



**Reaching,
Restoring,
Raising Up**

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L.I.F.E. Group Questions—Luke 12:35-48

Our L.I.F.E. Groups that meet in homes use the following questions from the sermon for discussion and application. To find a group pick up a L.I.F.E. Group brochure in the Welcome Center.

1. Share with the group the most “dangerous” thing you have ever done for Christ.
2. Talk about how you get “dressed” each day to live for Christ—the process you use each day to first renew your commitment, and then to be well-prepared for what might come up?
3. What is your most typical response to Christ—denial of Him, thinking very little about Him, or constantly listening to His voice? What would it take for you to move to the next level?
4. How well do you carry out the disciple’s responsibilities of forgiving, turning the other cheek, and praying for your enemies? Why are these important behaviors for Christ-followers?
5. Talk about what the Celebration mission of reaching, restoring and raising up means. Let each Life Group member identify a specific role they can play in fulfilling this mission.
6. Talk about anything else that impressed you from the message if you have time.

We’re on the Web!

Www. Celebrationnet.com

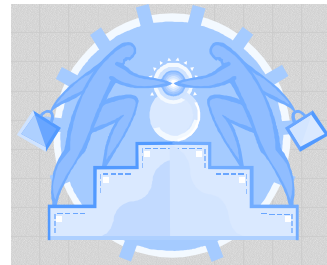
**You Can Join an ABF Anytime — Find
Yours Below and Join Us!**

Adult Bible Fellowships

Locations, Times, Descriptions

9:00

10:45



**ADULT BIBLE FELLOWSHIPS
- CONNECTING AROUND THE WORD -**

9:00	10:45
Rm104 30s-50s—Waller-Crary	Rm 104 Open—Bower-Chappell
Rm 112	Rm 112 Women—Byrum
Rm 201 30s-40s—Sims	Rm 201 How People Grow
Rm 202	Rm 202 “ “ “
Rm 203 Young Singles —Franklin/Reynolds	Rm 203 30s—Tripp-Tripp
Rm 204	Rm 204 Singles—Bentzel
Rm 205 40s&Up—Christensen-Hasler	Rm 205 Open—Regis-Anderson
Rm 206 Experiencing God—Graham	Rm 206 30s—Heritier-Sharp
Rm 207 40s-50s—McBrayer-Wicks	Rm 207 20s—Alexy/Jones
Rm 208 Women—Knox-Anderson	Rm 208 College—Ayres-Getchell
	Gym Engaged/Young Married —Houston/Baker

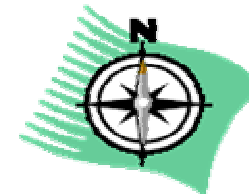
November 14, 2004

Extreme Makeover (Inside Edition)
Principles of Internal Change From the Book of Romans

Celebration Fellowship

Working the Plan

A preview of Romans 10:16-11:36



Volume 3, Issue 11
November 7, 2004

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It is often said that good leaders “plan their work”, and then they “work their plan”. God demonstrates this approach again in Romans 10:16-11:36, and the result is praise for His awesome wisdom. God’s “plan” is to redeem mankind from sin’s damaging effects by bringing us back into a relationship of peace with Himself. God designed this “plan of redemption” to be channeled through the Jews; but, sadly, they refused to cooperate. As we see in this week’s study, though, there was a second part to God’s plan. While most

of the Jews turned from God, He used a “remnant” of faithful Jews (the apostles and those converted through their ministries) to build a new community of faith composed primarily of Gentiles. God’s plan was to use these believing Gentiles to make the non-believing Jews jealous, leading these “jealous” Jews back to God. Therefore, God used both Jews and Gentiles to complete His plan of redemption, and in the process revealed some truths. First, God’s faithfulness and fairness was revealed—He never goes back on His prom-



**God wants to remake us
from the inside out.**

ises to His people, and He uses the same standard of evaluation for all. Then, the incredible wisdom of God is seen in His plan of weaving the rejection of the Jews, inclusion of the Gentiles, and return of the Jews all together to accomplish His purposes. He is truly “working His plan”.

Parallel Tracks

For a train to reach its destination it must ride on parallel tracks; if not the train will derail. This picture is the only approach that will help us understand and accept that God’s choice of us, and our choice to follow Christ, are both true. From our perspective they are contradictory; but in God’s mind they make perfect sense. As we see in Paul’s expression of deep grief over the unbelief of his countrymen, God honors man’s choice to follow or reject Christ. Paul was sad that his fellow Jews, who had been blessed with so much opportunity, had failed to believe in Christ. His grief was so deep that he was willing to do the impossible—forefeit his relationship with God through Christ—if it would help. It is always painful to see those with so much potential refuse God’s help; however, while we can pray for them, we can’t force them to accept His grace, and neither does God. Thus, although the Jews had rejected Jesus,

it wasn’t because God had failed them. The “real” chosen people were the “faith” descendants of Abraham, as Paul had explained earlier. All whom God had chosen through faith had, or would believe, so God had not failed; His promises to these “true” Jews would be fulfilled. Paul showed that the promises were originally given to the “child of promise”, Isaac, which underscored the fact that Jews with faith in God’s promises were the real chosen people. The next story, which illustrated that not all Jews were true Jews, was that of Jacob and Esau. Although as unborn twins they had done nothing good or bad, God had chosen Jacob to be the one through whom the covenant promises would carry on. This carried out God’s “purpose according to election”, which, although we don’t understand it, played out in the subsequent lives of Jacob and Esau. It was clear that God supported Jacob’s actions, thus

(Romans 9:1-10:15)

showing love towards him; but it was also evident that Esau was not on God’s side, and so God could not bless him; rather, He was against him. Therefore, as Paul, by the Spirit, said, in contrast to God’s love of Jacob, He “hated” Esau. Since “God is love”, this “hate” must be interpreted as a comparative term, for God’s nature is not to hate. However, compared to His treatment of Jacob, God “hated” Esau, and Esau, being set against God, received the consequences of his choices. Thus, from an historical perspective (as Malachi 1:2-5 shows), God was set against, or “hated”, Esau. Some would say that God was being unjust to make these choices, but this ignores a simple fact: all people deserve God’s judgment, but He mercifully chooses to deliver some from it. Since God is the One who offers the mercy, it is His right and His alone, to choose to whom He gives this mercy. Thus no one can take credit for God’s mercy, but as Exodus 33:19 shows, it is His mercy

(Continued on page 2)

**The 5 Purposes of the
Purpose Driven Life**

- Worship—You were planned for God’s pleasure
- Fellowship—You were formed for God’s family
- Discipleship—You were created to become like Christ
- Ministry—You were shaped for serving God
- Evangelism—You were made for a mission

Romans 9:1-10:15 (continued from pg 1)

that enhances God's glory the most. The glory of God's mercy is shown even more by those whom He allows to come to power. Although many, like Pharaoh, are evil, yet God uses their position of power to carry out His mercy. By hardening Pharaoh's already hardened heart, He was able to use him to deliver His people, thus revealing His glory to the whole earth. Although some would say that was unfair, Paul, by the Spirit, used another common sense analogy to refute this. God, as the Potter, has a right to make from a piece of clay an instrument to accomplish His purpose. We aren't told why He makes one for a "sacred" use, like His people, and another for a "common" use, like Pharaoh (and other unbelievers). Yet, as the Maker of us all, He has the right to form each for His purposes; and God exhibits great patience when He allows those who are against Him to demonstrate this by their actions. However, through those who are evil, like Pharaoh, God shows mercy to His people, both to Jews and to Gentiles. Had God not been merciful to the Jews, they all would have been severed from Him because of their rejection. Nevertheless, in His mercy, He has preserved a remnant "according to election", and one day, as a group,

Jews will turn to Christ. Gentiles, also, without God's mercy, would have remained "nobodies", but God took these unloved "nobodies" and renamed them "sons of the living God". The Gentiles obtained this status through their faith in Christ, while the Jews stumbled over God's provision through His Son, Jesus Christ. They had tried unsuccessfully to live by their own rules, due to their desire to remain personally in control of their destiny. While they had a sincere "zeal" for God, they were sincerely wrong; rejecting God's "faith" approach, they tried to become righteous on their own, but failed. The one who is righteous by faith simply accepts God's accessible and gracious provision; which is available to all. He



"God, as the Potter, has a right to make from a piece of clay an implement to accomplish His purpose."

confesses with his mouth, "Jesus, Lord", and believes in his heart that God has raised Jesus from the dead. These "faith-actions" are what it means to "call" on the Name of the Lord, and those who do that will be saved, and will receive God's riches in abundance. For this salvation to occur several things have to occur. First, they must hear the Word about Christ to be able to believe it, and then call upon Him in faith. For them to be able to hear the Word, someone must share it, and for someone to share it with them, they must be sent. The One who does this is God, and just as He sent prophets and apostles, He sends ordinary Christians (see 2 Corinthians 5:18-20). Therefore, salvation from beginning to end is of God. He calls His people according to His purposes, sends messengers of the gospel to them, and gives them the opportunity by faith to be saved. Thus, God should be given the glory and credit for those who are saved. From the human perspective, we have the responsibility to believe the message about Christ, which is readily available to all, and, as believers we have the responsibility to share this message with those in our lives. These are the parallel tracks of God's choice and our responsibility, and we must firmly believe in both.

Study Questions for Romans 9:1-10:15

God's ultimate goal is to reconcile the whole world to Himself, and He has an incredible plan by which to accomplish this.

1. Read Romans 10:16-17. How did the Jews respond to the good news about Christ (v16)? Specifically what message must be heard for faith to come about (v17)? How does this explain the Jew's unbelief?
2. In Romans 10:18-21, what 3 ways did God reveal the good news to Israel (v18—see Psalm 19:1; v19-20; 21). What was Israel's reaction to God's attempts to reach them (v21), and what does this show?
3. Looking at Romans 11:1-5 what are the evidences that God has not rejected Israel permanently (v1, 2b-4)? What fact insures that God will not reject them (v2a), and in what will this result (v5)? Apply this.

4. From Romans 11:6-10 what did God do to Israel after they had rejected Him (v7, 8, 9, 10)? How did God insure that some would be preserved (v6-7), and what does this say about God?

5. Using Romans 11:11-12 how did God use the transgression of the Jews (v11), and what is His ultimate plan for them (v12)? Who else will it benefit (v12)?

6. Read Romans 11:13-16. Why was Paul glad to be an apostle to Gentiles (vv13-14)? To what would the rejection of the Jews lead (v15), and what would their acceptance really be like (v15)?

7. According to Romans 11:17-21 how did Gentiles get into God's family (v17), and by what means (v20)? What attitude must Gentiles avoid (v18-20), and why (v21)? What does this mean?

8. From Romans 11:22-24 what 2 aspects of God's nature are brought out (v22)? How are these seen in his dealings with the Gentiles (v22), and with the Jews (v23-24)? How are true branches revealed (v22)?

9. In Romans 11:25-27 what type of "hardening" has Israel experienced (v25), and why (v25)? What will ultimately happen to Israel (v26), and by what method (v26-27)?

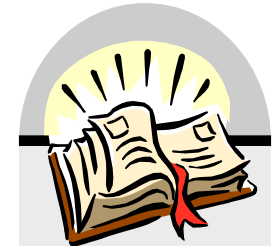
10. Looking at Romans 11:28-32 why will God's promises to Israel be fulfilled (v28-29)? What common condition and result do Jews and Gentiles have (v30-32)? What attitude should we thus have (v28, 32)?

11. Using Romans 11:33-36 list the characteristics of God that are identified in these verses. What should our response to this be (36)?

12. What are some evidences of the greatness of God's grace and wisdom that are found in Romans 9-11 (9:6-8, 11-12, 16, 22-23, 24-26; 10:11-12, 15, 18-21; 11:1-2, 5-6, 11-12, 22-24, 25-26, 28-29, 32)?



"The one who is righteous by faith simply accepts God's accessible and gracious provision, which is available to all."



Memory Verse

"For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen."
Romans 11:36