

**Episode:** Paul's Letters Series No. 10

**Narrator:** Phoebe

**Primary Scriptures:** Romans 9-16

**Story Summary:** Paul's letter to the churches in Rome

**Location:** Roman Empire; Italy; Rome

**Time:** AD 30 Jesus crucified and resurrected; Pentecost; Holy Spirit arrives  
AD 48 Paul's "famine visit" to Jerusalem; First Missionary Journey starts  
AD 50 Council at Jerusalem; Start of Second Missionary Journey.  
AD 53 Start of Third Missionary Journey  
AD 57 Paul writes *Romans* while in Corinth

**Suggested Memory Scriptures:** Romans 9:18; 10:17; 11:6, 29; 12:1-2, 9-12, 17-18, 21; 13:1, 14; 14:12, 17-18

Some of the New Testament's most challenging verses to understand are found in *Romans*. Romans 9:10-26 address Paul's thoughts on why God makes some of the choices He makes. This glimpse of God's thoughts provides Christians with some of their most important information about God's will, mercy, and justice.

Paul continues teaching on these subjects as he talks about the people of Israel and how that tradition affects the ability of the Gentiles to be saved. Verses such as Romans 11:29 continue to give us a glimpse into God's mind.

Since all Scripture is God-breathed, it is a bit presumptuous to rate some Scriptures above others. But it is fair to say Romans 12 rates alongside 1 Corinthians 13 as two of the most influential chapters in Paul's letters. Thinking of Romans 12 as a very meaty, theological sandwich, these are the two "bread" verses: "I beg you by the mercy of God, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service," and "Don't be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

In modern times, there is nothing quite as contentious as politics. If everybody paid attention to Romans 13:1-6, there would be a lot less rancor and despair.

Sometimes it is tempting to judge non-Christians by the same standards as Christians. However, Romans 14 is a good example of Paul's instructions about the ways Christians should treat each other, where he gives a very high but compassionate standard. Wanting everyone to understand the seriousness of the matter, he adds in Romans 14:12-13, "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Let us not therefore judge one another anymore."

While *Romans* is a book of instruction to Christians about behavior and belief, it's always important to remember that a primary purpose of all Christians is to glorify God, as Paul so eloquently states in Romans 15:6.

### Discussion Questions:

1. When you observe passages like Romans 9, how important is it for you to have a basic understanding of the Old Testament?
  2. Based on Romans 9:13-14, do you feel like God is fair? According to Romans 9:18-21, who has the sole right to determine what is fair and just?
  3. Does Romans 10:14-15 convince you of the importance of missionaries?
  4. How do you understand Romans 14:10-12?
  5. How could your church act with one mind and one voice to glorify God (Romans 15:6)?
  6. Romans 15:24 and 28 say that Paul planned to go to Spain. Do you think he accomplished that goal?
  7. Romans 16:3 says Aquila and Priscilla are in Rome. Why is that important?
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1. Paul used so much information included in the Old Testament, that it is hard to follow his reasoning without having a working knowledge of the Old Testament. 7. Aquila and Priscilla were trained by Paul in Corinth and Ephesus. They would certainly be mature and knowledgeable influences in the establishment of the church in Rome.

### Application Questions:

1. Read Romans 10:9-13. As with many passages in Romans, people have different understandings of these verses. Do you view these as describing *all* that needs to be done for salvation, or as describing *some* of what needs to be done for salvation? What does it mean for you to call on the name of the Lord?
2. Pick three verses at random from Romans 12 and contemplate ways you can immediately apply them to your life.
3. Read Romans 14:21. Is there anything you ought not to be doing since it might cause someone to stumble spiritually? If you acted in love, what would you do to remedy the situation? Has anyone ever caused you to stumble spiritually? What, if anything, should you do about that?

### Application Questions for Teens:

1. Romans 12:6 says we have different gifts, and then goes on to list some gifts given to people. What gifts do you have, and how can you develop them further? How can you use your gifts to benefit others instead of yourself?
2. Romans 12:9 says to hate what is evil. What is something you know to be evil, but have ignored or given passive approval to?
3. Think of a situation in your life where you can apply Romans 12:21.
4. According to Romans 16:8, what sorts of things will people do in an effort to deceive and influence?