

Romans Living in Hope

Interpreting the Text:

1. What do you make of Paul's language of "boasting" (v.2-3)? Why might he need to tell people to "boast" both in their hope and in their sufferings?
2. Paul makes references to Adam and Eve, referring to Christ as the "new Adam" and claiming that through Christ God has made a new creation, redeemed of its original sin. How does his interpretation of Genesis 2-3 influence his understanding of sin? How does it affect our contemporary understanding of 'original sin' and the story of Adam and Eve?
3. Remembering that Paul would likely still have understood himself to be Jewish, how do we see his relationship with Jewish law change here? Why is his understanding of the introduction of sin and the introduction of the law chronologically important?

Applying the Text:

1. How do the various themes of the letter deployed so far cohere? What is the relationship between "justification," "access," and "reconciliation" and how might they relate to our faith?
2. Have you ever felt that the grace of God has reached you "at just the right time (5:6)"? Ponder that experience. Could a similar one lie behind Paul's enthusiasm in this chapter?
3. Paul seems to stress a universal salvation through Christ. How does his argument feel in our multicultural and religiously pluralist world?