

May 19, 2019



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

Lesson Leaders:

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Class Leaders:

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

If we want the community experience God is offering to us, we have reason to seek a congregation of people "not like us"

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:

Lord, remind us that the church is Your work, and You have brought us together for Your good purposes. Help us extend grace to others

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:

that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel

(Eph 3:6 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", July 24, 2017)

Series: Discipleship & Mission

UNIT: Call To Life in Christ

NEXT WEEK

COMBINED CLASS
Don Smarto - Teaching

Called to Mutual Acceptance Romans 11:11-24

Lesson Background and Introduction

Fewer than 1 percent of Christians today come from a background of Judaism. But that was not the case in Paul's day. Initially, the majority of Christian believers were of that background. The church in Rome had a mix of Jews and Gentiles. There were apparently significant numbers of both, with evidence suggesting that those of Gentile background were in the majority (compare Romans 1:5, 6, 13; 11:13; 15:11). This put Paul in a unique position to address the church in Rome, a congregation he had never visited. His educational background was that of a learned Jewish rabbi. He had earned this distinction from having studied under Gamaliel, one of the best Jewish teachers of the day (Acts 22:3; compare 5:34). This gave Paul great credibility with any informed Jew. Yet Paul had devoted much of his efforts to evangelizing Gentiles (Romans 15:15, 16; Galatians 2:8, 9; Ephesians 3:8). He even defended their legitimacy as believers before the gathering of "apostles and elders" known as the Council at Jerusalem (Acts 15:1-4). These actions resulted in Paul's having great standing among believers of Gentile background. Paul's missionary travels had resulted in not just disinterest, but ferocious rejection (see Acts 14:19; 17:5; 18:6). Why? Paul turned to Scripture to find the explanation. From Romans 9:1 to 11:10 he quotes from (what we call) the Old Testament 25 times. Those texts reveal, among other things, Israel's long history as a "disobedient and obstinate people" (Romans 10:21; quoting Isaiah 65:2). Romans 11:7-10 summarizes 9:1-11:6 by concluding that the proclamation of the gospel has resulted in two camps among the people of Israel: those who accept the gospel are "the elect," while those who do not are "the others ... hardened." The significance of all this is the subject of today's study.

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

God Is Inclusive - In biblical days a Jewish male prayed, "Thank God, I'm not a Gentile, a slave, or a woman." However, God's plan always included the salvation of both the Jews and the Gentiles, men and women, the wealthy and the poor. He longs for a relationship with all people, no matter their nationality, gender, or social status. He selected the Jews as Christ's family tree, but throughout the Old and New Testament, God saved and used those who were not Jewish as well to accomplish His purposes.

Starting at Pentecost - The first Christians, the converts on Pentecost, and the initial leaders of the church were all Jewish. God never planned to leave out the Gentiles, but initially He designated His chosen people to be followers of Christ. God touched the hearts of Gentiles and eventually they too accepted the Good News about Christ. The Jews served as the root and the Gentiles grew out of that foundation. Paul wanted the Gentiles always to remember the contributions of the Jewish believers and be thankful. On the other hand, many hard-hearted Jewish people rejected Christianity, or attempted to mix it with Jewish law. Several leaders insisted Jewish converts who became Christians still needed to be circumcised and follow the commandments. This rebellion, with the Jews turning away from the true Gospel, opened the door wide to the Gentiles. He began using the Gentiles to spread Jesus' message of salvation. The Father hoped the Jewish people would become jealous, observing His blessings on the Gentiles, and turn back to Him.

No Place for Pride - Some Gentiles became prideful as God elevated them and put His people aside. However, Paul issued a stern warning: don't get too high and mighty. Just as the Jews have suffered consequences because of their arrogance and disobedience, Gentiles can experience the same.

A Church Representing All People - Prejudice, attitudes of superiority, and racial hatred are alive and well today. Sadly, churches with a variety of ages and races in one congregation are the exception, not the norm. It's natural to want to worship in comfort with likeminded people. It takes effort and intention to reach out to those who are of a different race, age, or mindset. One of the goals of every Christian church should be to explore ways to become more inclusive, reflecting the way believers will worship together in heaven.

(Adapted from the Echoes Commentary)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Accepted Through Israel's Jealous Rejection (Rom 11:11-14)

To provide salvation of the world (11-12)

- Salvation of the world that comes from the sanctification (Acts 26:16-18)
- Salvation of the world for those who believe (Rom 1:16)
- Salvation of the world for those baptized in Jesus (Gal 3:26-29)
- Salvation of the world through the gospel (Eph 3:6)
- Salvation of the world because God wants everyone to come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9)
- Salvation of the world because God wants all men to be saved (1 Tim 2:1-4)
- Salvation of the world because God's grace brings salvation before all men (Titus 2:11)

To provide the return of the Jews (13-14)

- Returning to God brings restoral (Deut 30:2-3)
- Returning to God brings answered prayers, mercy and forgiveness from God (1 Kings 8:47-50)
- Returning to God brings healing (2 Chron 7:14)
- Returning to God will result in growth in knowing God (Jer 24:7)
- Returning to God could bring blessings from Him (Joel 2:13-14)
- Returning to God brings mercy and prosperity (Prov 28:13)

Accepted Through Partaking of the Divine Source (Rom 11:15-21)

Partakers of reconciliation (15-16)

- Reconciliation through justification (Rom 5:1-2)
- Reconciliation through Jesus' death (Rom 5:10)
- Reconciliation that brings peace (Eph 2:14-16)
- Reconciliation through Jesus' blood (Col 1:19-22)
- Reconciliation through forgiveness of sins (Heb 2:17)

Partakers of God's sustainment (17-18)

- God sustains by upholding those who fall (Ps 37:23-24)
- God sustains from birth (Ps 71:6)
- God sustains through a willing spirit (Ps 51:12)
- God sustains because He will never forsake His own (Ps 55:22)
- God sustains because He promised to do so (Ps 119:116)
- God sustains because He always finishes what He starts (Phil 1:6)

Partakers through faith (19-21)

- Faith in the power of God (John 11:14-15)
- Faith in the word of God (John 20:30-31)
- Faith in God's indwelling presence (Exod 4:4-5)
- Faith in Jesus as the Son of God (John 19:34-35)

Accepted Through the Power of God (Rom 11:22-24)

Power motivated by goodness (22)

- Goodness that endures forever (Ps 107:1)
- Goodness because He is faithful to His promises (Ps 25:8-10)
- Goodness because He is longsuffering (Exodus 34:6)
- Goodness because He is forgiving (Ps 86:5)
- Goodness because He does good (Ps 119:68)

Power to fulfill promises (23-24)

- Promises that are always "YES" in Jesus (2 Cor 1:20)
- Promises made with the Divine power (2 Peter 1:3-4)
- Promises that are only being completely satisfied in the present age (Heb 11:13-16)
- Promises of an eternal life (1 John 2:24-25)
- God is faithful to His promises (Heb 10:23)