

QUESTIONS TO PONDER—What did you find new, interesting, thought-provoking, difficult, etc. in the reading this week?

1. Sunday, May 14; Rom. 3:1-8; God's Faithfulness. Read the passage with notes. What is the first advantage of being a Jew (1-2)? What is still true even though Jews or Christ-followers prove unfaithful (3-4, Ps. 51:4)? How does a person's unrighteousness bring out God's righteousness more clearly (5)? Why can't God overlook man's unrighteousness (5-6)? What was the "logic" these Romans were using (7-8)? Why did Paul firmly disagree about continuing in sin so God's glory and goodness would be increased (see 3:20)? **Personal Application:** How do you blend the thoughts of personal sinfulness with is worthy of judgment and salvation which is worthy of forgiveness and joy in your life or mine?

2. Monday, May 15; Rom. 3:9-20; No One is Righteous. Read the passage with notes. Look up some of the Old Testament verses. Who is under the power of sin (10)? Who is righteous (11)? Who (without help) understands and seeks God in their natural state (12)? Who has turned away, and of what value are they when compared to righteousness (13)? Are people born "good" (12b)? How do people let others know what is in their hearts (13-14)? What are the results of a wicked heart (15-18)? Why are those under the law silenced (19)? What is the purpose of the law regarding sin and righteousness (20)? **Personal Application:** How have the utterances of your mouth or mine changed since becoming a follower of Christ and being propelled by the Holy Spirit (13-14)? How do blessing, peace, and fear of God mark your path (15-18)? Thank the Lord for your new direction.

3. Tuesday, May 16; Rom. 3:21—31; We are Righteous By Faith Alone. Read passage with notes. How does one obtain the righteousness of God now that the law proves futile (21-22)? What is the only requirement to be deemed righteous on the part of a person (22)? Why is Rom. 3:23 so "famous"? What is the other side of the coin (24)? Define the words "justified", "grace", and "redemption" (24). In your own words describe God's plan for Christ (25-26). Who can boast about being "good enough" now (27)? How does God count a person justified (28, and notes on 28)? Why is faith alone all that God requires now (29-30)? Read notes on verse 31. We will discuss this later in Ch. 6-7. **Personal Application:** Reflect on the well-known verse Romans 3:23. Now reflect on it in light of its placement in the middle of the sentence between verses 22 and 24. How does this turn to GOOD NEWS? Write down verses 3:22-24 in your Romans list.

4. Wednesday, May 17; Rom. 4:1-8; Faith = Righteousness. Read passage with notes. What works might the Jews have thought that Abraham did to be considered righteous (1-2)? What counts for righteousness instead (3)? Read Genesis 15:1-6 and notes. Why was Abraham counted righteous even before the law was given? How does Paul use logic/common sense to show the difference between the wages of works and the gift of faith (4-5)? How do sinners become righteous (6-8)? Read Psalm 32:1-2 and notes. **Personal Application:** How does receiving forgiveness through Jesus Christ, paired with faith alone, impute righteousness on you or me? Declare your personal faith in God to Him in a personal time of prayer.

5. Thursday, May 18; Rom. 4: 9-15; Faith Came Before the Law. Read passage with notes. What is Paul's continued argument that righteousness based on faith alone belongs to **anyone who will believe** (9-10)? What did circumcision mean then (11)? Whose father is Abraham (11-12)? Based on Abraham's belief in God's promises, what promise did God give Abraham (13, Gen. 15:5-7)? Why is it important that this promise came before the law (14-15)? **Personal Application:** How important is it that God keep all of His promises? What promises may you or I claim as our own, granted and fulfilled?

6. Friday, May 19; Rom. 4:16-25; Abraham Believed in God's Power. Read passage with notes. What is the relationship between personal faith and God's grace (16)? What exactly did Abraham believe of God against all worldly evidence (17c)? How may you and I put greater faith in "God who gives life to the dead and calls into being the things that are not" (17-21)? How is verse 25 your statement of faith or mine? **Personal Application:** Ask God how He wants you or me to PRACTICE our faith to a greater degree, believing that HE has POWER to do the impossible in our lives. What seems an impossible prospect in your life or mine, and how do we claim faith alone in God as the answer?

7. Saturday, May 20; Rom. 5:1-5 Peace and Hope with God. Read passage with notes. Now that the law and works have been set aside, what is the result of being justified by faith in Jesus Christ (1)? Is your personal inner-self at peace in your relationship with God? If not, meditate with the Lord on verses 1-2. Through our faith in Christ alone, what amazing door has opened for us (2)? How do you or I stand in God's grace? What hope did Paul have? What does it mean to hope in the glory of God? Study verses 3-4. What is the inner production process that begins with suffering? Why did Paul get that he could "glory in" his sufferings? What are truths of our new and confident hope (5)? **Personal Application:** How do peace and hope play a role in your daily life? What other emotions or attitudes get in the way? How may you or I claim peace and hope as our NORMAL response to life? In your journal, draw the Suffering Continuum based on verses 3-4 .

Cindy Oury. May 12, 2017.