Bible Study 50

July 27, 2022

The Letter to the Romans (Continued)

In Chapter Nine of Romans Paul is at pains to point out the legacy that belongs to Israel From Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, the plan of God for a Messiah had been established and promised. Why then had Judaism and the Jews rejected God’s plan and the promise shifted to those who were not Jews?

“What have we done wrong?” Is the question many people ask? “Are we not the Chosen Race?” Paul compares God’s plan to a Potter who makes plates and bowls from the same lump of clay for rich and poor alike. Similarly, God can bestow his grace on both Jew and Gentile. Why? Because he is God and he in no way needs to justify his choices.

There follows in Chapter Ten a rational about the place of the Law of Moses and the Righteousness of God. Basically, it says that the law carried us when we did not know better. But now that God has revealed himself in Jesus Christ, there is faith and with that faith comes a new righteousness. It is no longer good to merely hold on to the Law and point at our own observance and good deeds. We must take the law a stage further. It is a language not of the mouth but of the heart.

There is now no difference between Jew and Gentile, because God has come into the hearts of all who proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord. Paul speaks of the importance of the one who brings the good news of the Gospel. For without it their can be no conversion and no people of faith.

Chapter Eleven is dedicated to telling the Jews of Rome that God has not rejected them. Israel will be saved, but realize too that God has pruned the tree and the broken branches have been cut off. Paul tells them that he himself is an Israelite chosen and commissioned to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles and that is the mission of Judaism also. To bring the word of God to the world. God is wise in his ways. He knows what he is doing. He has a plan.

In Chapter Twelve Paul begs the Christians of Rome to be transformed. It is a different mindset. He gives the ‘Body’ as a model of the church where every part has a separate function. No part more important than the other, but all united in serving one another. There are many ministries teaching, preaching, serving, healing, but one Body of Christ.

Now he speaks of love. It is the lifeblood of the community of faith. It must be self-sacrificing and sincere. Love one another. Do not hate nor repay evil for evil. Do not take revenge but pray for your enemies.

Fr. Bill.

Read: Chapters 9, 10, 11, 12.