

## Study Guide for the Week of May 27, 2007

*This study guide is designed to help you to become more familiar with the Bible. For 2007 the study guide will help you read through the New Testament in a year. Study these passages on your own, with a friend, or with a group. If you or someone you know needs a Bible, please take one from under a chair in the Worship Center. They are there for you to take home and use! Sermon manuscripts are available at [www.spwired.com](http://www.spwired.com).*

**Monday, May 28. Read Romans 3:9-31.** Paul is addressing a common belief among the Jews that merely obeying the law was enough to be in a right relationship with God. He is saying that attempting to live by the old law is a futile way because it focuses on do's and don'ts rather than a relationship with God. Focus on verses 22-24. What does this say to you about faith and works?

**Tuesday, May 29. Read Romans chapter 4.** In these early chapters of Romans Paul is answering the arguments typical of the Jews at that time. He was trying to show that Jesus is the true Messiah and that it is by faith, not by works or by the Jewish law, that a person is saved. By "saved" we mean in an authentic relationship with God through Jesus Christ. What in this passage speaks to you? How do we often try to win God's approval through our works? What does this say about God being able to make the impossible possible?

**Wednesday, May 30. Read Romans chapter 5.** What does this chapter tell us about hope? What does it tell us about God's love for us? What does it tell us about the extent to which God will go to rescue us from sin and death?

**Thursday, May 31. Read Romans chapter 6.** Here again, Paul is addressing the arguments of a skeptical Jew. This person is saying, "If God's grace and forgiveness abounds in the face of our sin, then why don't we just sin all the more so that God's grace can abound all the more?" Paul's response is clear and concise. "God forbid that we should sin more so that there can be a greater flow of God's grace!" Paul then talks about baptism. Baptism signifies the death of the old and the birth of the new. This new life means that we are free to **not** sin, rather than being free to sin all the more. We will be slaves of something, we can choose to be slaves of sin and death, or of God and life. What do you choose?

**Friday, June 1. Read Romans chapter 7.** In verses 1-6 Paul is in essence saying, "We were married to sin and that sin was slain by Christ. Therefore we are now free to be married to God." In verses 7-13 Paul is laying out the paradox of the Jewish law. In itself it is a very good thing. It is holy and the voice of God. But the law also defines sin so that it comes into our awareness. And when it is in our awareness we often desire to break it. What does this chapter tell you about the human condition? What has God done to address that human condition? What is the good news?

**Saturday, June 2. Read Romans chapter 8.** Paul talks about the reality and the power of being adopted into God's family. What does this mean to you that, if you choose to accept Christ, then God adopts you into his family? We are co-heirs with Christ. This means that what Christ inherits so will we—life, the kingdom of God, eternity. Paul spends a great deal of time here articulating the good news about following Jesus Christ. Verses 31-39 are some of the most power in the entire New Testament. What do they mean to you?

**Sunday, June 3. Read Romans 9:1-29.** Here Paul begins to address the fact that the Jews were and are the chosen people of God. While some Jews did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah, many did. Paul is using a very complex form of argument to show his Jewish readers that while, yes, God is behind all things, that human beings still have free will. And that while doing good is the right thing, God does not owe us anything when we do the right thing. But at the same time God freely gives his mercy and forgiveness through Christ. Not that we earned it and God owes it to us, but that we choose to accept what God has done. This points to the power of relationship over rules and regulations. Yet at the same time, our love for God will guide us in doing the right things at the right time. What does this mean to

you and your daily life and decisions? What does it mean about the closeness of a relationship with God through Jesus Christ?