

# 2020-2021 Bible Study

## #25

3/23/21

# Administrative Information

- The Bible Study Class will be presented via Zoom every Tuesday morning from **9:30 A.M. until 10:30 A.M.** beginning **September 15, 2020** and ending **May 11, 2021** except for the following Tuesdays related to a holiday:
  - Nov 24, 2020 – Thanksgiving Week
  - Dec 21, 2020 – Christmas Week
  - Dec 29, 2020 - New Year's Week
  - **Mar 30, 2021 – Holy Week**
- The same class will be given via Zoon every Tuesday evening from **7:30 P.M. until 8:30 P.M.**
- Contact info: email: [biblestudy@straymonds.org](mailto:biblestudy@straymonds.org) ; Tel: (703) 644-5873
- Inclement weather decisions will be **based on Fairfax County Public School announcements (once we are back in the classroom)**

# Review of our Last Class

- Last week, we set the stage by reviewing what Paul's theology (absence of theology in my Protestant past) meant when he talked about sin of one man (Adam's fall in the garden), and redemption by one man (Jesus' passion, death, and resurrection)
- We looked at the good and bad descendants of Adam and Noah, and how Jesus made it possible for his followers (through justification/righteousness) to return to the paradise of the garden

# Review of our Last Class (Cont)

- Father pointed out that the Christians in Rome were Apostolic Christians (Most people today have lost their understanding of the theology of “faith”)
- Paul was saying that they (and us) are justified by “faith,” in the blood of Jesus into a relationship with God
- He also pointed out that death came from the devil (not God) as a result of sin (including original sin)
- Furthermore, that sin was identified and made culpable by the Torah

# Review of our Last Class (Cont)

- Also, that the greater the number of sins, the more abundant His graces
- The Roman Christians (and we) were baptized into the death and burial of Jesus
- When Jesus was raised from the dead, we also can now be raised in Him
- Father pointed out how few today understand this theology of baptism (look at infant baptism)

# Romans 7

# Romans 7

- **Romans 7:1-3** *“Do you not know brother – for I am speaking to those who know the law – that the law is binding on a person only during his life”*
  - At this point, Paul was directing his attention to the Jewish Christians
  - He pointed out that the “Law” was only binding on a person during his lifetime
  - Then, he reminded them that a wife must be faithful to her husband until he died
  - He indicated that they (the Jewish Christians) had died to the law at their baptism, and therefore they no longer needed to keep the “law”
  - Father said that Paul would soon get into serious trouble over this teaching with the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem

# Romans 7 (Cont)

- **Romans 7:7-8** *“What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means!... Apart from the law sins lies dead”*
  - Paul reminded them that without the law he (and they) would not have known what sin was
  - Sin seemed to be clouded within the natural law because of the sinful minds experienced by most
  - He said that the need for a special law (the Torah) arose because of that confusion
  - He pointed out that if a person committed a sin (adultery or stealing), without the *Torah*, he would **not** have known that he had committed a sin
  - But, once they had been given the *Torah*, they realized what acts constituted a sin (thus, the culpability of sin increased)



# Romans 7 (Cont)

- This will be a major issue discussed in the rest of **Romans 7**
- He said that because of this, what he wanted to do, what he knew was the right thing to do, is different from what he actually did
- He said that there were two laws within himself and often he felt like what he wanted to do was the right thing, but he often did not do it

# Romans 7 (Cont)

- Father pointed out that this is what is known today as the “theology of concupiscence”
- It deals with the reasons that after we are baptized into Christ, we often still fall into sin
- It is very important that we understand what Paul is saying about baptism
- Paul said when one is baptized, he dies and is raised from the dead (but then you have a post-baptismal problem)
- Before your baptism, you were dead to God and eventually your body was going to die with your soul in that state
- Your body was in sin, doing what ever it wanted to do, and you had free reign as your spirit was out of control and dead to God

# Romans 7 (Cont)

- Then, when you were baptized, your spirit was raised to life by the spirit of God
- At your baptism, Jesus came to dwell within you, and then you had two parts of your existence
  - Spiritually were resurrected in Jesus Christ and the spirit of God then began to dwell within you
  - You now know what is right, but you still have your old body, which yearns for the things of the sinful world
- The problem is that your body has not as yet been raised from the dead (even though it is in the process of being sanctified)
- In your spirit, you have been raised (that is justified with God - as a son of God)

# Romans 7 (Cont)

- But, your body remained as “the old man”
- It has not as yet died, and then raised from the dead
- This means you now have two urges within at war with each other
  - What is right
  - What is wrong
- What you must do is train your body to follow your spirit!

# Romans 7 (Cont)

- **Romans 7:24-25** *“Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?...but with my flesh I serve the law of sin”*
  - Father recommended that we highlight, *“Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ”*
  - This will be discussed further in **Romans 8**, where he talks about the “Resurrection of Jesus”
  - Someday, our body will die, and be raised from the dead
  - Then, our body, mind, and spirit will be united, recreated, resurrected, and restored to what it was supposed to be

# Romans 8

# Romans 8

- **Romans 8:1-8** *“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,...who walk not according to the flesh but according to the spirit”*
  - Paul was basically announcing that there was a new *Torah*, a new “Law,” a new covenant!
  - He said that a Christian was to walk according to the “spirit,” and not according to the “things of the flesh” (the Law)
  - He indicated that one’s spirit may seek something sinful (adultery or stealing), but your spirit must tell your flesh to do what is right in Jesus Christ
  - This was because we are composite beings, who often waged a war between doing the right thing or an evil thing
  - He told them that their spirit would tell them what was right, and their spirit would direct what their body was to do
  - This meant that one’s body should **not** direct one’s spirit

# Romans 8 (Cont)

- Father said that this looked a great deal like “dualism”
- But, he pointed out, that Paul’s dualism was very different from pagan dualism (two gods – one good and one bad)
- Paul was describing a temporary state in one’s post-baptismal period, in which the baptized person was spiritually restored to life in Jesus, raised from the dead spiritually, and would never die again
- However, because of what happened “in the Garden of Eden,” a person would physically experience a lag



# Romans 8 (Cont)

- God warned Adam and Eve that if they ate of the tree of “good and evil,” they would die (which they did)
- The proof that they were dead to God was demonstrated by the fact that when God came looking for them, they ran away and hid
- This indicated that their relationship with God had been severed
- Also, their relationship with each other had been severed as demonstrated by their need to seek covering for their nakedness
- They were spiritually dead
- When God asked them what they had done, they sought no repentance, but blamed each other
- Thus, their spiritual relationship with God was dead

# Romans 8 (Cont)

- Father pointed out that eventually they would also die physically
- Their physical death resulted from their spiritual death
- From the root of sin, came death
- This is what Paul is talking about in this passage
- We are first raised spiritually, and as a result, our bodies will be raised physically as well
- This works the same way in us as it did to Adam and Eve

# Romans 8 (Cont)

- **Romans 8:9-17** *“But you are not in the flesh, you are in the Spirit,...provided we suffer with him in order that we may be glorified with him”*
  - This means that there are two parts to our salvation: the spirit (has been raised) and our physical bodies will (be raised in the future)
  - Adam and Eve died spiritually after the fall, and later they died physically
  - Father pointed out that Paul told his audience that their future inheritance was as “heirs,” within a resurrected life

# Romans 8 (Cont)

- **Romans 8:21-23** *“I consider that the suffering of the present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed in us...the redemption of our bodies”*
  - Paul said that not only will we be raised from the dead, but someday all of creation will be raised from the dead
  - God will restore everything to what it was originally supposed to be
  - He went on to point out that since they were already sons of God spiritually, they were waiting for the bodily resurrection in order for them to be complete

# Romans 8 (Cont)

- **Romans 8:24-25** *“For in this hope (in the resurrection) we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope...we wait for it with patience”*
  - Father said that:
    - It was critical for us to grasp what Paul was saying here
    - 99% of Christians today have no idea of what he was talking about
    - If one asks the average Christian why they were baptized, many would fall into heresy (most have no idea of what Paul was saying in **Romans 8**)
    - Luther has deconstructed Christian theology so much that even Catholics have no idea of what was being said here
    - Over 500 years of Lutheranism and the anti-sacramental theology of Zwingli have destroyed this entire concept

# Romans 8 (Cont)

- Luther, an Augustinian monk, got off on the wrong track when he was told by his confessor to read the **Book of Romans** to realize that there was no way that he was going to save himself
- His confessor pointed out that only Jesus Christ saves, and since Luther was baptized, he needed to go to Confession and that would take care of the situation
- Unfortunately, Luther was overly scrupulous, and when he read **Romans**, he thought that he already knew it from his study of the writings of St. Augustine
- It would appear that Augustine read **Romans** in light of the *Pelagian* audience he was writing to (Pelagius believed that one could be “saved” without the grace of God; that is, natural grace/natural revelation alone)

# Romans 8 (Cont)

- Pelagius taught that it was theoretically possible, not that it ever happened, that a human being could be born, live a virtuous life, and die in that state and therefore, be a part of God's people
- St. Augustine said that that was impossible since all human beings are descendants of Adam and Eve (as Paul had said), and therefore, all had sinned before they died
- This could only be fixed through grace from Jesus
- Augustine used what Paul said in **Galatians** and **Romans** to point out to Pelagius his error
- He said that one needs Jesus to be saved
- This meant that the Augustine-Pelagius debates were about faith in Jesus (understood to mean faith versus works)

# Romans 8 (Cont)

- When Luther read **Romans** through the Augustinian lens, he had no idea that Paul was talking about the Torah (circumcision or non-circumcision, Jew versus Gentile, or anything else)
- Instead, Luther read **Romans** and got confused as he taught that one will be saved by faith in Jesus, and not by what you do
- This was Luther's hang up
- Apparently, Luther had a problem with some sort of sin, which caused him to go repeatedly to Confession
- He continually asked how one could be saved, until he concluded that it was not about what one does, but about what one believes that saves him
- Father pointed out that this is where the Protestants got their idea of "faith versus works"
- It has nothing to do with the **Book of Romans** (where Paul was dealing with the Judaizer problem, not Pelagius)



# Romans 8 (Cont)

- **Romans 8:28-29** *“We know that in everything God works for the good with those who love him...in order that he might be the first-born among the brethren”*
  - Father said that to be “confirmed,” meant to be refashioned in the image of God’s son
  - We are restored to what we were supposed to be in the original creation
  - This happens through Jesus (who was the perfect image and likeness of God)
  - So, once we become a part of Jesus, we are restored to what Adam was supposed to be (back in communion with God)
  - Now, we have a new creation
  - At this point we will end our study of the Community Letters and return to **Acts 20**