



**Reaching,
Restoring,
Raising Up**

1140 Morrison Dr
Fort Worth, TX 76120-3426

Phone: 817-451-5513
Email: allan@celebrationnet.com

We're on the Web!

Www. Celebrationnet.com

L.I.F.E. Group Questions—Romans 2:1-16

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. Talk about which bothers you most—the heathen (an ungodly person) or a hypocrite. Why? Which category do you fall into?
2. What is “absolute truth”, and how does it differ from “relative” truth? Discuss how it is possible that 53% of people in evangelical churches believe that “truth is relative”.
3. Share experiences where you have fallen prey to a “fatal flaw” of man’s truth (if I look good, then I am good; if circumstances good, my life pleases God; delayed judgment = no judgment)?
4. Discuss what it means that “I can’t be saved by works, but I will be judged by them”. Why is it so important to understand this in daily living?
5. In what sense will the gospel “judge” us, and how can we come out on the right side of this judgment? What difference should this make in our lives this week?
6. Talk about anything else that impressed you from the message if you have time.

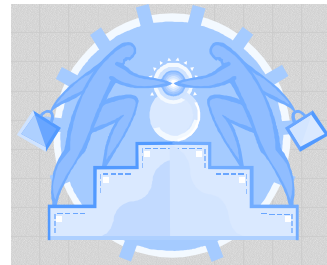
**You Can Join an ABF Anytime — Find
Yours Below and Join Us!**

Adult Bible Fellowships

Locations, Times, Descriptions

9:00

10:45



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

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

October 17, 2004

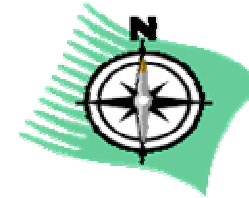
Extreme Makeover (Inside Edition)

Principles of Internal Change From the Book of Romans

Celebration Fellowship

The Silver Bullet

A preview of Romans 3:21-5:21



Volume 3, Issue 7

October 17, 2004

Inside this issue:

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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

Anyone familiar with werewolf stories knows that the only way to break the werewolf's curse is to kill one with a silver bullet. As Paul has written in Romans 2-3, mankind is under a curse far greater than that, the curse of sin and death, and is in desperate need of a “silver bullet” to break that curse. In this week's study God begins to reveal that “silver bullet”, and how to use it. To overcome the condemnation that mankind is under because of his sin, God has provided a way for us to be made right in His sight. This way, however, is not new; God

has spoken about it through the words of the Old Testament prophets. Our right standing before God (justification) comes to everyone who believes in Jesus Christ. Since He freely paid the penalty for sins, God is just in forgiving our sins, and the One who justifies (truly makes us right) in His sight through His Son's sacrifice for sins. The fact that this gift of righteousness by faith is for everyone is demonstrated by the story of Abraham, the “father of the Jews”. He was made right before God by faith before he ever carried out the



God wants to remake us from the inside out.

“work” of circumcision. He was thus “justified” before God based on faith, as everyone else, resulting in peace and hope. While we all carry Adam's sin and death, by faith we will all obtain Christ's righteousness and life. His work is the silver bullet, and faith is the gun.

Rotten to the Core

(Romans 2:17-3:20)

Sometimes there is a bad spot on an apple that can be cut away, leaving an edible piece of fruit. However, much of the time the bad spot indicates that the whole apple is bad—all the way to the core. This is the picture that the Spirit presents through Paul regarding mankind's condition; we are “rotten to the core”, being completely affected by sin, not only externally, but internally as well. In Romans 1:18-2:16 Paul had pointed the sinfulness of Gentile mankind, both among those who were blatantly sinful, and among those “hypocrites” who thought themselves above this. In Romans 2:17-3:20 Paul then presented his case regarding the sinfulness of the Jews. They, too, thought themselves above God's condemnation because of special privileges they enjoyed. They bore the name Jew, relied on the Law that God had revealed especially to them, boasted in their special relationship with God, and approved the

“essential” things in which the Law had instructed them. Because of these things they considered themselves guides of the blind, a light to those in darkness, correctors of the foolish, and teachers of the immature. They were arrogantly proud of these things; but their lack of adherence to their own words made their condemnation just. They didn't learn from their own teachings; they stole when they preached to others not to steal; they committed adultery when they told others not to do so; and they burglarized pagan temples, although they claimed to abhor idols. This behavior was dishonoring to God, and resulted in His name being cursed among the Gentiles. This shows us that the reason many don't believe in God is because of the hypocritical behavior of many Christians. Our lives speak much louder than our words, and although no one is perfect, hypocrisy is a powerful tool in the hands of Satan. The

Jews, though, relied on the physical sign of circumcision to “keep” them in God's favor. But, just as in the case of baptism for a Christian, the outward symbol is only important if it signifies an inward condition. Anyone, whether Jew or Gentile, that kept God's Law from the heart, was considered a “true” Jew by God, meaning they were in God's “covenant” family. Conversely, even if one were circumcised, if they didn't keep God's Law from the heart, this outward symbol had no value at all in God's sight. As Paul, by the Spirit, went on to say, a true Jew is defined by three things. First, he is a Jew on the inside, not just in the flesh. This is what “heart” circumcision means, that one is faithful to God from the heart. He is also one who lives by the Spirit, not by the “letter” of the Law. This means that the Law is then kept by God's power, and not by the “flesh”. Finally, a true Jew is one who seeks the praise of God, not of men. Thus, a true Jew isn't defined by nationality, but

(Continued on page 2)

Romans 2:17-3:20 (continued from pg 1)

rather by what a person is on the inside. Having said this, though, some would question whether there was any advantage to being a Jew outwardly. Paul answers that there are many advantages, and foremost is the fact that the Jews were entrusted with the words or "oracles" of God. This meant that Jews had the opportunity to understand, better than anyone else did, how God designed life to work, and how to relate to their Creator God. Those who don't have God's truth are in the dark, struggling to make sense of life. However, those who have God's truth, as Christians do, are able to navigate life successfully; and so should take advantage of the access they have to God's Word. Some argued with Paul's reasoning though; they said that God's rejection of the Jews due to their unbelief would mean that God had been unfaithful to His promises. However, this view was wrong because God had done His part by giving the Jews every opportunity to believe; they were the ones who had been unfaithful, who had been "liars" when it came to honoring their profession of faith. God was justified in His response to Jewish unbelief, especially since He had laid out in advance the consequences of this unbelief. Paul then answered the

argument that if one's unrighteousness "showed off" the righteousness of God by contrast, then it shouldn't bring about His wrath. This is an absurd argument, though; if it were true, God would not be able to judge the world fairly, since the basis of judgment is that published standards or laws are violated. The corollary twisting of the truth, that "if our lie shows the glory of God's truth, we shouldn't be judged", only deserves condemnation, since the fallacy of such thinking is so obvious. Paul then summarized the thorough sinfulness of man. Everyone is under sin; no one is righteous, and no one understands the things of God or seeks after Him. In fact all have turned aside from His path, and thus have become

useless. There are none who do good, so the extent of man's sin is complete. It is evidenced by sins of the tongue—lies, poison, cursing and bitterness—which emanate from inner death and decay. It is further seen in the violence that man inflicts on others in murder, destruction and misery, in his lack of inner peace, and in his defiance, rather than fear, of God. Of course this all sounds like headlines ripped from today's newspaper. Looking back over Paul's argument it is clear that not only do Gentiles stand condemned before God, but also Jews, who are under the Law, are without excuse. When compared to God's righteous standard, no one's actions, whether Jew or Gentile, will measure up. Due to sin, the whole world finds itself accountable before God, in a defenseless position. While the "moralist" Gentile, or the "legalist" Jew both wish to balance the books with God by their behavior, the sad fact is that the "law" by which they attempt to live only serves to reveal their sin more clearly. We are all deservedly under God's wrath. Both the Gentile, seeing God in nature and conscience, and the Jew, being blessed with God's special revelation, have rejected His righteousness and stand condemned. It is clear—we are all "rotten to the core".

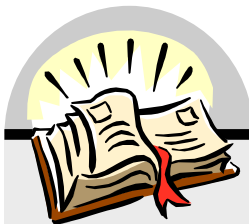


"However, those who have God's truth, as Christians do, are able to navigate life successfully"

Study Questions for Romans 3:21-5:21

Having shown that all deserve God's wrath, Paul begins to show how God has graciously dealt with mankind's problem.

1. Read Romans 3:21-24. How is the righteousness of God made known (v21), how do we get it (v22), who is it for (v22), and why (v23)? What has God done about our sin (v24)?
2. From Romans 3:25-30 what did Christ's death do for God (v25-26), and man (v26)? What reaction should that exclude on our part (v27), and why (v28, 29-30)?
3. Look at Romans 3:31-4:5. On what basis was Abraham, the father of the Jews, made right in God's sight (v3, 5)? What is the other basis (v2, 4), and why is this not pleasing before God (v2, 4)?



"Due to sin, the whole world finds itself accountable before God, in a defenseless position."

4. In Romans 4:6-8 how did the psalmist, David, show that God's righteousness is a gift of grace, rather than something we earn (v6-8)? Think about how this relates to you.

5. Using Romans 4:9-12 for whom is the blessing of righteousness by faith, Jews or non-Jews (v9-13)? How does Abraham's story demonstrate this (v9-12), and what was the result for him (v11-12)?

6. Looking at Romans 4:13-17 what promise was made to Abraham (v13), and what would getting this by keeping the Law do to this promise (v14), and why (v15)? What does "grace through faith" result in (v17)?

7. Read Romans 4:18-25. By what steps did Abraham express his faith (v18-21), and with what result (v22)? How does this affect us (v23-24), how is our faith demonstrated (v24)? What makes us right before God (v25)?

8. From Romans 5:1-5. What blessings come from being justified by faith (v1, 2, 3)? When we have the right response, to what do our sufferings lead (v3-4), and what is the basis of our hope being fulfilled (v5)?

9. Using Romans 5:6-11 how did God show His love (v8), and why is this so impressive (v6, 7, 8)? What are the 3 results of being justified by the blood of Jesus (v9, 10, 11)?

10. According to Romans 5:12-16 what ruled the world (v14), and why (v12)? Who was first responsible (v12, 14, 15), and who reversed this process (v15)? What did He change (v15)?

11. From Romans 5:16-21 contrast what Adam did with what Christ did (v16, 17, 18, 19). How do we participate in what Christ did (v17), and what will be the results (v17, 18, 21)?

12. Review Romans 3:21-5:21. What is the basis of our right standing before God (4:5), how did this happen (4:25), and what are the results (5:1, 2, 3-4, 9, 11, 17, 21)?



Memory Verse

"But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness."

Romans 4:5