

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, Jan. 22, 2012

Passage: Romans 1:8-15

Memory Passage: Romans 8:1-2

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Rom. 1:8-15 & Rom. 6.** In Paul's introductory thanksgivings it is his custom to speak of how *often* he prays (note the use of "always" in 1 Cor. 1:4, Phil. 1:4, 1 Thess. 1:2, 2 Thess. 1:3 & Philemon 4). Why do you think he alters this approach here in Romans by using the phrase, "through Jesus Christ"? How does this connect his thanksgiving to his greeting?

(b) Why is he thankful? What is it about their faith that was being proclaimed (see 16:8 & 1:5)? To ask it another way, how would those outside of Rome have known about their faith?

(c) How is your faith evidenced to your family, friends, & community? Would those around you look at your life & describe it as being marked by "the obedience of faith"? Would other believers "proclaim your faith"? Spend some time in prayer asking God to reveal to you areas of your life in which He desires greater obedience. Write down what He reveals & ask Him to remind/convict you daily of these areas.

(d) *Family:* Give your family 60 seconds to write down everything for which they are thankful. Share aloud your lists. Then **Read Paul's thanksgivings from Rom. 1:8, 1 Thess. 1:2-3, 2 Thess. 1:3, & Philemon 4-5.** As you read & discuss each passage, have your family write down each thing for which Paul is thankful. Then compare their own list with Paul's. Emphasize that we are to always give thanks for everything (Eph. 5:20), so there is nothing wrong with the lists they made, but "all things" should also include giving thanks to God, as Paul did, as people exhibit "the obedience of faith." Now spend some time "proclaiming" the faith that is evident in people in our congregation & pray, thanking God for His mighty work.

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Rom. 1:8-15 & Rom 7.** Why does Paul call God as His witness to his claim of praying for the opportunity to visit the Roman church?

(b) What does Paul mean when he says that he serves God "with my spirit"? How does he serve "in" the gospel of His Son? Since these are both prepositional phrases that modify "serve" (a word which can be translated "worship" and in the NT always has to do with serving God), what are we to learn from Paul's view of his ministry?

(c) For what does Paul specifically pray? How often does he pray for it? How would you describe Paul's prayer life as it is shown in vs. 9-10?

(d) How would you describe your own prayer life? How would someone else describe it if they walked with you 24 hours a day? Write down 3 or 4 ways you can endeavor to increase the frequency & consistency of your prayer life. Be ready to share these with your class so you "may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith" (v. 12).

(e) *Family:* **Read Rom. 1:8-15.** Point out all the verses that speak of Paul & his apostolic calling (vs. 1, 5, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15). Explain that Paul was convinced of his calling. Say, "Even though Paul's calling as an apostle to the Gentiles was his specific, individual calling, all believers are also called in specific ways. Can you think of any Scriptures that teach what this calling looks like?" Then teach your family from **1 Pet. 2:20-21, 2 Thess. 2:13-14, Eph. 1:17, Eph. 4:1-6, & Gal. 5:13** everything you find to which believers are called and list them on your white board. Help your family understand each one.

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Rom. 1:8-15 & Rom. 8.** What is the "spiritual gift" Paul desires to impart to the saints at Rome? What is its goal? What reciprocal gift does Paul wish to see given in v. 12? What does this assume about both Paul & the Romans?

(b) Write down 3-5 ways you are encouraged by the faith of other believers in our body here at BCC. Also write down 3-5 ways others in BCC might be encouraged by your faith.

(c) Be ready to brainstorm with your class ways in which this mutual encouragement can be facilitated in our church, and ways we can keep our mutual encouragement God-centered instead of man-centered.

(d) *Family:* **Read Rom. 1:9-15.** Ask, "Do you think Paul ever makes it to Rome?" Your family may know the answer, but during this lesson you will trace Paul's desire to go to Rome and the surprising way he arrived. Begin by **Reading Acts 19:21** where Paul first mentions his desire to go to Rome. Then **Read Acts 20:1-3** and tell your family that it was during these 3 months that Paul wrote his letter to the Romans. Then show them that Paul reaches Jerusalem in chapter 21 and is arrested. Then **Read Acts 23:11** in which the Lord promises Paul that he will indeed go to Rome, but lets him know he will go as a prisoner. Then read **Acts 27 & 28** to show how Paul actually arrived in Rome and what happened when he got there. You can

read it all, have your family take turns reading it, or read parts and summarize parts, depending on the needs and attention span of your family. You might also have them draw pictures of the shipwreck, the storm, or Paul in custody in Rome.

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Rom. 1:8-15 & 15:14-33.** Paul states in 1:13 that he was prevented from coming to Rome. According to chapter 15, why was Paul prevented? When Paul wrote this letter (probably during his 3 month stay in Corinth in Acts 20:1-3), what was he doing (15:17-19)? Where was he headed and for what purpose (15:25-28)? Why does Paul desire to go to Spain (15:20-23)? How does this reflect his apostolic calling to which he refers so many times in these chapters?

(b) Imagine you were a member of the church at Rome. Would you, after hearing Paul's letter read, be ready to receive him? Would you trust him? Would you be ready to contribute to his mission to Spain? Would you be willing to accompany him on his mission to Spain? What did you hear/read in his letter to make you answer as you did? The next time you hear a missionary give a report about their future mission plans, will you ask the Lord of the harvest if he desires to send you to fill the need, or to use your funds to supply the need, or to send your children to meet the need?

(c) *Family:* **Read Rom. 1:11-15.** Ask, "Why was Paul prevented from going to Rome?" Then lead you family through **Rom. 15:14-33** to answer these questions: Why was Paul prevented from going to Rome? (He was ministering the gospel to Gentiles from Jerusalem to Illyricum) Where was he headed first, before going to Rome? (To Jerusalem, to bring the offering he had been collecting for the saints in need.) What did he want the Roman believers to do with/for him? (To help him on his journey to Spain after he had had a time of fellowship with them.) Why did he want to go to Spain? (To preach the gospel where Christ had not yet been named.)

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Rom. 1:13-15 & Rom. 9.** What is the "harvest" Paul hopes to reap among the Romans and Gentiles? What is the "obligation" Paul is under? Are the words "wise" and "foolish" referring to the Greeks & barbarians or someone different?

(b) Why is Paul eager to preach the gospel to a bunch of people who are already saved? Why do saved people need to hear the gospel preached? What advantage is there to *you* in hearing the gospel preached? How does this concept affect your relationships with other believers? How does it affect your approach to your home group fellowship? Your family?

(c) *Family:* Spend some time with your family memorizing Romans 8:1-2 & reviewing Romans 1:16-17. Make this a fun activity by making a flash card for each word, mixing them up, and having your family place them on the table in the correct order. Then progressively remove one card at a time and have everyone say the verse, including the word(s) you removed until you are all saying the verse from memory with all the cards removed.

DATE: January 22, 2012

PASSAGE: Romans 1:8-15

I Long to See You!