

STUDY GUIDE

THE MESSAGE OF ROMANS

BY JOHN R. W. STOTT

ADA BIBLE CHURCH, AUGUST 15 – OCTOBER 3, 2019

THURSDAY, AUGUST 22, 2019:

“THE INFLUENCE OF THE LETTER” (PP. 20–24):

1. Stott recounts the lives of five figures from church history who were transformed by their encounters with Romans. Which of the following is NOT one of the figures Stott mentions?
 - a. Martin Luther (1483–1546)
 - b. George Whitfield (1714–1770)
 - c. Karl Barth (1886–1968)
 - d. Dumitru Cornilescu (1891–1975)
2. In 1918, Karl Barth published the first edition of his famous commentary on Romans. Which of the following represents the conclusion of Barth’s study of Romans?
 - a. It shattered the illusion of liberal theology that humanity can bring about the Kingdom of God through its own achievement
 - b. It led to his acceptance of the message of salvation for the first time when he translated the Bible into Romanian
 - c. It resulted in the experience that his heart had been “strangely warmed,” and so he became a model of faith for the First Great Awakening
 - d. It convinced him that inductive Bible study and expository preaching are the keys to church multiplication

“PAUL’S PURPOSES IN WRITING” (PP. 31–36):

3. Paul penned Romans from Corinth in the winter months of 56AD, before sailing on Jerusalem with the intention of traveling then to Rome and eventually to Spain. What was the purpose of Paul’s stopover in Jerusalem?
 - a. To compel Barnabas not to take John Mark on his next mission to Cyprus
 - b. To confer with the “pillars” of the church in Jerusalem—Peter, James, and John—concerning his understanding of the gospel
 - c. To recover the scrolls and parchments that he had left with Timothy
 - d. To deliver funds that he had collected from the churches in Greece and Macedonia to the saints in Jerusalem

"A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF ROMANS" (PP. 36–43):

4. Which of the following does Stott consider to be the two main themes of Romans?
 - a. The integrity of the gospel communicated to him and the solidarity of Jews and Gentiles in the messianic community
 - b. The justice of God and the mercy of God
 - c. The resurrection from the dead and the second return of Christ
 - d. Predestination and Double Predestination

5. Stott paraphrases the theological problem that Paul addresses in Romans 9–11 as which of the following?
 - a. Is circumcision necessary for salvation?
 - b. How is it that the Jewish people as a whole had rejected their Messiah?
 - c. How can divine sovereignty and human responsibility be reconciled?
 - d. Why did God give the Law through Moses if redemption could be achieved only by the cross of Christ?

6. Which of the following is NOT true of Stott's analysis of Paul's instructions to the "weak" and the "strong" from Romans 14:1–15:13?
 - a. The "weak" were predominantly Jewish Christians who maintained the Jewish dietary laws and calendar of feasts
 - b. The "weak" were weak in faith or conviction, not will or character
 - c. The "strong" are to lead the "weak" into the freedom of the gospel
 - d. The "strong" are to receive the "weak" as brothers and sisters for whom Christ died

THURSDAY, AUGUST 29, 2019:

SECTION INTRODUCTION AND "GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS REVEALED IN CHRIST'S CROSS" (PP. 108–118):

7. Which of the following is NOT one of the major themes of Romans 3:21–4:25?
 - a. The revelation of God's righteousness in Christ's cross
 - b. The defense of the gospel against Jewish critics
 - c. The dichotomy of being "in Adam" or "in Christ"
 - d. The life of Abraham, who was himself justified by faith and is in consequence the spiritual father of all who believe

8. Which of the following is the best summary of Stott's explanation of the term "justification"?
- The sense of the term is almost entirely synonymous with "forgiveness"
 - It is a legal term which means to declare righteous; it is the opposite is to condemn
 - It means to make holy; also sometimes called "sanctification"
 - It is another way of expressing "regeneration" and occurs at baptism
9. On pages 111–112, Stott writes: "Fundamental to the gospel of salvation is the truth that the saving initiative from beginning to end belongs to _____. No formulation of the gospel is biblical which removes the initiative from God and attributes it either to us _____."
- ... God alone.... or to human merits
 - ... Jesus Christ.... or even to the Holy Spirit
 - ... God the Father.... or even to Christ
 - ... Mary.... or even to the saints
10. On pages 113–116, Stott discusses the definition of the term *hilastērion* (ἱλαστήριον) from Romans 3:25, and he concludes that the term is properly translated "propitiation." Which of the following is NOT one of the alternate translations that Stott mentions?
- Mercy Seat
 - Expiation
 - Indemnification
 - Sacrifice of atonement

"GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS DEFENDED AGAINST CRITICISM" (PP. 118–122):

11. Stott draws each of the following implications of the gospel of justification by faith alone EXCEPT:
- It humbles sinners and excludes boasting
 - It unites believers and excludes discrimination
 - It upholds the law and excludes antinomianism
 - It prioritizes amicability and excludes confrontation
12. **Discussion Question:** Martin Luther called Romans 3:21–26 the center of the Epistle to the Romans and therefore the center of the entire Bible. Explain Paul's teaching in these verses in a way that best sense to you.

SECTION INTRODUCTION AND "RELEASE FROM THE LAW: A MARRIAGE METAPHOR" (PP. 189–197):

13. According to Stott, Paul's advocated which of the following positions concerning the law?
 - a. *Legalism*: Christians are to fear the law and be in bondage to it
 - b. *Antinomianism*: Christians are to hate the law and repudiate it
 - c. *Libertinism*: Christians are to ignore the law and disregard it
 - d. *Law-Fulfilling Freedom*: Christians are to love the law and fulfill it

14. **Discussion Question**: Stott writes: "So we return to the question whether the law is still binding on Christians, and whether we are expected still to obey it. Yes and no! Yes, in the sense that Christian freedom is freedom to serve, not freedom to sin.... But also no, because the motives and means of our service have completely changed" (p. 197). Do you find this explanation helpful? Why or why not?

"A DEFENCE OF THE LAW: A PAST EXPERIENCE" (PP. 197–205):

15. Stott notes that Paul uses the personal pronoun "I" repeatedly and prominently in Romans 7:13–25. While Stott acknowledges the attractiveness of alternate positions, Stott's own position is that Paul is referring to which of the following when he says "I" in this passage?
 - a. Paul
 - b. Adam
 - c. Israel
 - d. The Church

"THE WEAKNESS OF THE LAW: AN INNER CONFLICT" (PP. 205–215):

16. **Discussion Question**: In the opening of this section, Stott poses the question of whether the "wretched man" of Romans 7:24 is the normal, abnormal, mature, immature, or backsliding Christian, or an unregenerate person. What answer does Stott provide to this question?

“THE STEADFASTNESS OF GOD’S LOVE” (PP. 246–260):

17. In his discussion of the “five undeniable affirmations” of Romans 8:29–30, Stott makes each of the following qualifications EXCEPT:
 - a. God’s foreknowledge is not the basis of his predestination
 - b. God’s predestination is the basis of any human decision to trust in Christ
 - c. The glory that is promised to the redeemed is God’s own glory
 - d. God’s ultimate purpose for believers is that they be transformed into the image of Christ, and this is something that can be accomplished in this life

18. Stott introduces the term God’s “effective” or “effectual” call. Which of the following best reflects Stott’s use of this term?
 - a. People hear God’s voice in many different ways; God’s effective call is life experience that people recognize as the voice of God
 - b. The gospel reaches many who are not predestined and therefore who do not respond in faith; God’s effective call is the call that results in salvation
 - c. Our attempts to communicate the gospel can be met with rejection and discouragement; we are to wait for God’s effective call before sharing the gospel
 - d. We cannot know whether we are predestined prior to placing our trust in Christ; God’s effective call refers to the fact that the Christian message of repentance and forgiveness is for all

19. Stott observes that the sequence in Romans 8:30 (“predestined... called... justified... glorified”) does not include “sanctified.” Which of the following best summarizes Stott’s position concerning why this is?
 - a. “Sanctified” was present in the earliest manuscripts and was lost due to scribal error
 - b. The doctrine of sanctification was not part of Paul’s mature theology
 - c. “Sanctified” is as much implied in the term “glorified”
 - d. “Sanctified” is as much implied in the term “justification”

20. According to Stott, the “five unanswerable questions” of Romans 8:31–39 all point to which of the following conclusions?
 - a. There is nothing that can divert the sovereign plans of God
 - b. We will understand God’s plans for us as we progress in sanctification
 - c. It is a mark of Christian maturity to release ourselves to God’s purposes
 - d. From the perspective of eternity, we would choose everything that God allows in our lives

21. **Discussion Question:** paraphrase Romans 8:28 in your own words. What is the basic teaching of this verse?

22. **Part I: From Revelation to the Reformation**

a. First, which of the following conclusions from the lesson is the most significant for you?

A. God revealed himself to his people in the events described in the Bible as well as the words recorded in the Bible	B. God not only inspired the Bible but providentially directed the church to preserve the Bible through the centuries
C. In ancient Israel or in Europe before the printing press, Bibles were scarce, and therefore priests and clergy had greater authority	D. God has always revealed himself to his covenant people

b. Next, please share which conclusion you found most significant and why.

c. Then, discuss the following questions:

- i. What is the relationship between God's revealed word and the community to whom God commits this word?
- ii. If you had lived in ancient Israel or in Europe before the printing press, how would you have pursued intimacy with God?

23. Part II: The History of the Bible in the Reformation

- a. First, everyone postulate which of the following positions best represents each of the members of your discussion group (including yourself):

_____	A. I currently read the KJV more than any other translation of the Bible.	B. I used to read primarily the KJV, but I currently read another translation.	_____
_____			_____
_____			_____
_____	C. I have never regularly read the KJV, but I would say that I am familiar with its style and diction.	D. I would not say that I am familiar with the KJV.	_____
_____			_____
_____			_____

- b. Next, each member of the discussion group reveal in turn which position best represents them. Did anyone postulate everyone else’s position correctly?
- c. Then, discuss the following questions:
- i. What are the advantages for a congregation that uses only one translation of the Bible, whether the KJV or another translation?
 - ii. Do you use more than one translation of the Bible on a regular basis (say, in the course of a month)?
 - iii. When you memorize Scripture (or, if you were to plan a memorization project), which translation of the Bible do you use?

24. Part III: Encountering the Word of God in the Twenty-First Century

- a. First, everyone postulate which of the following positions best represents each of the members of your discussion group (including yourself):

_____	A. This past month for devotional purposes, I read the Bible in paper only	B. This past month for devotional purposes, I read the Bible digitally (and perhaps also in paper)	_____
_____			_____
_____			_____
_____	C. This past month for devotional purposes, I listened to the Bible as an audiobook (and perhaps also read the Bible in paper or digitally)	D. This past month for devotional purposes, I used an app or computer program (and perhaps also read or listened to the Bible)	_____
_____			_____
_____			_____

- b. Next, each member of the discussion group reveal in turn which position best represents them. Did anyone postulate everyone else’s position correctly?

- c. Then, discuss the following questions:
 - i. What are the strengths and weaknesses of experiencing the Bible in each of the following media types: Paper? Digital text? Audiobook? App or computer program?
 - ii. In your experience, is it more profitable to experience the Bible in a variety of media types (perhaps to gain fresh perspectives) or in a single media type (perhaps to develop focus and a disciplined routine)?

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2019:

SECTION INTRODUCTION AND "THE PRESENT SITUATION" (PP. 291–294):

- 25. In arguing for the conclusion that God has not rejected his people (Romans 11:1), Paul cites each of the following reasons EXCEPT:
 - a. The personal reason that he himself was an Israelite
 - b. The ethical reason that God would not have given the law to an unworthy people
 - c. The theological reason that the Jews are God's special, chosen people
 - d. The biblical reason from the story of Elijah that God had preserved a remnant of Israel
- 26. **Discussion Question:** What stands behind Paul's questions, "Has God rejected his people" (Romans 11:1) and "Did they stumble in order that they might fall?" (Romans 11:11). Why does Paul ask these questions?

"THE FUTURE PROSPECT" (PP. 294–308):

- 27. In this section, Stott speaks of Paul's teaching about the salvation of Jews and Gentiles as a "chain of blessing" with three links or three interlinking ideas. Which of the following does NOT represent one these ideas?
 - a. Because of Israel's fall salvation has already come to the Gentiles.
 - b. The salvation of the Gentiles will make Israel envious and so lead to Israel's restoration.
 - c. Israel's restoration will bring even greater riches to the world.
 - d. The salvation of ethnic Israel will demonstrate God's faithfulness to an unbelieving world.
- 28. In Romans 11:15, Paul writes: "For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead?" Stott acknowledges each of the following interpretations as possible readings EXCEPT:
 - a. The moral interpretation by which Paul is referring to the renewed commitment of the Christian to avoid sin

- b. The literal interpretation by which Paul is referring to the resurrection at the last day
- c. The spiritual interpretation by which Paul is referring to the Christian’s status as living in the power of the resurrection of Christ now.
- d. The figurative interpretation by which Paul is referring to the unimaginable blessing through which the entire world will be enriched

29. Which of the following correctly paraphrases Stott’s interpretation of the phrase “and so all Israel will be saved” (Romans 11:26)?

- a. “Israel” should be interpreted as a reference to the church
- b. “Israel” should be interpreted as Jesus followers among the Jewish people
- c. “Israel” should be interpreted as Christians who are circumcised and keep the law
- d. “Israel” should be interpreted as referring to ethnic Jews, as the term clearly means elsewhere in the chapter

30. **Discussion Question:** Does Paul envision a separate way of salvation for Jews than for Gentiles? Should Christians evangelize the Jews as any other people group?

31. **Part I: God’s Election of His People**

- a. First, which of the following positions best represents your understanding of Paul’s teaching of the doctrine of election from Romans 9–11? Which do you anticipate best represent the views of each of your peers in your discussion group:

	A. God’s election is of individuals and is irresistible (an effectual calling)	B. God’s election is of individuals and is conditional (based on foreknowledge)	
_____			_____
_____			_____
_____			_____
_____			_____
_____			_____
_____			_____
_____			_____

- b. Next, each member of the discussion group reveal in turn which position best represents them. Argue for your own position and explain why this position is compelling to you.
- c. In **Romans 9:6**, Paul writes: “But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel.” Everyone take a moment to explain this verse from their point of view.

32. Part II: Christ Is the Fulfillment of the Law

- a. First, which of the following positions best represents your understanding of Paul’s teaching in Romans 10:4 that “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes” (ESV)? Which do you anticipate best represents the views of each of your peers in your discussion group?

<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>A. Law and gospel are antithetical; Christ has abolished the law and thus the Christian stands uncondemned</p>	<p>B. Law and gospel work hand in hand to bring sinners to salvation in Christ</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>C. Law and gospel belong to two separate dispensations, and thus Christ is the end of the law</p>	<p>D. The law of Christ fulfills the law of Moses, and thus Christ is the end of the law</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

- b. Next, each member of the discussion group reveal in turn which position best represents them. Did anyone postulate everyone else’s position correctly?
- c. Then, discuss the following question:
- i. How have your own views on the relationship of law and gospel changed over the past several years? What are the life experiences that have played the most significant role in the development of your own views on the relationship of law and gospel?
 - ii. Is there a theologian tradition or theologian who has most prominently shaped your thinking on law and gospel? R. C. Sproul? John Calvin? John Wesley?

33. Part III: The Grafting in of the Gentiles and Jews

- a. First, everyone postulate which of the following positions best represents each of the members of your discussion group (including yourself):

<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>A. The promises to Israel in the Old Testament are now fulfilled in the church</p>	<p>B. The promises to Israel in the Old Testament will be fulfilled in the Jewish people in the future</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>C. When the Jews convert to faith in Jesus as the Messiah, it will mean extraordinary flourishing for all of humanity</p>	<p>D. Jews will convert to faith in Jesus as the Messiah en masse at the end of the age</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

- b. Next, each member of the discussion group reveal in turn which position best represents them. Did anyone postulate everyone else's position correctly?
- c. Then, discuss the following key verses:
 - i. In **Romans 11:15**, Paul writes: "For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead?" Everyone take a moment to explain this verse from their point of view.
 - ii. Discuss **Romans 11:25–26**: "Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And in this way all Israel will be saved...."

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2019:

"OUR RELATIONSHIP TO GOD: CONSECRATED BODIES AND RENEWED MINDS"
(PP. 320–324):

- 34. Noting that the term is used by Paul repeatedly, Stott suggests that which of the following terms is the "key-word" of Romans 9–11?
 - a. Justice
 - b. Love
 - c. Mercy
 - d. Righteousness
- 35. Stott suggests that Paul's imperative to present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God would have shocked the original readers. Why, does Stott offer, would this have been so shocking?
 - a. The Romans would have concluded that Paul, as an outsider to their community, would not have had authority over them to make this ethical claim
 - b. Because of Platonic philosophy, the original readers would have despised the body as something beyond redemption or use to God
 - c. Because the Romans believed that giving one's heart to God was what produced salvation.
 - d. Because the Romans would not have believed that the sins of the body could be overcome.

36. Stott observes that Paul does not tell us in this passage how precisely our minds are renewed, but Stott confirms that, based on what we read elsewhere in Paul's writings, we can know our minds are renewed by a combination of which of the following?
- Baptism and the Lord's Supper
 - The Holy Spirit and the Word of God
 - Reading the Bible and prayer
 - Scripture memory and prayer

"OUR RELATIONSHIP TO OURSELVES: THINKING SOBERLY ABOUT OUR GIFTS"
(PP. 325–329):

37. Stott notes the potential complexity in interpreting the phrase "in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you" (Rom 12:3), but interprets the phrase as teaching which of the following principles?
- God gives believers different amounts of faith, but because we know that this faith comes from God, we can be humble and sober about these differences
 - God encourages us to pursue greater limits of faith through exercising the amount of faith that we have been given
 - God has granted to each an equal amount of faith, and God is therefore just when he demands us all to live up to the same standard
 - Faith is not a substance that can be measured or quantified
38. When analyzing the spiritual gifts that Paul lists in Romans 12:6, Stott categorizes these gifts into which of the following?
- Gifts of affirmation and gifts of ministry
 - Gifts of physical touch and gifts of quality time
 - Gifts of speaking and gifts of service
 - Superior gifts and inferior gifts

"OUR RELATIONSHIP TO ONE ANOTHER: LOVE IN THE FAMILY OF GOD" (PP. 330–333):

39. In Romans 12:9–16, which of the following is one of the Christian virtues to which Paul does NOT refer?
- Sincerity
 - Enthusiasm
 - Sympathy
 - Cheerfulness

SECTION INTRODUCTION AND "THE POSITIVE PRINCIPLE" (PP. 355–360):

40. In Romans 14:1–15:13, Paul speaks about two communities in the church, the "weak" and the "strong." Stott says that the weakness or strength of these two groups refers not to will or character but to _____.
- Faith
 - Hope
 - Love
 - Morals
41. Stott considers each of the following a reasonable possible identity of the "weak" EXCEPT:
- The "weak" are former idolaters who feared eating meat that had been sacrificed to idols
 - The "weak" are ascetics who probably abstained from meat and wine
 - The "weak" are legalists who failed to understand that it is grace alone and not works that saves us
 - The "weak" are immature Christians who struggle with habitual sin
42. Stott notes that, concerning "disputable matters," Paul does not insist that his readers adhere to his own position, as Paul does on other doctrinal or ethical points. Stott concludes that "disputable matters" should be understood as which of the following?
- Matters on which church authorities commonly disagree
 - Matters on which the Scripture is silent or equivocal
 - Matters which are approached differently by groups from different cultural backgrounds
 - Matters on which the Apostles' Creed does not comment
43. **Discussion Question:** On page 358, Stott lists many "disputable matters" which are discussed among Christians today, including the mode of baptism (whether by immersion or sprinkling) and the gifts of the Spirit. How do we determine in our own churches whether an issue is a "disputable matter" or whether it is a matter requiring adherence to a particular position?

“THE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES” (PP. 360–375):

44. In Romans 15:7, Paul writes “Therefore welcome one another” (ESV). Which of the following is NOT one of the justifications that Paul cites as a reason for this imperative?
- Because God has welcomed the other
 - Because Christ has died for the other and has been raised to be Lord of the other
 - Because the world will be won over to Christ when they see the Church as a welcoming community
 - Because the other is our brother or sister
45. Which of the following is the best summary of Paul’s view concerning the way that the “weak” and “strong” should resolve their differences of opinion?
- The “strong” should defer to the stricter conscience of the “weak,” even though the “weak” are incorrect about the rightness or wrongness of the particular issue
 - The “weak” should determine community guidelines for disputable matters; what is wrong for one member of the community becomes wrong for all
 - The “strong” should bring the “weak” over to their own viewpoint in the spirit of Christian liberty
 - The “weak” and “strong” should both be encouraged to maintain their opinions and practice what their consciences dictate
46. **Discussion Question:** Stott closes this section by quoting the famous dictum: “In essentials unity; in non-essentials liberty; in all things charity.” What are some examples of how you have seen this principle applied well?