paul’s point?

Verse 4 – Who is the Master? Who judges?

Verse 5 – St. Paul offers another example, the keeping of O.T. feasts. What is his conclusion? Who kept these feasts for all men?

Verses 6-8 – What is the point that St. Paul makes? Eating/not eating could also be understood as a reference to fasting.

Verse 9 – This must be taken in the immediate context of verse 8. Christ is Lord of all.

Verses 10-12 – See Matthew 7:1-5, and 15-20. The context in verse 12 is an eschatological context – the final judgment.

Verses 13-14 – St. Paul recaps the previous section, addressing what is clearly a problem in the Roman congregations. See 1 Timothy 4:1-5, a discussion of the antichrist.

Verse 15 – See 1 Corinthians 8:8-13.

Verse 16 – The flip side of causing a brother to stumble is allowing what you consider good to be called bad. Christian liberty has two sides.

Verses 17-18 – See Luther’s explanation to the Second Petition. What is the Kingdom of God a matter of?

Verses 19-22 – St. Paul admonishes specific action on the part of the Roman congregations - pursue the things *which make* for peace and the things by which one may edify another.

Verse 23 – “... for every thing which *is* not out of faith, sin it is.” There are only two motivations: faith, and sin. This gives us a litmus by which to gauge every thought, word and deed: is it of faith, or sin? How can we know? This also means that even the best works of unbelievers – helping neighbors, donating money, even serving the church, - are sin in God’s eyes.

Read Romans 15:1-6

Verse 1 – In the Christian congregation there are those who are strong in faith, and those who are weaker. Any faith is enough faith. Still, those who are stronger in faith should “bear with the weak” rather than pleasing themselves. See Galatians 6:1-10.

Verse 2 – Which table of the Law is addressed here?

Verse 3 – In this remarkable verse, St. Paul, speaking by the Holy Spirit, puts the Words of Psalm 69:9 into the mouth of Christ. What is the context of Psalm 69? Read verse 9, and then John 2:17. In Romans 15:3, whom did Christ “please”? See Philippians 2:5. We are to have the mind of Christ. See 1 Corinthians 2:15-16.

Luther writes: “If He had wanted to please Himself and love Himself, He surely would not have done what He did. But now He has loved us and hated and humiliated Himself, He has completely given Himself up for us. Thus love is the reason why our neighbor is not displeasing to us and why we can have patience with him. Love does not allow us to please ourselves, inasmuch as it is patient itself, and without it every haughtily righteous person is impatient and self-pleasing. Thus he is saying that these things have been said about Christ, and yet they have been written “for our instruction,” “that by patience” with our neighbors “and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.” (Luther’s Lectures on Romans, *AE* 25, pg.515)

Verse 4 – This verse begins with a conjunctive “For...” What two thoughts are connected? What was “written before?” What is the purpose of the things written before? How does this bring hope? How does this apply to what we do between Services on Sunday morning? See 2 Peter 3:14-18 (Luther).

Verses 5-6 – These verses summarize the section that began in 14:1 – although there will be weak and strong mixed in the congregation, St. Paul exhorts us to unity. What is the expression of this unity? How does this relate to our being Confessional?

Read Romans 15:7-13

Verse 7 – The Greek verb translated “receive” can also be translated “welcome”, or “gather/eat”. Why might this last meaning be preferred here (hint: context!)? How did Christ “receive” you? The oneness we have by receiving one another brings praise to God, for God is one. See Ephesians 4:1-6.

Verses 8-12 – The example St. Paul provides for “receiving” one another and being one in faith is our Lord Himself. Jesus made Himself a servant (literally “deacon”) to the circumcision – He who was born without sin and needed no circumcision submitted to circumcision, placing Himself under the Law – that He fulfill the Law for Jew and Gentile.

The four Old Testament citations are from: 2 Samuel 22:50/Psalm 18:49 (David’s victory celebration); Deuteronomy 32:43 (Moses song of praise); Psalm 117:1 (A Psalm of praise); and Isaiah 11:10 (a promise that the Messiah would gather His people). All of these verses point to the inclusion of the Gentiles (nations) in the people of God. How does this relate to Paul’s main point in this section (see verse 7)?

Verse 13 – This verse, a thought connected with the hope expressed in verse 12, provides a blessing on the Roman Christians – having the hope promised by Isaiah in the Messiah, the Roman Christians also overflow with joy and peace by the Spirit’s power. How does this hope, joy and peace come according to St. Paul in verse 13? (hint: the Greek verb is an infinitive form of the verb “believe”).

Read Romans 7:14-22

Having discussed the Gentiles incorporation into the people of God by His grace, Paul speaks in this section of his unique calling – his ministry to the Gentiles.

Verses 14-15a – Paul writes as Pastor. His Epistle has been “bold”, as is appropriate for the Pastor, the undershepherd, guiding the flock he is assigned by the Shepherd. Paul’s boldness was for the spiritual good of the Roman Christians. Paul also compliments them for the same purpose – that they be built up.

Verses 15b-16 – Paul restates his Call, delineates his “priestly” duties, and articulates the result. How might the Gentiles be “an offering”? See Romans 12:1. We see now that the preceding section (really from chapter 9 ff) is immediately related to Paul’s Call to be Pastor to the uncircumcised. The tribulation in the Roman congregations regarding food, and the weak/strong in faith, would provided impediments to Paul’s ministry. Factions in the congregation are not just annoying – like all sin they impede the Gospel.

Verses 17-19 - See Galatians 6:14-17. As Paul prepares to close his Epistle, he “boasts” in the Lord. In Galatians Paul references his *stigmata* as proof, in Romans he references the miracles God worked through him. Acts 14:8-10 (healing of the crippled man); 16:16-18 (casting out of an evil spirit), 25-26 (escape from prison); 20:7-12 (raising Eutychus from the dead), etc... Review the purpose of such miracles in Paul’s ministry – they are always accompanied by the preaching of the Gospel. There is no promise from God that such miracles will accompany the preaching of the Gospel today – see 1 Corinthians 13:8 - why? What do we have that Paul did not?

From Jerusalem ... Illyricum – see map (a province running north from Macedonia to Italy – located where Dalmatia is pictured, which grew to include the entire Balkan peninsula. The area was annexed by the Roman Empire in 9 A.✠ D. The province took its name from Illyrica, a city located inside the province). Illyricum is not mentioned in Acts, the name is used only here in Scripture. Paul’s reference to Illyricum is chronologically more appropriate than using the name Dalmatia. The point of this verse isn’t history or geography, rather that in all these places Paul “fully preached the gospel of Christ.”

Verses 20-22 – Building on a quote from Isaiah 52:15, Paul asserts: 1) He desired to preach Christ where Christ wasn’t known; 2) He did not want to preach Christ to those who had already heard (1 Corinthians 3:1-7; 2 Corinthians 10:15-17); and 3) this has prevented him from visiting Rome, where Christ has clearly been preached.

Read Romans 15:23-29

Verses 23-24 – Paul’s trip to Spain would be his 4th missionary journey. Spain was the westernmost edge of the world to Paul. The Greek verb “help” is literally “to send on one’s way”, a reference to financial and spiritual support.

Verses 25-26 – Paul shares his itinerary with the Roman Christians. Having received financial support from the Macedonians and Achaians (see map), Paul is returning to Jerusalem to help the church there. See Acts 24:17. It is upon Paul’s return to Jerusalem that he is arrested.

Verse 27 – What is the debt the Macedonians and Achaians “owe” the Jerusalem church?

Verses 28-29 – See Romans 1:10 – Paul opened with his desire to visit the Christians in Rome.

Read Romans 15:30-33

Verse 30-32 – Paul knew that the trip to Jerusalem would be one of conflict and difficulty. See Acts 20:22-25, where Paul gives his farewell address to the Ephesian elders (who came to Miletus to see him off) before sailing for Jerusalem.

Read Acts 21:10-14. Paul writes to the Romans of his concern for his wellbeing in Jerusalem (Romans 15:30-32). He nonetheless is willing to go. What is Paul's answer in verse 13 of Acts 21? In verse 14 of Acts 21 "we" ceased trying to talk Paul out of going to Jerusalem. Who is the author of Acts writing in the first person plural?

In Romans 15:22-32 Paul writes that he desires to travel to Jerusalem, and then visit Rome. In Acts 21:17 Paul arrives in Jerusalem. In Acts 21:27ff Paul is arrested. After several trials (Felix, Festus, Agrippa), Paul appeals to Caesar. He is taken by ship to Rome. See Acts 28:16 for a description of Paul's first imprisonment. Many Lutheran theologians hold that during this "house arrest" Paul wrote the "Captivity Epistles": Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians and Philemon. See Philippians 1:7, Colossians 4:18, Ephesians 4:1, and Philemon 9ff (although other Lutheran theologians hold that they were written during an Ephesian imprisonment of up to three years, or from Corinth {Luther}, see our introduction). Church tradition records a trip to Spain by Paul after his release from his first imprisonment. The tradition relates that St. Paul and St. James began the evangelization of Spain together. While Acts ends abruptly and does not complete the story of Paul's life, his later Epistles describe a second, severe Roman imprisonment, ultimately ending in his death. The history of the church records Paul's martyrdom by beheading on June 29, 65 A.✠ D. at *Tre Fontane* in Rome.

Now reread Romans 15:31-33. Knowing this history, Paul's words here are all the more poignant.

Read Romans 16:1-15

Here St. Paul extends personal greetings to many of the Roman saints. Some of these names are common, others not. Many are named in Acts and in other Pauline Epistles. Many theologians (including Luther) hold that Phoebe was the letter-carrier of the Epistle to the Romans. See Aquila and Priscilla in Acts 18:2-3. Here we see that it is not blood relations, but Blood-bought relations, that are dear to the Christian. Luther attributes this section to the Hebrew custom of listing the names of Synagogue members.

Note in 16:2 what Paul calls the believers.

There are at least 6 different women with the name Mary in the New Testament. Which Mary is mentioned here is not clear. Church tradition records that Mary, mother of our Lord, went with St. John to Ephesus.

Read Romans 16:16-20

Verse 16 – The "holy kiss" was an "established ceremony" (Lenski) in the Christian assemblies of the first century. See 1 Corinthians 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:26; 1 Peter 5:14. The exchange of this liturgical kiss marked the fellowship in confession that the believers had. This is still practiced in some church bodies today.

Verse 17 – The “holy kiss” marked those who hold the same faith. The following verses identify the opposite – those who hold a different faith. Our language “mark and avoid”, a reference to denying church fellowship to those who believe differently, is taken from this verse. What does St. Paul direct that the Roman believers do? How are they to tell who is to be avoided? Taken together with verse 16 we have a good description here of Christian fellowship. Is Paul being mean?

Verse 18 – Those not in the Word, those who have no ability to defend their faith, are at peril when confronted with false doctrine. What are some examples of this today?

Verse 19 – St. Paul uses “obedience” as a synonym for “faithfulness”. The Roman Christians have received the Apostolic doctrine, although not from Paul. Where could we find this Apostolic doctrine, which protects Christians from false doctrine? How does Paul describe Christian wisdom in this verse?

Verse 20 is a closing thought by Paul. He conveys a promise and a blessing. What is the promise? What is the blessing?

Read Romans 16:21-27

Verse 21 – Those with Paul are mentioned. Timothy is Paul’s “son” in the faith.

Verse 22 – Here St. Paul’s amanuensis names himself. Theologians speculate that Tertius (a Latin name) was known to the Roman Christians.

Verse 23 – Gaius is named elsewhere in Scripture, and his name here aids in isogogical matters. Several men bear this name in the New Testament. This Gaius is held to be the Gaius named in 1 Corinthians 1:14 (not the Gaius from Macedonia, Derbe, or the Gaius of John’s Epistles). It seems from Paul’s description of Gaius that his home was used as a stopping point for Christians.

Verse 24 - Again here, in Paul’s words, a blessing is proclaimed upon the Roman Christians.

Verses 25-27 – St. Paul closes with a doctrinal doxology. In this he chiefly gives glory to God (verse 27). But his articulation of who God is, and how God is revealed, is catechetical.

In verse 25, how does the Gospel “work”? Through what means? What does St. Paul call the Gospel?

In verse 26 – where was the Gospel “hidden”? Where is it revealed? For whom is it revealed? Where is the “commandment” written of which Paul speaks? How is the “obedience” to the faith demonstrated?

