

Bethany Small Group Discussion Questions for the week of 9/1/2013

Romans 1:1-15

1) In his introduction to this letter, Paul divides the non-Jewish world into two groups. When you read v. 14, where do you put yourself in the picture? Do you see yourself as a “Greek” or a “barbarian”?

2) When you introduce yourself to people, what do you typically tell them about yourself?

Paul calls himself a servant = slave: why do you think he introduces himself this way?

Does Paul’s example affect the way you think about your own identity?

3) Paul was writing to people who had already believed in Jesus (1:8) Why then does he need to preach the gospel to them? (1:15)

Does this verse change your understanding of what the gospel is? If so, how?

4) Read 2 Samuel 7.

What did God promise to David?

What parts of that promise were fulfilled in King Solomon? (1Kings 3-11)

What parts were not fulfilled in Solomon?

Do you think this is one of the primary Scriptures in Paul’s mind as he wrote “born of the seed of David”? Why or why not? What other Scriptures come to mind as you read 1:2-3?

- 5) Paul “bookends” his message to the Romans by describing the goal of his ministry as bringing about “the obedience of faith” among all (Gentile, i.e. non-Jewish) nations (1:5, 16:26, ESV; It may be helpful to read these verses in several different translations.)

What does this imply about the relationship between obedience and faith? Is the gospel something you believe or something you obey?

- 6) Paul identifies himself as an apostle charged with bringing “obedience of faith **among the Gentiles**” (1:5). Knowing Paul’s background (a Hebrew of Hebrews, rabbinical training), does this seem like the best use of Paul’s gifts?

Has God ever called you to something that your gifts don’t seem suited to? How would you respond to a call that asked you to set aside what it looked like you had prepared for all your life?

- 7) In the book of Romans, Paul plans to ask the church in Rome (a church he had never been to) to support him on a prospective missionary journey to Spain (15:23-24). Some suggest Paul might have been wanting to move his missionary base from Antioch to Rome to more easily spread the gospel in the Empire.

If you were in Paul’s place, how would you make those arguments? What would you lead with? Is there anything you wouldn’t say?

- 8) Why do you think Paul wanted so much to visit Rome?

How did God answer his prayer in v. 10? (see Acts 28:11-31)

Do you think he was sorry that he prayed this way?

Would you ask the Lord to use you in the salvation of people if you knew that arrest and imprisonment would be part of the process?