

Romans Review 4

Romans Chapters 9

Puritan Reformed Church - Pastor David Reece

Lord's Day March 26th, Anno Domini 2023

Scripture Reading - Romans 9

Acceptable Sacrifice of Praise - Psalm 103

REVIEW OF ROMANS

- 1) 1:1-15 - Apostleship - Authority (Sola Scriptura) and Mission (the Great Commission and the Doxological focus)**

1:16-17 - Thesis - "16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith.'"

- 2) Chapters 1:18-3:20 - The Righteousness of God in Himself as Judge & The Righteousness of God revealed in the law¹**

- 3) Chapters 3:21-5:21 - The Righteousness of God imputed to the believer in Justification**

WSC Q 33 - What is justification? A. Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone.

Vow 5 - Do you believe that you are guilty and helpless as a sinner against God, repent of your sin, and believe that God, by grace alone, has pardoned all of your sins, and accepted you as righteous in his sight, only because of the righteousness of Christ imputed to you and received by belief alone?

¹ Root sin is the sin of unbelief. Not seeking and therefore not understanding. Neglecting, Avoiding, Resisting, and Denying the knowledge of God. Root sin results in an increasing sense of meaninglessness which leads to an increase of fruit sins through boredom increasing guilt and the lust for excess as we seek to amuse ourselves into oblivion.

4) Chapters 6-8 - The Righteousness of God imparted to the believer in Sanctification

WSC Q 35 - What is sanctification? A. Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.

Vow 6 - Do you believe that because God is the Lord, your God, and your Redeemer, having saved you from your sin, by grace alone through faith alone in the mediatorial work of Christ alone, that the only reasonable response to God's authority and mercy is to live your life as an acceptable sacrifice to God, seeking to glorify Him in the whole of life by knowing the Truth, acting according to the knowledge of the Truth, and spreading the knowledge of the Truth, all out of gratitude for the grace of God given to you?

- a) **8:5-11** - Those who are regenerated are being sanctified because they have been given spiritual life (which is the knowledge of God) by the Holy Spirit.
 - i) Tool of Sanctification - Faith - without faith it is impossible to please God.
 - ii) Tool of Sanctification - Assurance of Salvation - Guilt, Grace, Gratitude
 - iii) Tool of Sanctification - Hope (confident desire) of overcoming sin - I have been promised that I will overcome sin in my mind and body.
 - iv) Tool of Sanctification - The nourishing of Faith by focusing the mind on the things of the Spirit - Scripture. Putting off the old man by NOT thinking on unprofitable things. Putting on the new man by thinking on profitable things.
- b) **8:12-17** - Adoption as a ground of Hope.
 - i) V. 12 - Tool - acknowledgement of Obligation
 - ii) V. 13 - Tool - Negative Discipline
 - iii) V. 13 - Tool - Positive Blessing
 - iv) V. 14-15 - Tool - Sonship - Privilege as a Son. Bondage (slavish obedience) vs the Spirit of Adoption and the power to cry out to God as our Father.
 - v) V. 16 - Tool - Encouragement - The testimony of our own belief and of the Spirit causing us to want to Pray to our Father.
 - vi) V. 17 - Tool - Future Hope as Sons - Current status as Son and future reward of Glory. Suffering to Glory.
- c) **8:18-28a** - Affliction in this life vs the glory to be received by and revealed in the saints, and the upholding of the saints by the Holy Spirit through the

gift of Hope.

- i) Tool - Contrasting present suffering with future glory
 - ii) Tool - Hope that the Goal of Creation will be accomplished
 - iii) V.26-27 - Tool - Know that the Spirit gives you power to pray effectually - in faith.
- d) **8:28b-30** - Predestination as a ground of Hope.
- i) Tool of Sanctification - The Golden Chain - The Golden Chain that proves that God is unchangeably, omnipotently, and omnisciently seeking the good of the elect, and if you have assurance of salvation, then you know that God is unchangeably, omnipotently, and omnisciently seeking your good. God Works all things for the good of all those who are called. All who are foreknown are predestined. All who are predestined are called. All who are called are justified. All who are justified are glorified.
- e) **8:31-34** - The work that has already been done by Christ for justification and sanctification as a ground of Hope.
- f) **8:35-39** - God's unchangeable love as a ground of Hope.

37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. 38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

5) Chapter 9 - The Righteousness of God in His plan of the Predestination of all things for His ends by His means at His initiation.

- a) **9:1-13** - If God's love is unchanging, if the knowledge and love of God are inalienable, then how have the Jews been cast off? Bloodlines may fail. Visible Churches may fail. The Invisible Church will not fail. God has not cast off the elect - the invisible Church. The Promise is not to the flesh or even to the visible church, but to the children of promise.
 - i) God has not failed to keep His Promise to Israel. Not all of the people who come from Israel by the flesh are Spiritual Israel.
 - (1) Adoption/sonship - huiotesia - an external adoption - the making of the nation into a covenanted people - the making of Israel into a visible church - adoption into the household of God (the church).

- (2) Glory - doxa - the visible way in which God was present with the Israelite - the Shekinah and the administration of the house of God.
- (3) Covenants - diathekai - From Abraham, to Moses, to David, to Jesus

The Covenant of Works - God entered into a covenant of life with Adam wherein justice was made more plain with the promise of reward of life for perfect obedience and the threat of death offered for lack of conformity unto or transgression of the law of God. The Sacramental symbols of the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil showed forth the knowing God of and His Law as the good life of Theonomy where God shows us our good and our design in opposition to seeking to define our own good in autonomy - not distinct to the Hebrews.

The Covenant of Grace - Old Covenant, Old Testament, Old Administration

Adamic Covenant - The Covenant of Grace was first given in the Gospel promise as an oracle of God that the seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent while also being crushed in his heel by the serpent. Adam and Eve were given with the symbol of the covering of animal skins and the outward ordinances of sacrifice (as demonstrated by Able's acceptable sacrifice) in order to provide a sign for the need and promise of redemption.

Noahic Covenant - The Covenant of Grace was built upon with Noah in the giving of the ordinance of the Civil Magistrate to restrain evil through the use of the sword to avenge crimes.

Abrahamic Covenant - The Covenant of Grace was built upon with Abraham in the giving of circumcision for an external sign of the covenant to make the Hebrews largely overlap with the visible church in making the visible church more distinct from the world by the use of an entry ordinance pointing to the Messiah to come from the line of Abraham.

Mosaic Covenant - The Covenant of Grace was built upon with Moses in the republication of the law to make the Gospel more starkly visible in the giving of the moral law in organized written form for moral instruction, the giving of judicial laws for the restraint and good ordering of a national people, and the detailed administration of the priesthood for the house of God were given for the outward and glorious pomp of the old covenant.

Davidic Covenant - The Covenant of Grace was built upon with David in the development of promises of a perfect prophet, priest, king who would reign without break in the line as the triple anointed theanthropic mediator. The Temple is established as prophesied in order to have a place of stability and establishment leading into the reign of Solomon who squandered his wisdom and skill in giving his strength to women in the period of peace, prosperity, and power handed to him by his father.

The Covenant of Grace - New Covenant, New Testament, New Administration

The New Covenant - The Covenant of Grace was built upon with Jesus in his coming as the Christ and His ending of the old administration of the Covenant of Grace in 70 A.D. (the Old Covenant, the Old Testament) and the replacing of the **old administration** with the **new administration** (household administration/dispensation - oikonomia) through the ministry of His apostles. The New Covenant (the New Testament, the **new administration** of the Covenant of Grace) simplifies the ordinances of worship and holiness and allows for the simplicity of the New Covenant with less pomp and outward glory to be more effectual in that **(1) - Better Gifts** - the gifts of the Spirit are better in the New Covenant than in the Old Covenant (this includes the completed canon being better than the partial revelation given before the close of the canon, the outward administration, offices, and spiritual gifts), **(2) - Greater Depth** - the gifts in the New Covenant are more effective at deeply sanctifying the people of God (greater depth), and **(3) - Greater Extent** - the gifts in the New Covenant are more effective in extending out in broadness in bringing people to repentance (redemption having been accomplished it is more frequently applied - greater extent of persons brought into the covenant and the priesthood of all believers once brought in).

- (4) Giving of the Law - nomothesia - The Law, the oracles of duty - the whole system of legislation given by God made Israel a people with far greater wisdom than the other nations. They were given good principles, but then ignored them in pride and conceit. Israel neglected thoughtful seeking of the meaning of things propounded in the law and inverted the order of things, avoided correction through an escape to fideism or skepticism, resisted correction from the prophets, and denied the truth to the face of truth.
- (5) Service (of God, of the things of God) - latreia - The priestly service, all of the pomp of the old covenant.
- (6) Promises - epanggeliai - The Gospel, the oracles of redemption

- (7) Fathers - pateres - The Patriarchs, our forefathers in the faith
- Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and so forth.
- (8) Christ - Christos - Christ came through Abraham, Isaac, Jacob,
Judah ... David ... on down so that Jesus both inherited the
throne through his adoptive father Joseph and was of the
flesh of David through Mary.
- ii) V. 6 - The Word of God has not failed.
 - iii) Not all of the seed of Abraham by the flesh are children of Abraham
in terms of inheritance. In Isaac (not Ishmael) the inheritance will
be publicly known.
 - iv) Not all of the children of Abraham by the flesh are heirs of God.
 - v) All of the children of promise (Gospel) are counted as heirs of
Abraham and God.
 - vi) Isaac was born (physically) by the power of the Spirit according to a
promise, so that Abraham and Sarah conceived Isaac by faith.
 - vii) Not only is it true that Isaac is the child of promise conceived
through the miraculous power of the Spirit rather than the natural
power of man (the flesh), but Rebecca's conception, like Sarah's
conception, was in a state of barrenness, and thus the conception
was not by the ordinary power of the flesh (human nature), but the
conception was supernatural and for all to see (thus miraculous),
and so Jacob and Esau both are supernaturally conceived, but the
supernatural conception (a sign of the new birth, but not the reality
of the new birth) is not the cause of blessedness. Jacob and Esau
were not only from the same man (like Isaac and Ishmael), but also
from the same mother, and moreover were even twins. Whereas
Isaac and Ishmael were both of the same human father, and both a
part of the visible church and both circumcised and both saved, yet
only Isaac was chosen to be the one through whom Christ would
come.
 - viii) Jacob and Esau were both of the same human father, mother, and
time of conception, and hour of birth. Both were members of the
visible church. Both were circumcised. But Christ would only come
through Jacob, and Esau was not and would not be saved from the
wrath of God while Jacob would be saved from the wrath of God.
 - ix) God does not love everyone.
 - x) God does not hate everyone.

- xi) Everyone is someone whom God either hates or loves. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom.
- xii) Love and hatred are mutually exclusive categories.
- xiii) God does not have contradictory attitudes or desires.
- xiv) Grace is not common. Grace is particular.
- xv) Not all Israel is Israel.

(1) National Israel and Church Israel largely overlapped, and Church Israel and Spiritual Israel largely overlap, but not everyone who is from National Israel or Church Israel is Spiritual Israel.

(a) **National Israel** - The Citizens of Israel the State - being united to Israel as seed of the flesh or by naturalization. Citizenship in a civil covenant.

(b) **Church Israel** - Church Members - Being united to Israel by the signs of the covenant (the oracles and ordinances of God). This would be those who join the visible church by covenanting in a credible profession of faith and the natural and adopted children and other household members of church members in good standing.

(c) **Spiritual Israel** - The Regenerate Elect - those whom God has predestined to have faith and have already received the gift of faith.

(2) Earlier in Romans we saw that not all circumcised are saved and that not all saved are circumcised. The Circumcised were a part of the visible church (**Church Israel**), but not all of the circumcised were part of the invisible church (**Spiritual Israel**)

(a) Some of the visible church Israel is of Spiritual Israel.

(b) Some of the visible church Israel is not of Spiritual Israel.

(c) Some of Spiritual Israel is of visible church Israel.

(d) Some of Spiritual Israel is not of visible church Israel.

(e) The visible church is not coextensive with the invisible church (the elect).

(f) The invisible church (the elect) is not coextensive with the visible church.

- b) **9:14-29** - Objections Answered regarding the Justice of Predestination
 - i) 14 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not!
 - ii) 19 You will say to me then, “Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?”

Let us consider the Charge against God

Point 1 - God controls all things (including evil), but God is not unjust for being the cause of evil. God intends for evil and suffering to happen for the purpose of showing forth both His justice and His mercy. God causes evil and suffering. God is not the chargeable/responsible/accountable cause of evil.

- 1) **God is Ex Lex - God is above the law** - Without God there is no meaningful/coherent definition of good, so there is no definition of Good by which to judge God. There is no standard above God by which to judge Him. God is above the law. God can only be judged by what He reveals about Himself. God does not contradict Himself, God is Truth. When God causes a man to sin God is not sinning. If God kills a man it is not murder. If God takes a man’s property it is not theft.
- 2) **No Judge to call God before** - To be chargeable one must have a person to whom to bring charges. To be accountable/responsible one must have a person to whom one can be required to give an account or response. There is no judge to hear charges against God. There is no judge to call God to give an account/response.
- 3) **By definition, whatever God does is good** and not evil. The question is whether that definition retains meaning. God is the cause of evil. God is the rational cause of evil. God is not the “author of evil” because He does not do evil Himself and He is not the chargeable cause of evil.
- 4) **The End & Means - God creates things that are good and decrees that those things do evil (violate His law) for the display of justice and mercy.** God does not create things that are evil at the moment of creation (logically impossible since His design defines good for the creature), rather the creature departs from the design instructions (law) as discussed in Romans 1:18-3:20.

- 5) **Ambiguity - The Will of God** - an ambiguous term much to be avoided for the sake of clarity given all of the disputes that still rage about the will of God.
 - a) **The Command of God** - The preceptive will - the will of command
 - i) Matthew 6:10b - “Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven.”
 - b) **The Decree of God** - The decretive will - the will of good pleasure
 - i) Psalm 115:3 - “But our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases.”
 - ii) Psalm 135:6 - “Whatever the Lord pleases He does, In Heaven and in Earth, In the seas and in all deep places.”
- 6) The **formal cause** of sin and suffering is the law of God.
- 7) God (God’s decree) is the **effectual cause** of sin and suffering.
- 8) Human or angelic choice is the **instrumental cause** of sin and suffering.
- 9) Sinning creatures are the **meritorious cause** of sin - the chargeable / responsible / accountable cause of sin - Only creatures are the “authors of sin”.
- 10) God’s glory is the **ultimate cause** of sin.
- 11) Historical events and circumstances are **occasions** for sin and suffering (external tests / temptations) - these occasions are means that are not causal in the technical sense.

Point 2 - Unless God is the definition of Good we have no way to Judge anything - much less judging God. Defining Good - God is the Good. God created and governs the creation in order to show himself/show His attributes/show His glory. God created in order to cause rational creatures to see and understand the show as a display of His attributes. God causes rational creatures to understand the show and the attributes of God by divine illumination (causing the creature to grasp the meaning of revealed truths, test those truths for coherence, and believe those truths). Possessing what is good is according to nature. Good for man is knowing God. The possession of the Logos by the mind of man in increasing amounts is growth in the good.

- 12) The **Logos as the Divine Son** - Christ, the Second person of the Trinity, is the Logos.
- 13) The **Logos as Reason** - The light that lights the minds of all men. Logic, the image of God, is the Logos operating in both the elect and the reprobate. Spiritual death is wrong thinking, unbelief - not knowing, not seeking, not choosing rightly.
- 14) The **Logos as the Decree of God** - The Decrees of God in creating and governing creation. The decree results in creatures and the actions of creatures. The

Creation is the Tabernacle of the Logos.

- 15) The **Logos as the Oracles of God** - The Logos is truth. The propositional special revelation is the mind of Christ communicated to our minds in words.
- 16) The **Logos as the Deliverer and Teacher of Individuals** - The effectual operation of the logos on the mind to cause us to understand and believe - Sanctification/regeneration. We are individually the temple of the Logos and parts/stones of the temple of the Logos.
- 17) The **Logos Incarnate** - Christ is eternally and truly God, and Christ is truly man. Christ became man at the conception of His human nature. The addition of a human mind and body in union with the Divine mind of the second person of the Trinity is the hypostatic union (the personal union). The hypostatic union of the two natures was accomplished so that “two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person **without conversion, composition, or confusion**. Christ’s human nature is the tabernacle of the Logos.
- 18) The **Logos as the Deliverer, Builder, and Beautifier of the Church** - Leading the Church into all truth - the maturing of the church - the church as the bride of Christ - the bride as the body of Christ. The Church is the temple of the Logos. As the church is built up in knowledge and in numbers it fills the whole creation with individuals who know God deeply so that the Logos fills the earth with the knowledge of God as the waters cover the seas so that the Logos is all in all.

Point 3 - God is both the Objective Good and the Good for Man. Good is both objective and is possessed according to the nature of the thing - **God is the Good**. God Displays Himself for His own good (showing Himself as He is). God shows Himself for the Good of elect Angels and Men so that they can possess the immaterial and invisible God by knowing Him propositionally. Good for man is knowing God.

Point 4 - God achieves the Good End. God works **all things** together for the good - God controls and intends all things (including suffering, including sin) for the good of those who were made to be knowers of God. God controls and intends all things (including suffering, including sin) for the goal of deepening the knowledge of those who were made to be knowers of God. God works all things together for His glory. It is a show designed to show God’s glory to those who know God’s glory.

- iii) 25-29 - Proof of the same doctrine from the Scriptures from the Old Covenant (Hosea and Isaiah) that in the New Covenant God will bring in gentile nations to the visible church and will cause the nations as civil bodies to covenant with Him and will save many gentile individuals.

In the New Administration of the Covenant of Grace (the New Covenant) God will call nations as nations to be His people as national bodies politic. These will be Nations that were previously excluded.

These nations will include nations that are not the Hebrews even though in the Old Administration of the Covenant of Grace (Old Covenant) God had formed a covenant with the national body politic of the Israelites in a special way (Noahic Covenant makes a covenant with all nations to establish Godly Magistrates).

God will call nations beloved who had not previously received the signs of love. - the adoption, the glory, the covenants, law, worship, and the promises-v.4

Though the number of persons who are natural descendants (of the flesh) of Israel and members of the body politic and members of the visible church be of a huge number, the elect who are given faith and preserved by God will be saved.

For God will finish the work of the Old Covenant and cut it short in righteousness (God will bring judgment to bring about a sudden end of the Old Covenant), because the Lord will make a short work upon the earth (the judgment will take place on the land, Jerusalem is judged twice with the destruction of the city and the temple, but Daniel 9 points to the one ending at 70 AD).

With the destruction of Jerusalem God will preserve some Israelites and will cause many elect Jews to flee the city as happened in Acts and was commanded by Jesus in the Olivet Discourse that when armies surround Jerusalem, then Christians were to flee to avoid the judgment of Jerusalem. This happened in 70 AD.

Had God not caused this preservation by (a) scattering the New Covenant Church in the first two decades after the death of Christ and (b) giving a warning to the believers in Jerusalem to flee at the sight of armies around the city, then the Jews would have been annihilated like Sodom and Gomorrah.

- c) **9:30-33** - Jews and Gentiles Before God
- i) How do we make sense of all this then?
 - ii) The Gentiles did not seek righteousness, but they have attained righteousness, namely the righteousness that comes through the instrumentality of faith (the imputed righteousness of Christ).
 - iii) Israel sought righteousness through the instrumentality of personal and group law-keeping and has thus not attained righteousness.
 - iv) Why did Israel not attain to righteousness?
 - v) Because Israel did not seek righteousness through the instrumentality of faith but through personal and group obedience to the law.
 - (1) This is an illegal use of the law.
 - vi) Is. 8:14; 28:16 - Jesus is the stumbling stone. Jesus is the Rock of Offense.

6) Chapters 10-11 - The Righteousness of God in His treatment both of Israel and of the Nations.

7) Chapters 12-16 - The Righteousness of God on display in rational service by the saints.

12:1-2 - Hinge Thesis - I beseech [exhort] you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable [rational] service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.