

# Romans - God's Heart Explained

Week #10: Learning How to Live Like Jesus.

December 01, 2019

Paul's letter to the Christians living in Rome is perhaps the most influential book of the Bible outside the four Gospels. Its influence lies in the way God's heart is explained, and how His heart powerfully interrupts our empty existence. The American Pastor, Charles Swindoll describes Romans as God's grace invading the sin-fueled storms of our humanity - a grace that puts an end to our emptiness by offering forgiveness, new life through Jesus Christ and hope both for this present life we live and what lies beyond.<sup>1</sup> More than any other book, Romans explains our depravity, God's holiness, Christ's redemption and what new life in Jesus really means. You cannot follow Jesus well without comprehending what Paul writes to the Christians in Rome.

Our Sunday teaching on Romans this fall will speak to some of these deep truths that we must grow familiar with: human depravity; justification through faith; sanctification in Christ; glorification in God. But the mind is never the target ... it's our heart that matters. So, while engaging our minds with the goal of renewing them, we will consistently target our heart - because God wants our affections not merely our assent.

## **Study Questions: The habits of Sanctification.**

### Read Romans 7:14-25

1. Paul agrees that God's standards are not what he struggles with, but his human, sinful failings.
    - Using the analogy of a traffic speed limit, how do God's standards *define* our sin, *provoke* our sin and *expose* our sin?
  2. Why did God not just eradicate sin forever when Jesus died and rose again? How does allowing sin to exist and carry on make His decision to forgive sin such a powerful message to the world?
  3. In Jesus our souls are dead to sin, but not our minds & bodies ... and the sinful habits that have infected our minds and bodies for many years will not be unlearned easily.
    - What is the most entrenched sinful habit that you have had to break?
    - What sinful habit is God working with you on today? How did you learn it? How ingrained is it? Who did you learn it from? Who have you passed it on to?
  4. In Jesus' power & forgiveness, we embark on a journey of learning new habits ... His habits.
    - What are the habits of Jesus? Can you perhaps simplify them down to 4-5 essential habits that He practiced? Are we teaching & emphasizing these habits at New Life?
  5. Learning the habits of Jesus begins when we admit our frustration & failure, acknowledge our humanity that will stick with us until we reach Heaven & accept Christ's consistent forgiveness.
    - How does knowing that we're still human make striving to be like Jesus easier?
  6. Next, we attack our old habits, memories, attitudes & attractions. This is where we actively work with God to learn the new righteous habits that prepare us for Heaven.
    - What activities, conversations, images (internet, movies, T.V., print), relationships and associations is God directing you to abandon? How are you doing with these?
    - Anchoring yourself in God's truth through studying the Bible, meeting with other Christians and submitting to the Holy Spirit are how we learn heaven's habits.
      - Take stock of each of these in your life. How might you embrace them more consistently in order to master them ... and have them master you?
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