

Notes



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Meeting With God Bible Reading Notes

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Week 27: Paul's Letter to the Romans, 2 (A whole book study)

In the previous chapters, Paul explained the gospel, showing how God used the Jews to prepare the way. Now the gospel is to be preached to all men. Knowing their failure, Gentile nations are turning to God for pardon. But Israel, thinking they are God's favourites, are hardening themselves. What future does Israel have?

Day 1. Israel - Children of the promise

Romans 9 & 10

1. Write a summary of the two ways of seeking God that Paul contrasts. Why have the Jews failed?
2. What is the purpose of God's election? (You could look up the word 'election' in a Bible dictionary.)
3. List the responsibilities we have in proclaiming the gospel.

Memory verse: If you confess that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised him from death, you will be saved. For it is by our faith that we are put right with God; it is by our confession that we are saved (Romans 10:9-10 GNB).

Read through 10:5-15 again and let the implications sink in. Pray for the boldness and opportunity to proclaim the good news.

'Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God' by Jim Packer (IVP) tackles these issues.

Day 2. A faithful God

Romans 11

Is this the end for Israel? No, because God always keeps his promises. We have evidence for this in that some Jews were becoming Christians. God's sovereign ways are sometimes beyond us, but we know he purposes forgiveness for all, even though not all will accept his offer. Today we see his future plan for that nation.

1. List some of the ways God has dealt with Israel.
2. Pick out a lesson from God's dealings with Israel which you can apply to yourself.
3. What is God's future plan for Israel?

4. List the attributes of God mentioned in verses 33-36.

Pray that God's faithfulness and forgiveness will be expressed in your behaviour to others.

Day 3. Living the new life

Romans 12 & 13

God gave his Son for us. Now we are to give our lives to him in gratitude. He will shape them into the likeness of his Son (8:29).

1. Carefully list the characteristics, qualities and attitudes that those who have a new life should demonstrate. Assess yourself in the light of this.
2. Note down the reasons Paul gives for submitting to the authorities. Are there any grounds for opposing them on occasions? (See Acts 5:29.)
3. What incentives do we have for living the life described here?

Memory verse: Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is - his good, pleasing and perfect will (Romans 12:2 NIV).

Pray through the list you made for question 1, asking God to show you the areas in which you particularly need his help.

Day 4. Let Christ dwell among us

Romans 14:1 - 15:13

A writer once described church life as 'building with bananas'. He was explaining that we are all far from perfect, yet through the Holy Spirit, God has given us the potential to live in peace, and work together in the Christian community. Today's study will give us some insights about how this can be worked out.

1. From Paul's illustrations, try to work out the most important principles which govern our relationships with other Christians.
2. What sources of help do we have to achieve these?
3. What practical things ensue from following Christ's example?

Pray that you will learn to bear with others' failings, be forgiving and cultivate compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience (see Colossians 3:12-13).

Day 5. 'Friends, Romans and countrymen!'

Romans 15:14 - 16:27

Despite Paul never having visited Rome he includes a long list of personal greetings. His hectic life never came between him and his priority of care for other believers.

1. Examine what Paul says about himself and his work. Paul doesn't intend to sound superhuman, but to be an encouraging example. Can you see yourself having similar ambitions and priorities?
2. Look down the long list of names. Write out those expressions used by Paul to describe these people. What's the significance of your findings?
3. What characterizes false teachers (verses 17-18)?

Pray that, like Paul, you will develop godly aspirations, seeking to put the Lord first in all things.

Weekend

1. In last week's study on Romans we saw the incredible truth that we can be justified in God's sight by Christ. This week we have seen that he has the power to bring us into the likeness of Christ himself. Go back over your notes and list all the practical hallmarks that demonstrate this new life within.
2. Make a study of the demands of Christian living by reading one of the many fine books available, such as *'Take my Life'* by Michael Griffiths (IVP). You could ask your literature or church bookstall secretary for further suggestions.