



Book of Romans
#4
Romans 10-11-12
Sharing the Good News

My dear friend,

When you have experienced something wonderful you want to share it with those closest to you. Therefore it is only natural that Paul upon experiencing the life changing power of the resurrection wanted to share it with those closest to him. “My heart’s desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness. Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.”(Romans 10:1-4 NIV) Earlier Paul had declared, “This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.”(Romans 3:22-24 NIV)

John Stott in his book The Message of Romans refers to Romans 10 as a manifesto of evangelism. Citing Romans 10:15 which says, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news,” he goes on to list an eight-point manifesto for evangelism.

1. “The need of evangelism: evangelism is necessary because until people hear and receive the gospel they are lost.”(Romans 10:13)
2. “The scope of evangelism: the whole human race must be given the chance to hear the gospel.”(Romans 10:18;1:5;16:26)
3. “The incentive to evangelism: evangelism arises from the love and the longing of the heart.”(Romans 9:13;10:1)
4. “The nature of evangelism: evangelism is sharing with others the good news of Christ crucified and risen.”(Romans 10:6-13)
5. “The Logic of evangelism: evangelism demands the sending out of evangelists, so that people may call on Christ for salvation.”(Romans 10:13-15)
6. “The result of evangelism: evangelism brings such blessings to those who believe, that it arouses the envy of others.”(Romans 10:19; 11:11,14)

7. “The hope for evangelism: evangelism has hope of success only if it rests on the election of God.” This is the mercy of God. The love of God. The fact that God so loved the world He sent His only begotten Son (John 3:16). God takes the initiative and provides the gift of salvation.(Romans 10:17,21;11:29-32)
8. “The goal of evangelism: evangelism introduces converts into the people of God, and so brings glory to God.”(Romans 9:17;11:30)

After looking up the above Scriptures plus adding Romans 3:23,24 and Romans 6:23 see if you can put together a Roman road for the plan of salvation. This means first you list the Scriptures that speak of why we need a Savior (like Romans 3:23) and then the ones that tell us how we can receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. This is very important in order that you can share the plan of salvation with others.

As we share the gospel in word and deed here at New Life Evangelistic Center, I like to think of the word “entry”. We are desiring to help under the leading of the Holy Spirit and the mercy of love of God to enable the lost to make an entry into the salvation provided through our Risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. As I spell out this word I want to encourage you to come up with a Scripture from your Roman road to salvation and put it beside each letter. The e in entry refers to encounter. What Scripture in Romans tells you of ones desire to encounter the lost with the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ? What about Romans 9:1-3 and Romans 10:1-4 which tell of Paul’s great desire for the Jews to encounter the salvation Christ provides? Can you think of other Scriptures? Then the n in entry refers to need. How does Romans 3:23 show this need? The t in entry stands for treaty. How does Romans 10:4-8 show that Jesus provides the righteousness necessary for us to be cleansed of our sins so we are no longer at war with God who is holy? Can you think of other Scriptures? The r in entry tells us of the need to receive Jesus. Please read Romans 10:9,10, which shares why confessing and believing is so important when it comes to receiving Jesus as your Lord and Savior. The y in the word entry refers to the need to yield daily to the love and power of God. This involves obeying His word and surrendering to His will. Romans 10:21 speaks of God’s frustration towards those who refuse to obey. “All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and obstinate people.” Why do you believe that a saved person is a person who will obey God and His Word? True obedience involves faith and trust and that is why we are told in Romans 10:11, “Anyone who trusts in Him (Jesus) will never be put to shame. “Remember the promise of God both now and for all eternity to those

who will believe and trust Him. “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”(Romans 10:13)

Sometimes as we are sharing the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ and trying to live for Him, it is easy to feel totally alone. What example does Paul give in Romans 11:2-4 that shows this is not the case? Listen to what he has to say in verses 5 and 6 of this chapter. “It’s the same today, There’s a fierce loyal minority still-not many, perhaps, but probably more than you think. They’re holding on, not because of what they think. They’re holding on, not because of what they think they ‘re going to get out of it, but because they’re convinced of God’s grace and purpose in choosing them. If they were only thinking of their own immediate self-interest, they would have left long ago.”(The Message Bible) How do these verses encourage you when you are feeling alone in your work for the Lord?

According to Romans 11:7-18, why was the covenant removed from just Israel and extended to everyone? According to verses 19-21 what should our response be? “Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God; sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in His kindness. Otherwise you also will be cut off. And if they do not persist in unbelief they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.”(Romans 11:22,23 NIV) Israel’s refusal of the Messiah opened the door to the Gentiles (everyone else). Paul uses the example of a branch that is broken off in order that another one may be grafted in. But Paul goes on and says, “for God’s gifts and His calls are irrevocable. Just as you who were at one time disobedient to God have now received mercy as a result of their disobedience, so they too have now become disobedient in order that they too may now receive mercy as a result of God’s mercy to you. For God has bound all men over to disobedience so that He may have mercy on them all.”(Roman 11:29-32)

Thank God for His mercy, grace and love. “Is there anyone around who can explain God? Anyone smart enough to tell Him what to do? Anyone who has done Him such a huge favor that God has to ask his advice? Everything comes from Him; everything happens through Him; everything ends up in Him. Always glory! Always praise! Yes, yes, yes.”(Romans 11:33-36 The Message Bible)

When your wife or husband suddenly walks out on you, or sickness strikes your body and no matter how hard you pray nothing seems to change, its hard to praise God. When you really believe that everything comes from God and everything happens through Him the tendency is to feel cheated, let down and even

angry when day after day passes and there seems to be no let up in the pain and loneliness. Paul's response is to take us into a deeper level of faith by declaring, "Therefore, I urge you, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship." (Romans 12:1 NIV) This is no easy matter particularly in this age of pop theology where we are conditioned to believe that if we just name it and claim it, suddenly God will provide an instant solution for all our problems. How we love to quote Romans 8:28, but oh how we hate to wait as our bodies are offered to God as living sacrifices. It's so much easier to say "I love you Jesus, You are the love of my life," than it is to engage in the spiritual act of worship Paul is calling for here.

The true realization that God is the source of all things (Romans 11:36) and we exist as a result of His mercy should be reason enough for us to make such a sacrifice. Yet knowing what we should do and then actually doing it often seem worlds apart. That is why in Romans 12:2 Paul goes on and says, "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."

My mind tells me that this terrible thing that is happening to me should not be happening. I must take control of this situation before it controls me. Yet here I am in the midst of this overwhelming problem that only seems to get worse the harder I try. Surrendering this body, as a living sacrifice in service to God just doesn't make sense particularly in a culture intoxicated with greed and self-service. That is why we need to be reminded, "Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what He wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you."

"I'm speaking to you out of deep gratitude for all God has given me, and especially as I have responsibilities in relation to you. Living then, as every one of you does, in pure grace, it's important that you not misinterpret yourselves as people who are bringing this goodness to God. No, God brings it all to you. The only accurate way to understand ourselves is by what God is and by what He does for us, not by what we are and what we do for Him." (Romans 12:2,3 The Message Bible)

As I meditate upon these verses in the midst of my wife's departure, I can't help but think of Phoebe Palmer, who after her eleven-month-old child Eliza had

died in a tragic accident, struggled with anger and grief. This had been her third child to die in infancy. As she cried out to God, in her despair, she heard an answer. Although it seemed harsh, it gave her comfort. She came to believe God had taken her children because she had loved them too much and that “No other gods before Me” was His command. At that moment, she resolved she was going to surrender everything she held dear to God. In that year of 1836 Phoebe wrote in her diary, “Never before have I felt such a deadness to the world, and my affections so fixed on things above. God takes our treasures to heaven, that our hearts may be there also.” From the time of the declaration to the time of the total consecration I am sure the battle raged within her like it does me. Then a year later on July 27, 1837, Phoebe wrote, “Last evening, between the hours of eight and nine, my heart was emptied of self, and cleansed of all idols, from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and I realized that I dwelt in God, and felt that He had become the portion of my soul, my ALL in ALL.” Phoebe and her husband Walter went on to be used by the Lord to help 20,000 people experience salvation and sanctification. Christian History and Biography goes on to report that, “Dr. and Mrs. Palmer’s efforts were part of a movement of the Spirit that brought over a million people into the various churches in England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.” Oh may God help me to be that “living sacrifice,” daily laying aside my own desires as I put all my energy and resources at His disposal. My prayer is that He may completely transform me through the renewing of my mind in order that I might trust Him to guide and direct every area of my life.

As we commit our lives, to our wonderful Savior in service unto Him we must remember we are not alone. We are part of a large body of believers who each have different gifts and talents. Paul goes on to say, “If you help, just help, don’t take over; if you teach, stick to your teaching; if you give encouraging guidance, be careful that you don’t get bossy; if you’re put in charge, don’t manipulate; if you’re called to give aid to people in distress, keep your eyes open and be quick to respond; if you work with the disadvantaged, don’t let yourself get irritated with them or depressed by them. Keep a smile on your face.”(Romans 12:7,8 TMB)

Paul goes on and gives us further practical direction for offering our “bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God.” He tells us in verses 9-21, “Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with

those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' says the Lord. On the contrary: 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.' Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

Paul has given us in Romans 12 the masterpiece of love in very practical directives for daily living. Why do you believe it is important for every true believer to implement these directives in their personal lives? What steps do you plan to take in the light of Romans 12 to become the person God is calling you to be?

Please join me this next week in reading Romans 13-16. As you read ask the Holy Spirit to direct and enlighten you. "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."(Romans 15:13)

Yours in Christ,

Larry Rice