

NOTE: Pastor Robert Winters shares at the end of this material. Be sure to read it as it adds perspective to last week's lesson, today's lesson, and next week's lesson. WES

TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

IHOP BIBLE STUDY

17 – Romans 10: 1 - 21 “**Spirit Help: The end of The Law**” -- with commentary
The purpose of the Letter to the Romans is to develop a “**Model for Living the Awakened/Transformed Life.**” **Today's study is the 17th of 27 lessons.**

According to our Study Chart we are studying the 3rd section of “Embrace The Work of Christ and the Spirit” This is one of seven sessions under the rubric of “Spirit Help.” This is the fifth session in this series. Remember, the focus of the Book of Romans is to provide us “The Model For Living The Awakened/Transformed Life.”

BACKGROUND: Honoring our Romans Chart is important. In this section we have seven lessons, five of which we've completed. At this point, it is helpful to keep before us that each of these seven lessons teach us what Paul has to say about *how this information helps us awaken to our human purpose of standing in the presence of God as Perfect At-One-Ment?* This is what is known as “Embracing the work of Christ and The Spirit.”

In this series of lessons we have discovered how The Spirit helps us. In lesson # 13, the Spirit helps us to **embrace our weakness** so that it is no longer our enemy, but a friend; in lesson # 14, the Spirit **helps us to fulfill God's desires** rather than our own desires; in lesson # 15, the focus is on how The Spirit helps us **act on God's desires and not our own.** In lesson # 16, the Spirit helps us embrace Perfect At-One-Ment through the pursuit of **fulfilling our intended purpose.**

In today's lesson, # 17 the Spirit **helps to end The Law and to establish righteousness.**

Define: **Righteousness** is experienced as a right relationship with God. God is experienced as unmerited love (agape). This is a love that desires that humans meet their intended purpose of living humane lives.

Faith is experienced as surrender. It is like walking along the sidewalk and discovering a crack. On closer inspection, we kneel down to look into the crack and suddenly are sucked through it into a deep and dark cavern from which there is no escape. Now we are in a helpless situation. There is no way to save ourselves except to cast ourselves on God's mercy.

God's mercy is experienced as awakening; God wants us to awaken to the knowledge of our complete dependence on God. As we awaken to the fact there is no way for us to save ourselves, we surrender; we give up and give in to God.

Belief is similar to the word Faith. However, a belief system is associated with a structure whose purpose is to promote faith as the experience of surrender.

Read the assignment in one reading.

I. **Vss. 1 – 3: What prevented the Jews from righteousness?**

WS: One commentator observed that the Jews were stumbling over the stumbling block mentioned in Isaiah 8: 14, 28: 16, and in 1 Peter 2: 6-8. Another commentator noted that the Jews were ignorant (**vs. 3**) of Jesus role as the Christ and the concluding episode to The Law. The Jews have zeal but this leads them astray

"unless governed by knowledge of God's character and purpose." (*My underscore. Abingdon's One-Volume Commentary on The Bible, p. 786.*)

The IHOPers reground the words "God's character" as experienced in agape love. This is associated with God's mercy which is to awaken us to At-One-Ment. "God's purpose" is experienced as living our intended human creation as humane people. In this way we make our neighbor (read: spouses) happy, we're happy, and God smiles.

II. Vs. 4: Describe the experience of a belief that ends the influence of The Law.

WS: Salvation is not a moral behavior; it is a gift of God. In order to receive the gift it must be accepted. That's it. On the other hand, The Law hinders God's purpose to impart—to give--a right relationship to the human purpose of living the humane life. The Law is not the highest revelation of God. Christ is. As a consequence Christ takes over The Law, and Christ becomes our moral obligation in WWJD. (*For further discussion of this point, see The Abingdon One-Volume Commentary of The Bible, p. 786.*)

III. Vs. 5: Research in your commentary the significance of Moses and righteousness. What are the "things" the Jews could live by to achieve righteousness? (NIV.)

WS: Moses Righteousness -- "Moses describes in this way the righteousness that is by the law: 'The man who does *these things* will live by them.'" (*My italics for emphasis.*) The question is, what are "these things" that we can live by? Moses implies that as we live by The Law, we will experience the fulfillment of our intended purpose to live humane lives. The interesting information here is that Moses is right. However, the essence of The Law is to convict us of our imperfections, and the result is guilt. Salvation from victimization can not be achieved by living the letter of The Law, because The Law itself victimizes us.

However, living by The Law is essential for those who already are saved by the mercy of God. When our salvation is assured, then living The Law supports our efforts to live the humane life.

IV. Vss. 6 – 11: Summarize these verses in such a way as you will know and understand what Paul is saying.

WS: My summary statement - Faith Righteousness is not something we fetch. For the Christian, Christ is the supreme gift given to us with no human effort other than receiving the gift.

Vs. 5 - "Moses legal righteousness" is contrasted with **vs. 6** "faith righteousness" is: 1) not moral behavior but of the heart, **vs. 6**; 2) it is inward conviction, **vs. 10**. It is not right conduct that saves us, it is surrender to Christ. After this, then we move on to right conduct. Surrender is the action of giving up your decisions into God's will.

Vss. 6 and 7, this is a curious construction that has implications in Jewish history. For our purposes it is enough to say that Christ is not something you fetch. Christ is a gift you accept.

Vss. 9 – 11, This is one of the powerful verses in the New Testament. This construction of this verse provides us with the steps taken in the acceptance of our salvation: Confess with your mouth; Believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead; You will be saved. The danger here is Old Christian Code Words. Take each one and re-ground in your human experience. Confess is to first be awakened; Belief comes in surrender to our intended purpose; God raised him from the dead, i.e., to be the first born of many brothers and sisters who are awakened to our intended purpose; To be Saved From spiritual sleep and Saved To spiritual awakenment.

V. Vss. 12 and 13: Summarize for yourself what Paul is saying here.

WS: Faith righteousness is rooted in the mercy, or the awakenment, provided by God.

VI. Vss. 14 – 17: Paul lays out the case for “the need of a messenger.” Describe the need.

Vs. 17: This is the crucial statement in this lesson. Read it several times out loud to be certain you pick up on the significance of what is being said. When you have it, write out your summary of what is being said.

ROMANS 10: 17

“FAITH comes from hearing THE MESSAGE, and the message is heard through the WORD OF CHRIST.”

Faith — Surrender to our intended purpose.

Message --- **Good News** (All is Good, the Present is a gift, the Past is Forgotten and the Future is open.

Word of Christ --- Life, death and Resurrection

LIFE — We are victimized;

DEATH --- We can die to the idea we are victims;

RESURRECTION --- We can choose to live as victors.

VII. Vss. 18 – 21: Paul asks a rhetorical question, how did the Jews hear the message of Christ? Read this proof-texting carefully and be able to discuss each of these Old Testament references.

WS: The following is proof-texting that Paul uses to make his point that the Jews previously had heard The Word of God. In most instances, these passages tell how the Jews kept rejecting this information.

Psalms 19: 4, This is one of the psalm hymns. The Psalmist makes the point that all of creation speaks God's Word that “goes out to all of creation.”

Deut. 32: 21, Implied in this statement is that a non-Jewish nation living as an Awakened People will make the Jews jealous because their idolatry proves they have gone back to sleep.

Isaiah 65: 1, The message here is that a non-Jewish nation living as yet unawakened found that God's message awakened them.

Isaiah 65: 2, Isaiah reports that God had compassion on the un-awakened nation.

III. How do these passages provide a model for discovering how to live the awakened and transformed life?

WS: Self-surrender to the Christ Word is necessary to live the awakened transformed life. We hear the Christ Word with our hearts (*Gut Trip Analysis*) rather than with our minds (*Head Trip Analysis*). Acceptance of God's intended purpose for living the humane life is necessary.

Alright folks, talk to me.

WS: The following was sent to us by Pastor Robert Winters. Recently, at our IHOP Bible Study, he's been sharing with us some of the complexity of Paul's work in Romans. Read on and enjoy.

Romans chapters 9-10-11 These three chapters in Romans have a unique format. Each chapter starts with Paul's deep desire for Israel to accept Christ's offer of salvation.

Mercy is the common theme of these chapters with allusion to mercy in each chapter and explained by God's actions in three distinct ways. This first expression is the most complete and eloquent.

The vessel is shaped by the potter for God's purposes. "I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. I could even wish myself separated from Christ (accursed) for the sake of my brethren."

Chapter 9:1-5

Mercy is described by God choosing to bestow this mercy without our worthiness solely on the basis of our faith.

The vessel is chosen by God to receive his mercy – chosen not earned. He shapes it according to his purposes to be sustained and nourished by his son Jesus.

Chapter 10:1-2

The word that is spoken. It is again Paul's desire and prayer for the salvation of the Jews. *It is expressed by the Word spoken first through Christ (Logos) in the beginning and described by the law and proclaimed by the prophets and apostles.*

And finally the word spoken by the hearer in faith and believed in the heart results in salvation. Even in disobedience and unbelief God still proclaims his salvation.

Chapter 11:14

The vine and the branches. Paul proclaims his desire to bring the Jews to faith even if necessary by moving them to jealousy in his ministry that some might be saved those who believe. They are like branches of an olive tree each grafted in through faith supported by the root of the tree which binds us together in a common bond with each other and Christ. Through this bond we bear the fruit of the gospel.

WS: There's good stuff here to chew on. Certainly, Paul's message is clearly stated.