

Fried Chicken for *Everybody!*

When I was young, our family vacations often included visiting relatives in another state. It would take a few days to get there, rambling along with a rented travel trailer towed behind our station wagon. On one of the earliest trips I can remember, we got into Dad's home town late in the afternoon. Dad pulled over to a pay phone, called his sister, and told her she'd have a family of six at her door soon. He asked her to call the rest of our relatives and tell them he was picking up enough fried chicken to feed everyone.

The youngest of my cousins, just a little older than I, was very excited about all this. So excited, that she called a friend of hers, inviting her for dinner too. "Come on over," she said. "My uncle's in town and he's bringing fried chicken for *everybody!*"

People love to include others when good times are coming. That's what this week's passage is about.

Monday – Sincerely Wrong

zeal - *n.*, enthusiastic devotion to a cause, ideal, or goal and tireless diligence in its furtherance.

1. Please read Romans 10:1-3. What is Paul's desire in verse 1? To understand the fullness of Paul's heart for Israel, read again Romans 9:1-5. What can we learn from Paul about passion for those without Christ?
2. What mistake does Paul identify in verses 2-3? Paul is talking about a righteousness that brings us into a right relationship with God. Where does this righteousness come from? From where were the Israelites seeking their righteousness?

Text Insight: "Zeal" comes from the Greek word *ze/los*, which is also the root for our word "jealousy."

Making it Personal - Though zeal is often focused outward, its close cousin "jealousy" is often focused on self. How might the notion of jealousy help us understand the manner in which the Israelites sought their own righteousness? In what manner are you seeking righteousness?

Tuesday – Lawful Fulfillment

"Love is the fulfillment of the law." Romans 13:10; *"God is love."* 1 John 4:8

1. Please read Romans 10:4. Who is the end, or fulfillment, of the law? One translation reads, *"Christ is the goal of the law."* What does this statement mean?
2. For what purpose did Christ become the end of the law?
3. Take a look at Matthew 5:17-20. What does Jesus say about the law and himself? What does he say about the Pharisees?

Making it Personal: Have you (like the Pharisees) set standards for yourself that you are trying to reach under your own power? How can you keep this from being all about you? How can you make it all about Christ?

Wednesday – Saving Faith

"I do not want merely to possess a faith, I want a faith that possesses me." Charles Kingsley, 19th c. British pastor and novelist

1. Please read Romans 10:5-10. What is the difference between the righteousness described in verse 5 and that shown in verses 6-10 (especially verses 9 & 10)?
2. Consider Galatians 3:10-14. What does Paul say about those who rely on the law? How does verse 13 give us another way – the way of hope?
3. What does it mean to confess Christ as Lord (vs. 9-10)? Why does Paul connect confession with faith?

Prayer Focus: Ask God to give you opportunities to confess your belief in Christ to others.

Thursday – Old Testament Guidance

"Men give advice; God gives guidance." [Heart Breathings in Poetry and Prose](#), Leonard Ravenhill

1. Please re-read Romans 10:5-10 and compare it to Deuteronomy 30:11-20. According to Deuteronomy 30:17, how can a person miss out on God's blessings?
2. In Romans 10:1-10, Paul describes a righteousness by faith. In doing so, he quotes from Deuteronomy 30:11ff. How does the passage in Deuteronomy help us to understand the life of faith?

Digging Deeper – In the Scriptures (such as Deut. 11), the biblical writers always link faith and obedience. Perhaps the classic New Testament example can be found in James 2:14-24, where James discusses the role of faith, obedience (deeds) and righteousness. Consider spending some time reflecting on how faith and obedience are playing out in your own life. Is the Lord calling you to express faith by obeying him in a certain area of your life?

Friday – Anyone, All, Everyone

"He's bringing fried chicken for everybody!" - from the introduction above

1. Please read Romans 10:11-13. What is promised in verse 11? How is this supported by Ephesians 2:17?
2. Compare Romans 10:12-13 with Colossians 3:11. As human beings, we tend to break people into different groups. What are some common groupings in our culture today?
3. No matter how we break people down into groups, what does Christ do to our groupings?
4. The implications of what Christ has done are significant. Read on in Colossians 3 by looking at verses 12-15. What is your responsibility to those who belong to Jesus (and their responsibility to you)?

Digging Deeper: Read 1 Corinthians 12:13, 27. What point do these verses make together?

For the Weekend: Review Romans 10:11-13. Consider what it means never to be ashamed of your faith (verse 11). How can this truth make a difference in your life?