
Calvary Church: Coordinated Curriculum 2007-2008

Romans: The Transforming Power of the Righteousness of God

Interlude

This interlude lesson is intended to:

- allow us to review—see the big-picture before we focus on the parts. . .
 - a brief review and an overview of the final section
- allow us to examine felt needs that will make the issues discussed in the next section more relevant . . .
 - prior to studying Paul’s practical instruction about living in the church and world, we need to do some self-assessment
- allow us to slow down and insure that we are applying the main point of the section. . .
 - What does life in the body of Christ look like? What should it look like?

Main idea

Evaluation of our community, connectedness and compassion.

Teaching ideas

This lesson has very little “content” but is designed to prepare your class to not only hear but respond to Paul’s teaching about life in the church and world.

Review

I am providing a very short review of the previous section. You may decide to elaborate on one or more of the issues raised in the previews section. **But please make the review no more than one quarter (1/4) of the lesson.**

Recommendation

Don’t rush—this lesson could very possibly provide fuel for refocusing the ministry of your ABF.

Review

Romans 9-11

9:1-13

Having taught about the sinfulness of all men, the means of salvation and sanctification for all men, Paul turns to the question about the place of the Israelites, God’s chosen people. Had God set them aside? Paul’s answer, “God is faithful to His word, He has said some will be saved.”

If God is faithful to His Word (9:6) and has provided a means for Gentiles and Jews to be saved, a means which He initiates, what is man’s responsibility?

9:14-29

God has the right to do as He pleases yet He is pleased to demonstrate mercy on those who are undeserving (remember 1:18-3:20) both Jew and Gentile, in order that He might save some.

God’s actions are just even when we don’t understand them.

God doesn’t always explain Himself
God doesn’t have to explain Himself

God is free to act as He chooses and He has chosen to act in accordance with His character which means He is always faithful to accomplish what He has said and He is merciful in His interaction with mankind.

9:30-10:21

Paul moves his discussion from the right God has to sovereignly initiate the salvific process, to God's justice and mercy, now to man's responsibility.

He develops two aspects of man's responsibility: the responsibility to believe the gospel and the responsibility to proclaim gospel.

11:1-10

Paul asserts God's continued commitment to Israel in the present by saving a remnant.

11:11-32

Paul asserts God's continued commitment to Israel in the future by promising to save "all Israel."

Introduction to Romans 12-16

Paul's last major section—as with many of his books—consists of practical application of the principles and doctrine he has taught. While there are general principles for Christian living that Paul includes in his letters, these are normally tailored to the needs, difficulties, challenges and culture of the readers of each specific letter.

Romans 12-16 teaches wonderful general truths—truths that are applicable in many situations and should be applied in any situation. But Paul also clearly is aware of some relational challenges the believers in Rome are facing. With a brief preview, we can see that living within the church appropriately is not easy. Living in the world as saints is not easy. Therefore both the process and product of living correctly within the body become the means of growth (what facilitates growth) and the environment for testing and proving our growth as well.

Preview

Key topics in Romans 12-16

Living within the church Romans 12

Living with others in light of the mercy we have received

Foundation of Conduct 12:1-2

Function of Conduct 12:3-21

 In humility

 In love

Living in the world as saints Romans 13

 Submission to civil government 13:1-7

 Exhortation to love neighbors 13:8-10

 Motivation to godly conduct 13:11-14

Living with others who are different and who disagree Romans 14-15

 Mutual forbearance 14:1-2

 Strong not to offend the weak 14:13-23

 Strong are to help the weak 15:1-6

 Mutual Acceptance 15:7-13

Living with a greater purpose Romans 15:14-16:27

With that brief preview, we can see that the relational challenges facing the believers in Rome and their need to not simply maintain a surface unity or simply co-exist with those who had differences—differences of background, race and customs—but their need to work out differences and work together to accomplish the needed care and commission that they and we all have as believers.

If the body does not function correctly, the gospel is not propelled.

If the body does not function correctly, the gospel is impeded.

If the body does not function correctly, individuals will not grow to be what God intends.

If the body does not function correctly, individuals will not serve each other or God the way He deserves.

Interaction

In preparation for our study of this key section on body life—Romans 12-16—we need time to assess our present situation and prepare our hearts for what Paul will teach. It is easy to miss key points when we don't feel they are relevant to us.

So today, we will have a discussion about our “body life.”

How are we as individuals connecting with others? How are we as an ABF enabling “body life?” How are we as individuals and a class, fostering true biblical fellowship? How are we as individuals and a class, ministering to others?

Teachers, most of these questions would be best discussed in smaller groups of 4-5 people. I would encourage you to give groups time to talk about one section at a time. After the groups have discussed a section, ask for feedback to be given to the whole group.

General Questions

What are the strengths of your ABF? (List at least 3 but no more than 5)

What are the weaknesses of your ABF? (List at least 3 but no more than 5)

What would you like to see happen more (more regularly, more often, more significantly)?

What would you like to have less of (less often, less prioritized)?

Rate your ABF in these categories:

This is not a survey to be completed but an activity to cause interaction, discussion and brainstorming.

Community

How easy is it to develop surface level relationships?

- 1 (almost impossible)
- 2 (possible)
- 3 (fairly easy)
- 4 (extremely easy)

How long did it take you to develop meaningful relationships?

- Weeks
- Months
- Years
- Not Yet

How many of the people in your class would you consider acquaintances?

- 10%
- 30%
- 50%
- 75%
- 100%

How many of the people in your class would you consider friends?

- 10%
- 30%
- 50%
- 75%
- 100%

How many of the people in your class would you call in case of a crisis?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 5
- 10
- 15 or more

Would you say that within your ABF, you have intentional relationships that promote your spiritual and relational growth?

- Never thought about it
- That scares me
- Long for it
- Not to the degree I need
- Absolutely

If you are a part of a smaller group that meets regularly or semi-regularly, how connected do you feel to that group of people?

- It's just another activity
- I enjoy our times together
- I have refrigerator rights (I'm totally comfortable in their home)
- They are my the ones who challenge my growth

Transformation

How has your ABF facilitated your growth?

To what degree has your ABF been a primary means of growing toward maturity?

What would your ABF need to do to help you grow more in this next year?

If you are a part of a smaller group that meets regularly or semi-regularly, how has meeting with that group of people encouraged your growth toward maturity?

Ministry

In what ways are you involved in ministry...
in your ABF?

here at Calvary?

in/to your local community?

with a global perspective?

to the less fortunate?

Do you have regular opportunities to share your faith?

Conclusion

What are we willing to do to improve on our strengths?

What are we willing to do to address our weaknesses?

What must we do as individuals?

What must we do as a class?

Romans 12-16 is going to be exciting!