

# Week 31

## Romans / Προς Ῥωμαίων / to the Romans

### Part 2

Sunday, June 26<sup>th</sup> Romans 7

**For Reflection:** I find Romans 7 very difficult to understand, and at the very same time, I can completely empathize with the interior conflict Paul describes. I find this so frustrating!!!! I feel like I am missing something critical, and don't have the means to find understanding.<sup>1</sup> (Interestingly, Paul seems to feel this same frustration when it comes to the law. It shows him the way to God, but not the means to fulfill it<sup>2</sup>. Agggh!)

*Rules are critical to a civilized world<sup>3</sup>. When/Why have you found rules (the law) to be helpful? When/Why have they been unhelpful? How does God - through Jesus Christ and the gift of the Spirit - allow you to rise above the power of sin? (This is a lifetime question – and when you get close to figuring it out, humbly, write a book.)*

**Lagniappe:** Jeremiah 31:31-34

Monday, June 27<sup>th</sup> Romans 8: 1-17

**For Reflection:** Now Paul is telling us how everything has changed regarding that internal struggle/failure. Christ took our sin and paid its consequences. We can live by the Spirit, and that possibility changes everything. We are not felons on parole soon to be shown our place by power. We are not servant in a household who are clearly not members. We are adopted into

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<sup>1</sup> So, what I do with these passages like this is PRAY! (a lot more than usual). Then, I read the troublesome passage in different versions moving from more literal translations (think of these translations as attempting to be faithful to the author – translating the original language with word for word equivalents) to more dynamic translations (think of these translations as attempting to be more helpful to today's reader. Translating the original language idea for idea). The danger with dynamic translations (sometimes called paraphrases) is that the translators of those versions make a ton of interpretive decisions for you. That's why I always start with the literal versions. My path for this work is to start with NRSV (RSV & ESV are also good starting texts) then NIV then The Message.

<sup>2</sup> I am pretty sure Paul is saying the Law is good, maybe wonderful, but it is not enough. The law distinguishes between what is good and what is sin, however, it does not supply the means to rise above sin. Jesus alone accomplishes this (the last verse).

<sup>3</sup> Maybe because of our yearning for civilization, we always want to raise up law as the savior. Today, good and holy concerns about Social Justice is the example. Social justice eclipses the true savior. Social justice is good, and wonderful, but it's not enough. Regardless of our laws we still and will always have abuses of power.

the family of God, co-heirs with Christ. Hard to believe the Word of God says that. *How do you think today would be different if you believed in a practical sense, in other words if you acted like this passage were true, if you acted like you were a child of God; a child who can call on God at any time in the most personal way imaginable – Abba?*

**Lagniappe:** Matthew 6:9, Isaiah 66:12-13

**Tuesday, June 28<sup>th</sup>** Romans 8:18-27

**For Reflection:** *What are your present sufferings? How do the promises of God shape your life? How do the promises of this word shape your life? What is your hope? A fragment of funeral liturgy – Live as ones who will one day die and die as ones who go forth into life.*

**Lagniappe:** Psalm 62:5-6

**Wednesday, June 29<sup>th</sup>** - Romans 8:28-39

**For Reflection:** This passage shapes a lot of our understanding about ourselves, but it is primarily a God passage. God will not be deterred or defeated in his good plans for anyone. This passage is about a God who seeks and holds onto His children. God foreknew, predestines, calls, justifies, and ultimately glorifies. God does not withhold his own Son. God ensures his continuing love, from which we simply can't be separated. *Do you believe this?*

*Lagniappe: Judges 6:11-18*

**Thursday, June 30<sup>th</sup>** - Romans 9

**For Reflection:** *A big passage on sovereignty of God. Good thing he is merciful as well as sovereign. In what areas of life do you tell the potter how to do his work?*

**Lagniappe:** Isaiah 64:8

**Friday, July 1<sup>st</sup>** - Romans 10

**For Reflection:** What good news or bad news have you been proclaiming these last few months? Does it have anything to do with bringing people to Christ and his love?

**Lagniappe:** Deuteronomy 30:14

**Saturday, July 2<sup>nd</sup>** Romans 12

**For Reflection:** Verses 1-8 - Where does the secular world most influence your beliefs and actions? In what areas of life are you most tempted to conform to the world? What is your gift to the

body of Christ? Do you recognize our Sunday Charge in this passage?

**Lagniappe:** Leviticus 20:7