

An Idea On How To Use This Newsletter

Read the articles through the first time to gain an overview. Then, use it as a study guide for the month. Start with a topic that captures your interest, exploring it as a Berean. Look up verses in their context to prove what was written.

“Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.” (1 Timothy 4:16)

Try a couple more articles, study them, pray, and then apply what you learned. By the time you're finished, the next 'Just A Minute' will be on the way. **Share what you learn with others!**



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Just A Minute! *With Scripture*

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How We Pray? - Part 1

The truth be told, many feel uncomfortable with their prayer life and find it difficult to resolve some of the prayer issues today. As Scripture is explored to address this topic in the next issues, pray to be open. Re-evaluate beliefs, taking a closer look at what the Word really teaches.

Until we mature to have the mind of Christ 'formed in us,' we will need help, by the Spirit, to pray. Romans 8:26 teaches, "...the Spirit helpeth our infirmities: **for** we know not what we should pray for as we ought..." Yet, we can be sure our groaning's and difficulties are fully heard.

Paul is the Apostle for this 'time of grace' today, so we are to follow him in what he teaches and how he functions. "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." (1 Cor. 11:1) "Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen **in me**, do: and the God of peace shall be with you." (Phil. 4:9) Since Paul is our pattern to pray, the natural question would be, 'What did Christ teach him about prayer for this present time of grace?'

A few issues that can be observed: 1) Paul prays from a heart motivated in love. 2) Prayers are affected by what he knows about the individual. 3) He prays according to what he has learned doctrinally. 4) Issues addressed are specific. 5) His emphasis is not 'physical,' but on 'spiritual needs.'

Allow God's own Word to be stirred up in your heart and soul to motivate a more active and confident prayer ministry. **To Do:** Read 'how' Paul prayed for others. Can you find the issues listed above in any of these prayers: Romans 1:8-12, Ephesians 1:15-23, Ephesians 3:14-21, Philipians 1:9-11, Colossians 1:9-20.

(Continued on Page 4.)



Paul's Roman Epistle: Designed to Establish the Body of Christ

Romans 9: Student Study Insights

Romans 8:39 says, nothing "...shall be able to separate us from the love of God..." Yet, the question arises, 'What about the promises God made to Israel; does He still love them?' This next unit, Romans 9-11, addresses a number of questions regarding what happened to Israel and their unfulfilled promises.

The two distinct 'programs' God made with man, correlate with His two-fold purpose: " In the beginning God created the *heaven* and the *earth*." (Genesis 1:1) God made promises to His Nation, Israel (related to a physical *earthly* Kingdom). Separate promises were made to the Body of Christ (related to our *heavenly* kingdom).

Explore a few insights below to see God's enduring love, mercy, and trustworthiness, even to a rebellious nation.

1. Study one section at a time: Generally, Romans 9 can be broken up into clear sections by its questions. Read it through once, then study

each section. Verses 1-5: Attitude and integrity of Paul. Verses 6-13: An inferred question, 'Was God's Word ineffectual?' Verses 14-18: 'Is there unrighteousness with God?' Verses 19-29: 'Why does God still find fault, Israel didn't resist His will?' Verses 30-33: 'How is it that the Gentiles found what Israel had always desired?'

2. Meditation on Israel's new status: Read and think about Israel's diminishing in Acts. After functioning as God's special nation since Abraham, now they are set aside? How do they feel and what would their questions be to God?

3. Study references Paul makes to the Old Testament: Romans 9 refers you back in Scripture. A Bible's cross-reference systems can help you locate verses, but realize they are man-made.

4. Notice lists: Define elements in Verse 4. They 'pertain' to Israel, but do 'we' have them too?

5. Focus on a key word, 'righteousness:' Use a concordance to study this term. It's used through Romans and all Paul's epistles; consider context. (This is actually a theme in all the Bible.)

**Suggestion: For newer students, focus on 'reading' Scripture rather than trying to learn many new study insights; but when you're ready, do try one.*

**Evaluating Beliefs: Vain Repetitions**

How do you talk to God? Do you believe He is a real entity that thinks/hears/feels? Of course! Scripture teaches that He is the great three-in-one: God the Father, God the (Son) Word, and God the Holy Ghost. (1 John 5:7)

There is so much you can say to God; why would you speak using a 'formatted prayer?' Would you speak to a real person this way? Why not talk to Him intimately, as a Father?

Religion can sometimes teach 'vain repetitions,' by using them in their churches. What are 'vain repetitions?' They are **empty, prayers, often repeated, with little thought.** Reflect upon this tradition/habit. Even in Jesus'

day, there were religious leaders who lived and prayed without wisdom, so Christ taught His people Matthew 6:7: "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking." (**To do:** Think on this!)

The Lord provided this 'general prayer guideline' for the Little Flock, from which *saints today can also* learn. The verse clarifies God's thoughts; He doesn't want ritualistic prayer, but personal communing from your heart.

(Note: Explore 'how to pray' in Paul's epistles. Why? Instructions in this 'time of Grace' aren't exactly the same as in other time periods.) **Consider context!**



Introduction To Romans 9 - 11

Two of the most misunderstood doctrines facing the church today is, 'Why Israel did not receive her promised kingdom' and, 'Has God cancelled His covenant promises made to Israel?' Our Heavenly Father understands that these concerns will arise. In Romans, Chapters 9-11, He answers questions, refutes objections, and clarifies confusion about the interruption of Israel's earthly, prophetic program.

Romans 8:14-17 deals with a privilege/status that we have today, which was peculiar to Israel, according to her covenant promises: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."

Since we have some of these promises today, and they were promised to Israel, it makes sense that God would address this issue as soon as our establishment as sons is finished in Romans 8:14-39.

Romans, Chapter 9 answers questions raised by the remnant of Israel during the Acts period, about why God has not yet turned His focus back to Israel's earthly, prophetic program. "Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises..." (Rom. 9:4) The things that are promised to us Gentiles in Romans 1-8 were promised to Israel all through the Old Testament, the earthly ministry of Christ, and the early Acts period. Paul answers in great detail that God's program with Israel did not

fail; He is not unrighteous in interrupting their program and will surely resume His program with Israel.

Romans, Chapter 10 refutes objections raised by unbelieving Israel after the resurrection and which will also be raised at the Great White Throne Judgment. Unbelieving Israel, at the time of Christ's earthly ministry, did not see a need for Christ to come. "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." (Romans 10:3) Their objection was, and will be, that they 'were' keeping the law perfectly.

Their next objection was that they would have believed 'if' Christ had come. (Of course, He did.) The last objection is to blame God for not sending someone to tell them. Paul says, "...their sound went into all the earth..." so that they have no one to blame but themselves. (Romans 10:18)

Romans 11 clarifies the confusion about God casting away His people, because a dispensation of Gentile grace has been ushered in. Paul reminds the Gentiles that God did not cast away His people, as there was a remnant of Israel, at the time He wrote the book of Romans. God 'will resume His program with Israel,' because He promised to do so. The Gentiles will be cut off when they no longer continue in God's goodness.

The last confusion is to think Israel won't be able to be received back unto God, because they were blinded. Paul reveals a mystery that the Jews were only partly blinded and as natural branches, they will be easily grafted back into the olive branch, if they believe.

The reason Israel did not receive her kingdom and promises is because God *temporarily interrupted their program* to usher in the dispensation of Gentile grace. **Think on this!**



How We Pray? (Cont. From Page 1)

Exploring Paul's epistles will reveal he prayed 'for' and 'in' everything, yet his expectations were in check. He learned not to look for deliverance from sufferings, but rather, "...My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness..." Paul realized: "...Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." **'God's new way'** helped Paul accept his 'frailness,' to be *strengthened in the inner man*. (I Corinthians 12:9)

Paul actually attained contentment in circumstances, going on to "...take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." (II Cor. 12:10) Christ had become his 'inner power and confidence.'

How did Paul learn to 'take pleasure' and 'glory' in infirmities, especially when he 'had been' able to miraculously heal others? He *endured* difficulties, walking as a spiritual adult, focused above, on 'eternal things.' In contrast, a spiritual child is emotional, hyper-focusing on the 'physical,' to serve his flesh.' (Note: God's purpose for Paul's signs were to verify he was an Apostle. These miracles were 'done away' when this purpose was realized. II Cor. 12:12)

Our Apostle prayed for and then taught saints to trust **'God's new way'** in all circumstances. "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." (Gal. 5:24-25)

To Do: Survey Romans-Philemon to see how Paul handled the suffering/persecution of other saints. Did he teach them how to 'get miraculous' relief from these trials through God's intervention, or instruct them 'how to endure?'

(More on prayer next issue)



'On A Personal Side'

Forward feedback or questions about this newsletter. We will address all we can.

From Our Readers...

"I heard about your newsletter through a coworker...looking forward to getting them. (Alabama)

"Very well written. (Newby's Bridge) The Word of God is rich and I like the way you continually lead people back to the Word and God's design for edification. (Facebook)

"Yes, I would like to be placed on your mailing list. Thank you for your strong stand for the Grace Message." (Alabama)

Announcements

Family Bible Study In N. Chesterfield

Brian's Topic: Seeking and Searching for Truth

Time: Fridays, 7-9 PM Call for info - (804) 519-1210

Women's Bible Studies N. Chesterfield

1. Wed. Study: 10:30am-12 pm LaPrade Library

2. Friday Home Study: 2-4 pm Call for location

Call for Information (804) 519-1210

Monthly Things To Do Be a Berean (Acts 17:11)

1. Study the issue of prayer for yourself; prove what has been taught in this newsletter.
2. Assess whether you understand Romans 9-11. Make the time to study the chapters in more depth, prayerfully.
3. Use some of the articles in this newsletter as a guide for your personal quiet time in the Scriptures.

A Take Charge Saint

Paul is our motivated example, led by the Spirit in selfless love; his ministry even extended to his persecutors. (Rom. 9-11) Why? God has a purpose: "...have all men to be saved, and to come unto to knowledge of the truth." (I Tim. 2:4) His prayers reflected this.

Are you driven for Christ, making things happen, no matter the discomfort to your own flesh? Don't allow Satan and his devices in the course of this world to drag you along. It leads nowhere! Reflect and put it to prayer.

Ask Him to teach you to be a 'take charge' Christian, 'doing' the things God desires and has taught you in the Word. As this is done, you will "...be conformed to the image of his Son..." (Rom. 8:29) Be bold in your love prayers, and then, serve. **Shine as lights!**

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