

LESSON FOUR

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS (Continued)

Scriptural Reference: Romans 5:1 - 8:39.

A. **RIGHTEOUSNESS EXPERIENCED IN THE SOUL: (Romans 5:1-8:17).**

1. ROMANS CHAPTER FIVE:

- a. Results of Justification by Faith: There are definite benefits resulting from God's act of justifying us through faith. Paul stated that peace; joy, love and hope are included in these benefits. The first of these is peace.

Having been declared righteous by faith, the believer has peace with God. Peace simply means that the war is over, the arms of rebellion have been laid down and God's terms have been accepted. This peace with God means cessation of hostility between the soul and God. The hostility and animosity between God and believers are gone. In its place there is blessed peace. We should note that there is a difference between peace with God and the peace of God. (Philippians 4:7) The peace of God refers to a sensation and tranquility of mind and heart. Here in Romans, peace with God is a complete surrender to the will of God and all hostility in the soul is gone. This brings about a fellowship with God.

Through Jesus Christ we have access into the grace of God in which we have taken our stand. This grace is the unmerited favor of God. Here the believer stands, justified.

Having been justified, and having access into the grace of God, the believer now rejoices in hope of the glory of God, but not only in the future hope but the believer also rejoices in present trials. Trials, rather than destroying our faith, develop a proven character. These trials turn us away from self-trust to complete trust in God. The believer glories in tribulations, because tribulation brings about endurance and endurance builds proven character and then this brings about hope. The order here is significant: tribulations, endurance, character and then hope. The character that is developed by tribulation and endurance gives the believer a proof or real evidence that he is standing in the grace of God and the result is hope.

- b. The Love of God: We shall not be disappointed in this hope because we already have a foretaste of its consummation, which is the love of God poured forth within our hearts. This love which has been poured out and grips us is not our love for God but rather, God's love for us. The nature of God's love is best described by what it does. God loves men, sinful as they are. God's love is totally unmotivated by any qualities in the person loved. The Apostle Paul describes man as being helpless, ungodly, sinners and even enemies. Men might evidence that love by giving their lives for a just man but God showed his love by Christ dying for his enemies.

- c. The "Much More's" of Romans chapter 5: In this chapter we have the Apostle Paul making certain comparisons and using the expression "Much more." Verse 9, much more saved from wrath; verse 10, much more saved by his life; verse 17, much more the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by Jesus Christ; verse 20, much more grace abounds over sin. The student should take time to meditate upon these much more's for they describe what Jesus Christ accomplished for the soul that is justified.
- d. The Two Headships: Here we have the whole matter of righteousness experienced by the human soul dealt with by a comparison of two representative headships: Adam and Christ. Our forefather, Adam, as the first representative man, plunged the whole human family into sin and death, from which man could not of himself escape. Through the last representative man, and his obedience to God, there came eternal life. This may be summed up as follows: Because of sin and disobedience of Adam there came death and condemnation upon all mankind; because of righteousness and obedience upon the part of Jesus there came the free gift of justification, righteousness, abundant grace and eternal life to all who receive grace.

The chapter ends with a statement dealing with the absolute sovereignty of God's grace. God's grace is absolutely sovereign. Eternal life through Jesus Christ is assured.

2. ROMANS CHAPTER SIX:

- a. Our Death With Christ: If grace is more manifested as sin increases, why not go on sinning that the supply of grace might be increased? Since more sin calls forth more grace, shall we not go on sinning to get more and more grace? Paul's answer is: God forbid. Such a conclusion would be a direct contradiction. Death and life are not compatible. To be a Christian means to have died to sin. Death once our enemy is now actually made to minister to the believer, the benefits of Christ's victory over the tomb.

Paul would have everyone to know that our baptism into Christ's body is a baptism into his death and his resurrection. To obey the gospel one goes with Christ through the steps of the regeneration. This means that one dies to self and sin through thorough repentance, that he is buried with Christ in baptism into his death, and is resurrected to walk in newness of life. The life of our Lord is imparted through the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Should a person who has experienced such a change continue to sin? Not if the believer is dead with Christ. A corpse is completely unresponsive to the prompting of sin.

The grace of God in Christ Jesus is indeed freedom; but freedom from sin, not freedom for to sin.

- b. Two Reckonings: In verse 11 we have the secret of a victorious life in Christ. We are to reckon or count on certain things as true. Christ has suffered for my sins. I am therefore bought with a price; I am no longer my own. I am his; therefore, I do not recognize the old man, which is crucified with him. I count myself as being dead unto sin.

However, this is only part of the story. The believer not only reckons himself to be dead but he also must see himself as alive unto God through Jesus Christ.

- c. Two Yieldings: Having reckoned ourselves dead to sin and alive unto God, we now come to two yieldings. These are stated in verse 13: first, the inner life; then the members. There is little use giving God some of our members when the heart is not yielded. The order should be to yield yourselves unto God and then your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.
- d. Man's Choice: There are two options available to man. He chooses as his master either sin or God. Sin leads ultimately to eternal death; obedience to God leads to eternal life. The real seat of sin is in the will. The will makes the members instruments. Sin reigns when the will says, yes, to temptation. The Holy Spirit reigns when the will says, No.

The old sin master pays the ultimate wages of death. Sin is a deceiver. It offers life and ends up paying death. On the other hand, the free gift of God offers eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord.

3. ROMANS CHAPTER SEVEN:

In the seventh chapter of Romans Paul gave the death struggle of self. The carnal nature was condemned for the law made sin, sinful. There was real defeat in the self-life. Some people try to live in the seventh chapter instead of accepting the fact that the self-life must die in order that eternal life may be imparted unto them. Why live in the seventh chapter trying to justify sinfulness when the Spirit will take over the conflict and conquer the flesh. Through the life of Christ one becomes strong. There is a clear contrast between the life lived in the flesh and the life lived in the Spirit.

In this chapter the pronoun "I" occurs 26 times in verse 15 to 25. There is no mention of the Holy Spirit until we get into chapter 8 where He is mentioned 19 times. In chapter 7 the law is mentioned very frequently, but only a few times in chapter 8. Paul was showing his wretched servitude under the law. In spite of his consent to it and his desire to keep it, the sinful nature within was continually overcoming the desire of his mind. How could the mind get free from the dictation of the flesh so that it could have power to do what it really desired to do? The only way out of this conflict and bondage was through Jesus Christ our Lord, verse 25.

4. ROMANS CHAPTER EIGHT:

- a. Victory in Jesus: This chapter is the victory chapter. It begins with no condemnation and ends with no separation. Romans chapter 7 is dominated by the words: I, me and my. In contrast, the Holy Spirit, who is mentioned some 19 times, dominates Romans 8. The secret of victory, brought out here, is being in Christ.

There is a great difference between being in the flesh and being in the Spirit. To be in the flesh is to be motivated by the desires of the flesh, but to be in the Spirit is to be motivated by the Spirit of God. The flesh produces a certain way of thinking and ends with death. The flesh is hostile to God and unwilling to subject itself to His law. On the other hand, the Holy Spirit produces a way of thinking which end in life and peace.

- b. Immortality: In verse 11 Paul stated clearly the role of the Holy Spirit in the resurrection. A mortal body is a body capable of dying. A body made alive by the Holy Spirit becomes immortal. This verse proves conclusively the necessity of having the Holy Spirit in order to be ready for the coming of Jesus.

- c. Abba, Father: In Romans 8:15, the expression: "Abba, Father" is half-Aramaic and half-Greek. This showed that both Jew and Gentile might be adopted into the family of God and cry out Father.

B. RIGHTEOUSNESS A PERMANENT BLESSING: (Romans 8:18-39).

1. PRAYER WITH GROANINGS:

Following adoption into the family of God there comes adaptation to the family of God. A Christian must know how to yield himself to the Spirit and to express the longings that arise from within. While the whole world is groaning in suffering, the Christian groans with deep longings for the return of Jesus. This he cannot express without the help of the Holy Spirit. The child of God only prays effectively when God's Spirit moves upon him. The Holy Spirit helps him and enables him to live in Christ, victoriously.

2. NO SEPARATION FROM GOD'S LOVE:

Notwithstanding the tribulations of the present, everything is working together for good and God who commenced the work of grace, will not allow it to be interrupted and will take care that it issues in final glory. If He is with us no one can be against us or lay anything to our charge. There is no condemnation and no separation from the love of God in Christ. However, this does not mean that the Christian is still not a person of free choice and of his own will. He may turn his back upon God.

3. PREDESTINATION:

In verses 29 and 30 we have it taught that predestination is based directly upon the foreknowledge of God. Foreknowledge no more determines facts than after knowledge. The omniscient God is able to know in advance, what course will be chosen by every individual. He therefore knew who every one of his children would be and these are the elect. There is not a word of Scripture to suggest that any person be foreordained to be lost. Those who think that men are excluded from salvation because of the foreknowledge of God are mistaken. Whosoever will may come. Man's free choice determines whether or not he shall enter into glorification.

LESSON FOUR

SELF HELP TEST

A. Explain the following:

1. Two Headships in Chapter 5.

2. Two Reckonings in Chapter 6.

3. Two Yieldings in Chapter 6.

B. Explain the fact that predestination is based directly upon the fore- knowledge of God.

C. What is the secret of victory brought out in chapter eight?

D. What truth is taught by the expression Abba, Father, in Romans 8:15?