

**TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
IHOP BIBLE STUDY**

26 -- Romans 15: 14 - 22, Paul, the minister to the Gentiles -- 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 26th of 27 lessons.

According to our Study Chart we are studying the 4th section of "Become The Work of The Church." Our previous sessions cover Paul presentations on God, Christ and the Holy Spirit. This new section covers the Work of the Church. This is one of seven sessions under the rubric of Ethics. This is the seventh 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: Now, our work shifts to applying what we've learned in order to become the work of The Church. Observe, this is more than just doing the work of The Church. Paul wants us to embody The Church, to embrace it and morph ourselves in the shape of little Christs; you'll remember this is Luther's expression for Christians who live their lives fulfilling their intended purpose of being humane people and communities.

The way this work gets done becomes Christian Ethics; the way we treat others, and the way in which we view ourselves. It may be helpful to remember the short hand offered by Gut Trip Analysis. Christian Ethics always is WWJD.

REMEMBER! THE CONTEXT IS CHRISTIAN ETHICS.

ABOUT THIS LESSON: In this last lesson, Paul gives a short commencement speech before handing out the graduation certificates. After a brief review of some of the code words Paul uses, we will do an evaluation of our study during the Book of Romans.

Define and then ground in your own human experience the following before reading the assignment:

1. Review and ground in your experience the phrase The grace of God.

IHOP: "God's unmerited favor." "God's favor and caring." "God's forgiveness and gift of love."

WES: Yes, and the experience of these things is not being allowed to go back to sleep!

2. Review and ground in your experience the phrase gospel of God.

IHOP: "We can have a relationship with God." "Message of grace."

WES: Yes, and God's gospel is the Good News is that we are not victims.

3. Review and ground in your experience the phrase power of the Holy Spirit.

IHOP: Power to do or say the right thing at the right time." "Power of God with us."

WES: Wonderful!

Read the assigned reading at one time.

I. Vs. 14B, Now that the study is concluded, do you feel complete in knowledge and competent to instruct one another Why or why not?

IHOP: Not totally competent, but better prepared than when we started." "God doesn't call the qualified, He qualifies the called."

WES: Excellent!

II. Vs. 17 - 19, Paul lays out three guidelines, identify how you experience them, and then illustrate how you employ this guideline in your own life.

IHOP: His three guidelines:

WES: How do you "use" these things?

- 1) By word and deed. **WES**--I counsel people they are not victims.
- 2) By power of signs and wonders. **WES**---The "miraculous is not "magical," it is just mysterious. Miracles are nothing more than a part of The Way Life Is that we have not experienced before nor understand rationally. I try not to be overwhelmed by miracles, but to see the miraculous in everyday events; i.e., in the jazz piano, or in the flight of a bird.
- 3) **By the spirit of God.** **WES**---God's spirit is defined as Perfect At-One-Ment. I experience this dynamic in every event and experience, such as cooking breakfast, looking at my wife and experiencing her unconditional acceptance of me.

A. **Vs. 18A,** I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me.

IHOP: "By my actions and what God has done through me." "Missionaries first help the people they are trying to convert in whatever they need the most, then try to teach by example and message."

WES--- This is a head trippy answer. How do the natives experience Christ's accomplishment? (Remember, we are the "natives.") I experience this accomplishment when an event calls me into question and I am reminded that I am nothing but the backside of a donkey! However, Christ's death is a reminder that it is not my human side that qualifies me for authentic living. Rather, it is Christ's resurrection that demonstrates that I am never ever a victim!

B. **Vs. 18B,** to obey God by what I have said and done. . .

IHOP: "The Gentiles believed because Paul led by his actions."

WES--- This is head trippy too. What is the experience of obeying God by our actions? It is surrendering ourselves on every occasion. Our accomplishments do not belong to us. Our being the rear end of a donkey also belongs to God. God gets all of us all the time!!

C. **Vs. 19,** through the power of the Holy Spirit.

IHOP: "Jesus said --anyone who has faith in me will do even greater things than these because I am going to the father." Paul spread the gospel much farther than Jesus because of help from the Holy Spirit.

WES: OK, the IHOPers were getting tired? What is the experience of "having faith in Jesus?" (Hint: it is surrender to Christ.) The Holy Spirit always is experienced in our freedom to choose to be victims of victors.

III. As individuals, quietly take 10 minutes to answer the following:

IHOP did not discuss this but will include it next time. An outline review of the entire Book of Romans follows below.

- A. Use the attached information to think back over the previous 25 lessons.
1. What were some of the activities used during these IHOP study session. List two or three different methods we've used together.
 2. List the two or three sessions you found particularly helpful.
 3. Identify the two or three sessions where you really struggled.
 4. Can you remember why you struggled?
 5. In what lesson, or lessons, did you experience a new insight?
 6. In what lesson, or lessons, did you find confirmation of yourself as a Christian?
 7. As you reflect back, why did Paul write this letter? What was he trying to accomplish?
 8. Share one, or several, points that you believe deepened your surrender (faith) to God.
 9. If this study was to be done again, what can not be changed in order to get the job done?
 10. If this study was to be done again, what can be changed without harming the entire study?

Please use more space on the back if necessary. After returning to a group reflection, please hand in your evaluations to the class moderator to be given to Pastor Bill.

Thank you!

Alright folks, talk to me.

Now go on to a group reflection led by the class moderator.

ATTACHMENTS FOLLOW THIS MATERIAL TO REVIEW THE PREVIOUS LESSONS. This is to accommodate the evaluation.

A Review of the Book of Romans

The purpose of the Letter to the Romans is to develop a Model for Living the Awakened Life/Transformed Life.

Review the Romans Chart (This outline is from The Romans Chart)

- I. Paul's Credo: This I believe
 - # 1 Romans 1: 1 - 17
Paul's credo; wrath of God
 - # 1A Romans 1: 18 - 32
Alienation of others and Gods judgment (wrath = love) as justice and love

II. Awaken to The Work of God

A. God's Righteousness

2 Romans 2: 1 - 29

God's righteous (right relationship) judgment; God shows no favoritism; Jews and The Law.

B. Law and Righteousness

3 Romans 2: 3: 1 - 20

Law and righteousness; God's Righteousness; affects of the lack of faith; affects of unrighteousness.

4 Romans 3: 21 - 31

Law and Righteousness through faith; justified by faith.

5 Romans 4: 1 - 23

Abraham justified by faith (as surrender); Abraham is the father of us all.

C. Law of Judgment and Grace

6 Romans 5: 1 - 11

Peace is the result of justification through faith; this relationship is hope that is the glory of God; justification by his blood saved us from God's wrath.

#7 Romans 5: 12 - 21

Law of judgment and Grace; justification as awakenment; sin as separation; human hopelessness: Adam represents hopelessness. Christ represents hope.

III. Know The Relationship of Sin and The Law

A. The Need for Christ's ethic

#8 Romans 6: 1 - 14

The need for Christ's ethic: dead to sin.

9 Romans 6: 15 - 23

The need for Christ's ethic: alive to Christ. The way we move from death to life is through the Father.

B. Sin and The Law

#10 Romans 7: 1 - 6

What it means to die to The Law; to be controlled by the sinful nature; the literal death we die as we die to the things that bind us.

#11 Romans 7: 7 - 25

Sin as an inner conflict that leads us to utter despair; The role of The Law (10 Commandments); The death we die is the literal death of the free self; being imprisoned in our inner being leading to wretchedness; how victory is claimed. (Hope is found in despair).

IV. Embrace The Work of Christ and The Spirit

A. The Sin Offering

#12 Romans 8: 1 - 17

Death experienced as living apart from God; the difference between The Flesh and The Spirit.

B. Wakened by Spirit Help

#13 Romans 8:18 - 27

Spirit help in weakness; discussion on evil as illusion of being victims: Bus Stop Story; adoption as Son and Daughters.

#14 Romans 8: 28 - 39

Spirit help: we are more than conquerors; being conformed to the likeness of Christ; being prevented from answering God's call.

#15 Romans 9: 1- 29

God's wrath; living in the indicative (TWLI); Glorification as being the Awakened; the Spirit helps us to find truth in Christ (the Truth is we are family with God).

#16 Romans 9: 30 - 33

Spirit help: not our desires but God's desires; the righteousness that Israel pursued but not attain it; the definition of a stumbling block.

#17 Romans 10: 1 - 21

Spirit help: The end of the Law; faith is not something we seek, but is a gift given to us; faith is given to us through Christ.

#18 Romans 11: 1 - 10

The Remnant of Israel; we are the Remnant as the Awakened Ones; Remnant fulfills the Jewish covenant; the Awakened are The Elect

19 Romans 11: 11 - 36

Gentiles are engrafted branches into the Jewish root.

V. Become The Work of The Church

A, Living Sacrifices

20 Romans 12: 1 - 8

Living sacrifices; the fullness of ourselves; conforming our lives to the pattern of the world; transformation of our-selves; the renewal of our minds; living in the light of grace (as being awakened). Gifts of the Spirit.

B. Practice Love

21 Romans 12: 9 - 21

Practicing Love; sincere and insincere love; Christian hospitality (all hospitality is Christian hospitality).

C. Submit to Civic Duty

#22 Romans 13: 1 - 7

Submission to authority; the responsible person.

D. The Rule of Love: Christian Ethics

#23 Romans 13: 8 - 14

Continuing debt of love; fulfill The Law; deeds of darkness and the armor of light.

#24 Romans 14: 1 - 23

How the Awakened care for the Weak; the Awakened live to the Lord; accountability.

26 Romans 15: 1 - 13

How the Awakened bring praise to God; overflowing with hope (never a victim but a victor) by the power of the Holy Spirit (through the freedom of deciding to be a victor).

VI. Greetings and Expectations

27 Romans 15: 1 - 16: 27

Future plans.