Romans August 24

Judging, Stumbling, Pleasing

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

 We are all servants of God – Who are you to judge someone else’s servants? Romans 14:4a. Our very existence is guided by God, he is the only one that knows all, and we are not to pass judgment on others because we cannot know all aspects of their lives.

 In Rome they seemed to have a conflict about foods they 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, if bad enough of we allow ourselves to be brought down to sinful death but to take another with you, instead the thing to do – So then, we must always aim at those things that bring peace and that help to strengthen one another. Romans 14:19.

 We must try not to be pleased by our own deeds – Instead, we should all please our brothers and sisters for their own good, in order to build them up in the faith. Romans 15:2. All our service should be to further the kingdom of God, not to try 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: Accept one another, then, for the glory of God, as Christ has accepted you. Romans 15:7.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me to always please others and you O Lord that all my service is done to help others and not myself.

Romans August 25

Praise be to God

 Paul spoke very frankly to the Romans and he gives a reason to them why he could be so bold – I have been bold because of the privilege God has given me of being a servant of Christ Jesus to work for the Gentiles. Romans 15:15b, 16a. We too can speak boldly if we are filled with the Holy Spirit and are truly servants of God.

 Paul's goal after becoming a Christian was to preach the gospel and as our study has shown that Paul was a great preacher, even today, centuries later, Paul's teaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ lives on!

 Throughout this letter to the Romans, although addressed to a specific group, Paul gives us much food for thought. Human nature does not change we sin and we need help, guidelines and open frankness to keep us on the straight and narrow is always needed!

 Paul finishes his letter to the Romans with instructions about avoiding people who cause divisions and then his very closing is praise to God – Let us give glory to God! To the only God, who alone is all-wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever! Amen. Romans 16:25a, 27.

 What more can be said but Amen.

VERSE FOR TODAY: May God, the source of hope, fill you with all joy and peace by means of your faith in him, so that your hope will continue to grow by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Thank you O Lord, for Paul's frankness and helping me to apply his guidelines to my life. Help me also to have even a portion of his boldness in my witness of you.

Corinthians August 26

The Lord’s Power

 In Paul's letter to the church at Corinth, he sends blessings in Christ name and then gets down to the business at hand, the divisions in the church and how they seem to be putting ministers of Christ – Let me put it this way: each one of you says something different. One says, “I follow Paul”; another, “I follow Apollos”; another, “I follow Peter”; and another, “I follow Christ”. 13Christ has been divided into groups! Was it Paul who died on the cross for you? Were you baptized as Paul's disciples? 1 Corinthians 1:12, 13.

 The Reformation brought forth a whole new group of men to follow, Luther, John Wesley to name only two, the members of these groups must be careful not to lose sight of Jesus in the quest to live up to the rules of the religions.

 It’s the power of Christ’s death and resurrection that is the saving power – For the message about Christ’s death on the cross is nonsense to those who are being lost; but for us who are being saved it is God's power. 1 Corinthians 1:18.

 It is the Holy Spirit that brings out the secret of God's wisdom. – But it was to us that God made known his secret by means of his Spirit. The Spirit searches everything, even the hidden depths of God's purposes. 1 Corinthians 2:10.

 We must not be fooled into putting our faith in human wisdom and strength but in God.

VERSE FOR TODAY; But God has brought you into union with Christ Jesus, and God has made Christ to be our wisdom. By him we are put right with God; we become God's holy people and are set free. 1 Corinthians 1:30.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Praise be to you, O Lord, for your power and wisdom, helps me always to put my faith in you.

Corinthians August 27

What About Marriage?

 The Corinthians had questions about you Paul was quite adamant about not marrying – A man does well not to marry. 1 Corinthians 7:1b. But goes on to concede because of immorality it would be better to have your own spouse and be true to the spouse – But because there is so much immorality, every man should have his own wife, and every woman should have her own husband. 1 Corinthians 7:2.

 Paul goes on to talk about marriage between believers and unbelievers in that the nonbeliever is acceptable and so are the children of the marriage. It may be difficult for a "mixed marriage" to survive and because of this Paul points out that there is a way out – However, if the one who is not a believer wishes to leave the Christian partner, let it be so. In such cases the Christian partner, whether husband or wife, is free to act. God has called you to live in peace. 1 Corinthians 7:15.

 Then nonbeliever must do the leaving and then the believer is free and at peace but Paul goes on to say, – How can you be sure, Christian wife, that you will not see your husband? Or how can you be sure, Christian husband, that you will not save your wife? 1 Corinthians 7:16.

 One of the purposes in marrying the person you are married to maybe to bring them to Christ!

VERSE FOR TODAY: A man should fulfill his duty as a husband, and a woman should fulfill her duty as a wife, and each should satisfy the other’s needs. 1 Corinthians 7:3.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help all of us in our marriages today, O Lord, and especially those in "mixed marriages” that they will find peace together through you.

Hebrews August 28

Faith

 We've looked at faith before, believing in things unseen – It is by faith that we understand that the universe was created by God's word so that what can be seen was made out of what cannot be seen. Hebrews 11:3.

 Abel had faith, which made him make sacrifices pleasing to God.

 Enoch’s faith let him pass straight from life here to life with God and because of this faith Enoch pleased God. Enoch and Elijah were the only two people ever recorded to have never seen death but to go from life to life.

 Noah’s faith led him to go against nature and build a boat in the desert without a cloud in the sky. His faith saved him and his family when the world was destroyed.

 Abraham is also cited for his many acts of faith, he was called on by God to leave his homeland and by faith he went, not knowing the destination.

 Our lives can be like Noah and Abraham, we can be saved in the end by our faith and if we put our faith in the Lord we can follow his will and not know our destination in this life but follow his lead, we will know the destination of our eternal life.

VERSE FOR TODAY: No one can please God without faith, for whoever comes to God must have faith that God exists and rewards those who seek him. Hebrews 11:6.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me, O Lord, to use these examples of faith to strengthen my own faith.

Creation August 29

God’s Masterpiece

 Have you ever wondered, How the ocean stays put? Or where all the stars come from? God made it all possible.

 God started with nothing – the earth was formless and desolate. The raging ocean that covered everything was engulfed in total darkness, and the Spirit of God was moving over the water. Genesis 1:2.

 Our lives are nothing when God comes to us, but with his loving hand and infinite power, he can shape us, like he did the Earth into useful pleasing objects.

 God did not waste time each day was filled with creative activity:

 - Then God commanded, "Let there be light" – and light appeared. Genesis 1:3. God divided the light into day and the darkness into night.

 On the second day, water was separated and the sky was named.

 On the third day God separated the land from the sea, keeping the water contained, naming the land "Earth" and the water "sea". Plants were also created.

 The sun was put to rule the fourth day and the night was ruled by the moon and the stars.

 God was pleased with what he had created.

A LINGERING THOUGHT: Are we pleasing to God each day?

VERSE FOR TODAY: Let them all praise the name of the Lord! He commanded, they were created; Psalm 148:5.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Indeed O Lord, praise your name for the earth, son, moon and stars! Help me to always be mindful of you, the creator.

Creation August 30

The Rest of the Week

 God had an empty sea and sky – So God created the great sea monsters, all kinds of creatures that live in the water, and all kinds of birds. And God was pleased with what he saw. Genesis 1:21.

 The fifth day brought the creation of earth creatures large and small.

 -And God said, "And now we will make human beings; they will be like us and resemble us. So God created human beings making them like himself. He created them male and female. Genesis 1:26a, 27.

 This is the creation we should never cease to be thankful for – God created us!

 God gave these newly created human beings responsibility, God – blessed them, and said, “Have many children, so that your descendants will live all over the earth and bring it under their control. I am putting you in charge of the fish, the birds, and all the wild animals. Genesis 1:28.

 God provided food for his creation, the animals and human being as well.

 In six days God created the world, blessed it and on the seventh day God rested from his work. We need a day of rest from our labors and a day of special worship to the Lord.

A LINGERING THOUGHT: Are you just a Sunday Christian?

VERSE FOR TODAY: He blessed the seventh day and set it apart as a special day, because by that day he had completed his creation and stopped working. Genesis 2:3.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me, O Lord, to set aside your special day and worship you, but also to remember you every day of the week and praise your name daily!

Creation August 31

In the Garden

 Adam and Eve were created special by God, they were not the first or the only human beings on earth, but they were the first ones that could be called “God’s special people". God created Adam first, and then from Adam's rib Eve was created.

 Eve was part of Adam, woman part of man. -That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united with his wife, and they become one. Genesis 2: 24. This was God's original plan, these two lived together without clothing and without embarrassment; intimacy without embarrassment is to be part of our marriages too.

 God planted a garden called Eden especially for these two special people, filled with fruit trees of which they could partake, except of course for the tree of knowledge, which would show them good and evil, they were forbidden to eat from for they would surely die. The garden was also well watered, there needs were supplied.

 Adam and Eve lived in the garden in wedded bliss, in this garden, the closest thing to paradise on earth, that there ever has been or probably ever will be.

 Our lives can be close to a "Garden of Eden" too if we put our faith in the Lord!

A LINGERING THOUGHT: Are you putting your complete faith in the Lord?

VERSE FOR TODAY: He breathed life-giving breath into his nostrils and the man began to live. Genesis 2:7b.

PRAYER THOUGHT: O Lord, help me always to see the good around and to bring the best to the surface.