

The Bible FOR DUMMIES The New Testament

April 22, 2008



"THE LETTERS"

April 29, 2008

I & II Corinthians, Philippians, & Galatians

May 6, 2008

YOF & God's Angels Dinner Show

May 13, 2008

**James, Colossians, Ephesians,
Thessalonians, & Hebrews**

May 20, 2008

"The Revelation" – The Book of Revelation

Review: The Acts of the Apostles

The Council of Jerusalem (15:1-35)

The Hebrews – Peter

- Conservative, nationalistic
- Believe all Christians must be practicing (orthodox) Jews

The Hellenists – Paul after his conversion

- More liberal, more willing to adapt to culture around them
- Believed that Christians are subject to “moral” law – not ritual law

Review: The Acts of the Apostles

The Compromise - The Council of Jerusalem (15:1-35)

- In Jerusalem all Christians will practice Judaism
- Beyond Jerusalem, each Christian will be led by their conscience

***This sets the scene for Paul's
Missionary Journeys***

Paul's Letter to the Romans



Outline in 3's

- 3 Things about Paul**
- 3 Ways to read Romans**
- 3 Things about Romans**
- 3 Things about Adam and Eve**
- 3 Verses to Memorize**
- 3 Verses to Ponder**
- 3 Major Interpretations of Romans**

3 Things About Paul

1) The Amazing Paul

- Paul is featured in the **Book of Acts** from **Chapter 9** through to the end.
- Paul writes **1/3** of the **New Testament**
- Paul is largely responsible for **Christianity breaking free from Judaism**, rather than **Christianity being a “movement” within Judaism**, a separate faith, a separate religion.
- The **Book of Acts** explains that Paul is arrested for his teachings, but as a citizen of the **Roman Empire**, demands a **Roman trial** – and so he is sent to **Rome**.

3 Things About Paul (cont.)

2) The Controversial Paul

From the beginning, Paul was a controversial figure. After his experience with the Resurrected Jesus on the Damascus Road, the first reaction of Christians to this news was skepticism and fear (Acts 9:13-14:26). They found it hard to believe that the fiery Saul (his Jewish/Hebrew name; Paul is Roman version) who sought to take Christians prisoners (Acts 9:1-2) was now on the side of angels. Consequently, in his early ministry he had to defend himself (Galatians 1:11-2:23; 2 Corinthians 10).

3 Things About Paul (cont.)

3) Paul claims apostolic authority (Romans 1:1-6)

¹Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God ²Which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, ³the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴and designated Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, ⁶including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ;

3 Ways to Read Romans

- 1. God wrote it – Paul merely the instrument (trance). King James version is THE WORD OF GOD.**
- 2. Paul, inspired by God, wrote it – therefore the words, sentence structure, grammar, belong to Paul. WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT IT BECOMES THE WORD OF GOD.**
- 3. Paul was a gifted man, but nevertheless a man. Therefore, we read Paul as we would read any other gifted person (Plato, Shakespeare, Jeffords).**

3 Things About Romans

- 1) **Written in the 50's - In Acts Paul says that he will stop in Rome to raise money on his way to Spain.**
- 2) **First among all letters because of its prominence (though may have been last letter to be written)**
- 3) **Rome has a sizeable Christian population – both Gentile and Jewish believers**

Tension: in 40 AD Claudius expelled Jews from Rome because of riots, internal fights over embracing Jesus as Messiah

3 Things About Adam and Eve

- 1) **Paul believed it – it is key to Paul's thought.**

The story is ABSOLUTELY TRUE (even though many hold that its truth is told in poetry). Paul probably saw it as historical.



3 Things About Adam and Eve **(cont.)**

2) God is good, man is not

- God created the world good.
- Death was not part of the plan.
- Humankind rebelled against God and became separated from God (Sin) and death was the result.
- “In Adam’s fall we fell all;” each human being carries the ‘old Adam’ within them (born into sin).
- Sin/Separation inevitably leads to sins.

3 Things About Adam and Eve **(cont.)**

3) The journey of faith is to *BE DEAD* to the old Adam and *ALIVE* to new Adam

- Believers in Jesus “put on Christ” and seek to live by the Holy Spirit so that they are the “New Adam” (and thus do not follow the Old Adam)
- **DEAD TO SIN (Adam) and ALIVE TO CHRIST (New Adam).** To “crucify oneself” means to kill/destroy/negate the Old Adam/Sin that Christ may live within us.

THE TEXT IS THICK ... Brueggemann

The Reality of Evil

LUKE - Demons and the devil

JOHN - Darkness – light

PAUL - Old Adam (flesh) v. new Adam (spirit)



Three Verses to Memorize

- **“We know that all things work together for good for those who love God” (8:28)**
- **“If God is for us, who can be against us?” (8:31)**
- **“Nothing in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (8:39)**

Three Verses to Ponder

- 1) 2:6-7 “For he will render to every man according to his works: to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life, but for those who are factious and do not obey the truth, but obey wickedness, there will be wrath and fury”

How do you square this with justification by grace through faith (3:23-24 “since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, they are justified by his grace as a gift...”)?

Three Verses to Ponder (cont.)

- 2) 10:4 “For Christ is the end of the law, that every one who has faith may be justified.”

Martin Luther: Love God and do as you please!

Three Verses to Ponder (cont.)

- 3) 11:32 “For God has assigned all men to disobedience, that he may have mercy upon all.”**

East – Origin, solves question with ‘universalism’

West – Augustine tries to solve dilemma with ‘predestination’

West: To make Universalism stick, come up with purgatory

Three Major Interpretations of Romans

- 1) Justification by grace through faith**
- 2) The two ages**
- 3) Promotion and defense of gentile mission**

Three Major Interpretations of Romans (cont.)

- 1) Justification by grace through faith
(Chapters 4 and 5)**
 - **3 Things about Jesus' Death**
 - **3 Things about Justification**
 - **3 Things about Forgiveness**

3 Things About Jesus' Death

- 1) Romans does not say that Christ died instead of us—Christ died for us.**
- 2) SACRIFICE (in the Old Testament) did not wipe clean our slate but allowed God to overlook our sins. On the Cross God does not wink at or ignore sin, but takes away or wipes out our debt —because of Christ we are justified.**

3 Things About Jesus' Death (cont.)

- 3) Jesus did **NOT** die for our mistakes or our wrongs or our failings (what we call 'sins'), Jesus died for our condition – Sin.

Jesus died because we were separated from God, now, in Christ, we are One with God.



3 Things About Justification

- 1) **We are counted as righteous/justified/saved by God even though we are not. Justified, made righteous, saved ALL mean the same thing.**
- 2) **Acceptance of what God has done for us in Christ is called faith.**
- 3) **To understand justification by faith, think of THE LAST JUDGMENT –for Paul the wrath and judgment of God at the end-time has come ahead and is today present, so that God's wrath is now upon everyone and God's mercy is now upon everyone today who accepts (or does not accept) Christ.**

3 Things About Forgiveness

- 1) If justification means forgiveness, why didn't Paul use the word **FORGIVENESS** in the first place? For Jews, the word forgiveness implies repentance (story of Jonah - the people repented and because of their repentance they were forgiven).



- 2) Justification precedes, comes before our repentance...the story of the Prodigal Son is important for the Father forgives (receives the son home) even before the son makes his confession—forgiveness comes before receiving.

3 Things About Forgiveness (cont.)

- 3) **Grace comes before faith – for Presbyterians this is the basis of predestination – we are justified by God before we accept it!**

Example: ABRAHAM – Abraham was justified. Was he justified by faith? No – he lived 1800 years before Christ. Rather, his justification was 'given to him' by God. Romans 4.3 "it was reckoned to him as righteous" – reckoned means credited, counted, regarded as, ascribed, imputed. Predestination means that salvation precedes works (hence we cannot even boast of our faith for faith is also a gift). Also – this event with Abraham happened 14 years prior to the covenant of circumcision so the law cannot be a basis for righteousness.

Three Major Interpretations of Romans (cont.)

2) The Two Ages

- I. We live in the PRESENT AGE. But there is coming a NEW AGE.**
- II. In the NEW AGE we will be saved (salvation and redemption and justification mean the same thing) through belief in Christ.**

However...for those who believe in Christ now, in the present age, the new age is already here because we have the promise of Christ's resurrection and know that anyone who is baptized into Christ shall join Christ in the age to come.

The Two Ages (cont.)

The New Age is NOT YET – we are still waiting for Christ to come in glory. But the New Age is ALREADY as a foretaste of what is to come. The Lord's Supper is a 'foretaste' of the future.

- III. Therefore, we are all SAINTS (because the NEW AGE will redeem us) while at the same time we are SINNERS (in the PRESENT AGE we all sin and fall short of the glory of God).**

The Two Ages (cont.)

Paul moves back and forth between the already and the not yet.

Chapter 5 and 6 - Already, already we have the Christ event.

Chapter 7 - Not yet, the new age is still to come in victory.

Chapter 8 - Describes pilgrimage leading to the **NEW LIFE/NEW AGE**.

Righteousness: In Old Testament it means conformity to God's law; for Paul it is a relational term – when one believes Christ one follows Christ – the relationship (not the law) is compelling! Paul uses the term righteousness 34 times.

Three Major Interpretations of Romans (cont.)

3) Defense of his mission to the gentiles

“Forget all the other epistles, because to harmonize or homogenize them is the surest road to confusion...Justification by faith was not the center of Romans or of Paul's mission as a whole; instead, the promotion and defense of his gentile missions was central. Paul was born and remained a Jew, until the day of his death. It is quite inappropriate to speak of the conversion of Paul as if he left a decadent religion for a noble one, that is, abandoned his native Judaism for Christianity.”

Krister Stendhal

Review: Three Major Interpretations of Romans

- 1) Justification by grace through faith**
- 2) The two ages**
- 3) Promotion and defense of gentile mission**

It's All About Election

“The doctrine of election is the sum of the Gospel because of all words that can be said or heard it is the best: that God elects man; that God is for man too, the One who loves in freedom. It is grounded in the knowledge of Jesus Christ because He is both the electing God and the elected man in One. It is part of the doctrine of God because originally God’s election of man is a predestination not merely of man but of Himself. Its function is to bear basic testimony to eternal, free and unchanging grace as the beginning of all the ways and works of God.”

(Karl Barth, 1886-1968)

Barth for Armchair Theologians by John F. Franke, page 128.

Review: Three Verses to Memorize

- **“We know that all things work together for good for those who love God” (8:28)**
- **“If God is for us, who can be against us?” (8:31)**
- **“Nothing in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (8:39)**

Romans 8:28-39

²⁸ We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified. ³¹ What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³²He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³Who will

Romans 8:28-39 (cont.)

bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. ³⁵Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶As it is written, 'For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.' ³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor

Romans 8:28-39 (cont.)

things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.