August 17

Romans

Sin to Grace

Sin came into the world resulting in eternal death – Read: Romans 5:8. Christ died for all of us, now, after all these centuries his sacrifice still frees us from our sins.

Adam, one person brought sin into this world, this maybe the basis for what is coined “original sin” but no one is condemned for the sins of another, sin comes later because of human nature but the death and resurrection of one man, Jesus sets us free from sin - Read: Romans 5:19.

As we look around our modern day world it seems all we see is sin, strife, everything from petty theft to murder, sometimes even within our own families. We must not give up hope, we must always look to Jesus as our hope, and with the Christmas season approaching the hope of a new beginning is reborn.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Romans 5:20-21

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me, not to lose hope in your grace and not to become discouraged sin but to be only mindful of your love and grace through the sacrifice of your Son.

August 18

Romans

Slave or Free

To be a slave, we are held against our will, sin causes us to be slaves. Death was the only way to be free, just as in the days of slavery in the United States, a slave could run away but they’d be hunted down and returned to their owner, dying was the only way to be free before the Emancipation Proclamation. Same before Christ, we are dead unto sin, held in slavery with death the only way out and nothing to look forward to after that!

We still die to sin in the watery grave of baptism but rise again as Christ did to a new way of life – Read: Romans 6:3, 4. In this symbolic death, burial and resurrection of baptism we have died to our sins and no longer slaves unto sin or death.

In this new life sin is not domineering – Romans 6:11, 12.

We should fall into a new “slavery” a slave to good and to God – Read: Romans 6:22. A labor of love from now through all eternity!

VERSE FOR TODAY: Romans 6:23

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me, to be a slave unto good and for your purpose, O Lord.

August 19

Romans

Human Conflict

“I’m only human” is a common phrase to excuse mistakes and sins we commit, being human does cause problems in our existence, this is a continual conflict in our very nature, our want to do right and the sinful nature of man. This seems like an impossible dilemma, sins we’re all human but there is a solution, Jesus – Read: Romans 8:12-13.

Our human nature is to experiment, this is a trap that many people fall into, and an experiment with drugs can lead to addiction. We tend to have varying degrees of moods, days of depression and loneliness, some turn to alcohol to lift their spirits, drown their sorrows but we must resist the temptation to experiment with these things instead turn to Jesus as our experiment, you’ll be surprised at the relief and spirit lifting experiences you will have.

When we accept Jesus as our Savior we become more than human we have the Holy Spirit within us, we must let the Holy Spirit control us and not sin. We will fail, because of our human nature but the battle within us is winnable with the Holy Spirit and the prize will be eternal life with Jesus.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Romans 8:16, 17

PRAYER THOUGHT: Constant conflict is not easy but help me, O Lord, with your Spirit to win against seemingly unbeatable odds.

August 20

Romans

What’s Ahead?

Doing what the Spirit wants is not easy but the reward for being different is worth the trouble – Read: Romans 8:18-19.

Paul was looking forward to the second coming of the Lord and judgment, quite sure that it would be in the near future! But now 2000 years since Jesus was here on earth and life still goes on! We wonder how much longer?

If we live in God’s love today, nothing can separate us from that love, Paul puts it best – Read: Romans 8:38-39.

Sometimes life seems fruitless and that no one cares, God still loves us, even if we reject God, He still loves us. Why reject his love? Just live and rejoice in it and look forward to future glory.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Romans 8:28

PRAYER THOUGHT: Thank-you for your unchanging love and knowing I always have your love to surround and protect me.

August 21

Romans

Faith, Mercy and Salvation

We all have a part in God’s plan, we were created for a purpose, and we must have the faith, the belief to put our trust, our very soul in God’s hands.

God gives his mercy to those he chooses – Read: Romans 9:18. This is why not everyone is receptive to the gospel.

How and why are we chosen to be God’s people? We are chosen because of our faith and willingness to do God’s will. God’s grace is how we are chosen – Read: Romans 11:6.

What does all this lead to? The ultimate goal of life and death is eternal life with Jesus!

We, as Gentiles are quite fortunate that salvation was make available to us, God’s grace and the Jewish unbelief made it possible for salvation to be given to everyone! Praise the Lord he doesn’t change his mind- Read: Romans 11:29. Once Gentiles were offered salvation God will not take away the invitation.

VERSES FOR TODAY: Romans 10:11-13.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Praise your name for your grace, mercy and unchanging mind!

August 22

Romans

Service in Him

Now assuming we believe, put our faith in Jesus and are saved, what’s next? Serving!

In this service Paul warns us – Read: Romans 12:3. Paul goes on to remind us as he did the Romans that we are part of the body of Christ our “church” membership is not to a building, as a body member our service goes outside the four walls of the building.

Outside the protection of the four walls Paul warns us not to fall into the pitfalls of the world – Read: Romans 12:2a.

Paul goes on to give guidelines for service: Read: Romans 12:6-16. Make a list of all the ways of service and how that service should be carried out.

Every occasion calls for a different way to serve, but with the Lord’s help we can approach sorrow, joy, strengthening needs and all situations with confidence in the Spirit.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Romans 12:4, 5

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me in Your service, O Lord, always to do what will glorify your name, guide and direct me in my service to you.

August 23

Romans

Following Authorities

We complain today as the people in Paul’s day about taxes, always and governmental authority, Paul doesn’t mince words - Read: Romans 13:1. If we live within the constituted law we have no reason to fear authorities, if we live within the Will of God we have no reason to fear God either.

God allows governments to exist, there may be laws and regulations we don’t like or understand but God’s Will is in each one.

Each year we face our taxes, and filing of or returns we are amazed at what has been withheld through the year but Paul says – Read: Romans 13:7.

We can notice in our world the rise and fall of total countries and empires in many continents of the world. They change party power, complete rule, like from democracy to dictators; America seems to be truly blessed by God for over two hundred years we have existed as a democracy.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Romans 13:5

PRAYER THOUGHT: Praise your Name, O Lord, for America and help us to live by the rules, bless and keep those under oppression today that they may understand why they have to live this way and help them to know you and grow in your love.

August 24

Romans

Judging, Stumbling, Pleasing

Paul talks straight forward to the Romans and to us about these things.

We are all servants of God – Read: Romans 14:4.Our very existence is guided by God, he is the one that knows all, and we are not to pass judgment on others because we can’t possibly know all aspects of their lives.

In Rome they seemed to have a conflict about foods that were proper to eat, because the Jews had rules about what was clean etc. And these old habits were hard to give up in the new life, Paul was addressing this problem but his advice is good for all areas of life. We should never cause another person to fall into sin, it is bad enough if we allow ourselves to be brought down to sinful depths but to take another with us, instead the thing to do – Read: Romans 14:19.

We must try not to be pleased by our own deeds – Read: Romans 15:1, 2. All our service should be to further the kingdom of God, not to bring glory to ourselves. Many modern day cults are organized to bring glory to a certain person, not to the Lord, we must be careful to always give God the honor and praise.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Romans 15:7

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me to always please others and you, O Lord.