

Romans: A Study on Reformation
Lesson 30 “The Source of Faith”

I. Introduction and Review - We are continuing our series on **Romans** today. Our focus in this series reformation, specifically reforming our relationships.

A. Here’s a first thing we need to reform about our understanding of **Romans**. Most people think it’s a letter about how we are justified by faith. That is true, but only a small part of the truth. The context of the letter is human relationships and bringing together different people groups with different belief systems around the centrality of Jesus.

B. Paul wrote this letter to the church in Rome to reform it in 57 A.D. prior to his trip to Jerusalem. He wrote to deal major issues the church in Rome was having issues which related to the banishment of the Jews from Rome in the year 49 A.D.

1. When the church in Rome began it was mostly comprised of Jews who converted to Christianity. The church culture was very much in line with Judaism (keep the law of Moses, focus on circumcision, keep the feast days, etc.)

2. In 49 A.D. the Roman Emperor Claudius banished all the Jews from Rome because of their religious and political disturbances. **Acts 18:1-2**. The Jews were banished until 54 A.D. when Nero became Emperor and said they could return.

3. When the Jewish Christians were banished, the only Christians left were Gentiles (the heathen). They were now in charge in the church in Rome and the culture of the church was completely different. Modern example would be if all of the traditional people were banished from town and the church was turned over to Millennials/Gen Z who brought in a more contemporary vibe to service.

4. Each side had an aura of superiority. The Jews thought they were better because they were God’s original chosen people and the Gentiles thought they were better because they were the replacement of the Jews since they rejected Jesus.

C. Last week we studied **Romans 10:8-9** about the power of God to salvation/change. This isn’t a power we ascend into heaven or suffer in a pit to obtain. This power comes from the word of God that is in our mouth and in our heart.

1. **Change happens when we speak God’s word over our situation.**

2. Today we are going to continue in **Romans 10** and talk more about faith and specifically where faith comes from. Faith begins where the will of God is known. So how do we know God’s will?

II. The Source of Faith

A. The next question we need to ask is “What is Faith?”

1. **Hebrews 11:1** This verse shows faith and hope are different. Hope is a positive expectation about the future, but faith goes deeper. Faith gives substance to hope. Faith is now and facts acts on what is hoped for. That is how it gives substance to it.
2. Charles Capps used to say, “Hope is like the thermostat and faith is like the cooling unit.” The unit gives substance to the temperature the thermostat sets.
3. Spiritually, our words and actions give substance to our hope.

B. Romans 10:14-18 Faith Comes By Hearing

1. Right after Paul says God is rich to all those who call on His name, he then begins to exhort the church in Rome about the necessity of taking the gospel to those who don't believe. How can they hear without a preacher?
2. This is why we do all the outreaches we do as a church and encourage folks to invite people. How can people come to faith unless they are taught? **All churches should be focused on discipling the lost. It is the Great Commission. “Faith in others will begin where the will of God is known.**
3. *Verse 15* quotes **Isaiah 52:7** and **Nahum 1:15** - the word peace in **Isaiah 52:7** is shalom - nothing missing/nothing broken. Jesus came to provide wholeness and we discover this by hearing God's plan. Again, this is why ministers, missionaries must be sent and it is why each of us need to take the gospel to our schools and workplaces. God's will isn't automatic and it cannot be discovered unless it is made known.
4. *Verse 16* They have not all obeyed the gospel - **hupakōuō** - *to hear, listen attentively, by to implication to heed or conform to a command.* **Obedience comes from hearing God's word, not focusing on behavior change.** Ex: Faith is the root word of faithful. We become more faithful by getting more faith.
5. *Verse 17* - faith comes by hearing and hearing the rhema (declared word of God). **We must hear with the ears of our spirit, not just our intellect.**
6. **Verse 18** - Not all have heard - but they did hear with their natural ears, just not the ears of their heart. **Acts 28:25-27** Paul preached the gospel to Jews in Rome and even though they heard with natural ears, they didn't hear with the spiritual ears of their heart.

C. Hindrances to Faith (Keys to Getting Our Heart Sensitive)

1. Wrong knowledge that leads to wrong expectation. Ex: Paul's thorn in the flesh testimony.
 - a. The Jews had wrong expectations about how the Messiah would come so they missed him.
 - b. The anecdote for that is humility, asking the Holy Spirit to open our eyes and ears and studying the word (not just listening to someone because they are famous, have a big church, etc.)

2. Sense knowledge - **2 Corinthians 5:7** This passage doesn't contrast faith and fear. It contrasts faith and sight (senses). Our senses can mislead us, which is why we must let God's word lead us. Example from **Numbers 13:26-33**:

- a. *Verses 26-27* flowing with milk and honey - It looks awesome!
- b. *Verses 28-29* spoke what they saw - strong people, giants, fortified cities.
- c. *Verse 30* Caleb - the contradiction - the one who took the promised land at 85 years old.
- d. *Verse 31* released their fear through words
- e. *Verse 32* The ten spies network.
- f. *Verse 33* **IDENTITY THEFT - GOT THEIR IDENTITY JACKED UP**
Like grasshoppers in our sight and in their sight
 - a. Their sight - Why does it matter how the giants viewed them?
 - b. Grasshoppers have no ears - struggle to hear, but they have 5 eyes. The Jews compared themselves to an animal that is led by sight not hearing.
 - c. As an aside, there is a place to get a spiritual vision/having godly imagination, but that comes from the Holy Spirit, not our natural senses.

III. Conclusion - Faith begins where the will of God is known and God's will is revealed in His word. This is why we must endeavor to know God's word with all of our heart and be led by it and not our senses.

A. Transition to Craig.