

Romans - God's Heart Explained

Week #9: Freedom to live for righteousness.

November 24, 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.¹ 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: Our freedom to be good.

Read Romans 6:11-23

1. What was your life like before you embraced new life in Jesus Christ. What are some of the things you used to do that, frankly, you're ashamed of today?
 - How does looking back encourage you in terms of how far God has brought you.
 2. Read verse 13 again. In which part of your body do you find sin lurking most often? your ears; your speech; your eyes; your hands/feet; your mind?
 - What strategies have you put into action to ensure your choose righteousness over sin?
 3. Read verse 20. Have you considered before that prior to knowing Christ you were free from the *control of righteousness*? What does this mean for others you know who do good things but do not acknowledge Jesus as their Lord and Savior?
 4. Pastor Ken was careful to point out that what I do with the rest of my life is about my sanctification - becoming like Jesus in preparation for heaven - and not my justification, which has already happened when I embraced Christ and cannot be added to.
 - How is God preparing you for heaven?
 5. Ken also reminded us that our present bodies are mortal. We will receive new bodies one day that will not be subject to temptation, nor decay, nor death.
 - What part of your present body will you be most glad to leave behind?
 - What will it be like to no longer grow tired, old, broken and failing?
 6. Spend time thanking God for your freedom from sin, your freedom over sinning, and your freedom now to be righteous. Submit your life to Christ again, asking Him for His Spirit's power in you to resist the tug of temptation. If you're in a group, consider sharing with each other in confidence and vulnerability a temptation you are struggling with. Then, commit to praying daily for each other.
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