

The Bible (Unmuted) Transcript

Episode 12

Romans: Part 3 (Romans 1:8-17)

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Episode Summary:

In this third installment of our series through Romans, Matthew gives a tour through Romans 1:8-17. He begins by talking about "charisma" and Paul's mention of "grace-gift" in vv. 11-12. After a brief discussion regarding "spiritual gifts," Matthew takes listeners to the heart of this section, namely, to vv. 16-17. It is there where Paul offers readers his fundamental thesis that, in the gospel, the righteousness of God is revealed. Time is spent investigating what, exactly, Paul meant by not being "ashamed" of the gospel (especially in light of the Old Testament texts like Psalm 71). Matthew also addresses questions about what Paul meant by "the righteousness of God," as well as his interpretation of Habakkuk 2:4 in Romans 1:17.

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Transcript:

0:00 Welcome back to another episode of The Bible Unmuted.

9:24 Okay, Let's get to Romans! In the last two episodes we looked at Romans 1:1-7, which is what we might consider the introduction to the letter. It was in that section where we explored several important concepts that are, in my mind at least, foundational concepts for Paul's discussion throughout the entirety of Romans itself. So, if you haven't had a chance yet to listen to those episodes, I would definitely check them out. In this episode today we are going to look at verses 8 through 17. And most of our time will be spent thinking through verses 16-18. These two verses pack a lot of punch and unsurprisingly, they've received a lot of scholarly attention through the years. So, yeah, that's just such an important part of the text there. So anyway, let's read that entire section. Let's read verses 8 through 17 of chapter 1. I'll be reading from the New Revised Standard Version. And here we go.

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed throughout the world. **9** For God, whom I serve with my spirit by announcing the gospel of his Son, is my witness that without ceasing I remember you always in my prayers, **10** asking that by God's will I may somehow at last succeed in coming to you. **11** For I am longing to see you so that I may share with you some spiritual gift to strengthen you— **12** or rather so that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine. **13** I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented), in order that I may reap some harvest among you as I have among the rest of the Gentiles. **14** I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish **15** —hence my eagerness to proclaim the gospel to you also who are in Rome. **16** For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. **17** For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, "The one who is righteous will live by faith."

11:43 Romans chapter 1:8-17. As we can see from this passage, Paul is very eager to visit the Roman believers. It's interesting to see how Paul says that the Roman believer's faith is claimed throughout the world. Apparently they have developed quite the reputation. I mean it is of course unnecessary to point out that Paul is not being literal here. He's not saying that the people in South America have heard about the Roman believers. He's not saying that. Here the idea is just simply that their reputation has spread far and wide throughout the Roman Empire. At any rate, this is a reason for Paul's thankfulness. He like everyone else, it seems, has heard of their faith in Christ. Now he's been wanting to visit the Roman church for quite some time, but he's been prevented... at least up until this point. He doesn't quite elaborate on what has prevented him, but his point none the less is to simply say that he would have made to the sooner if he had not been detained by other circumstances. The reason he wants to visit them personally, he says, is because he wants to share with them a spiritual gift to strengthen them. This is verse 11. So let me read this verse along with verse 12 to get the full context of it. He says:

11 For I am longing to see you so that I may share with you some spiritual gift to strengthen you— **12** or rather so that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine.

I think I actually like the ESV's rendering of the Greek here. Okay so that version goes like this:

11 For I long to see you that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you— **12** that is that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine.

What we see here is that Paul tells us what he means by spiritual gift. The spiritual gift that he wants to impart to them is mutual encouragement by each other's faith. The word gift is *charisma* (χάρισμα). And we can translate this as grace gift. We get our modern word charismatic from this term *charisma*. Now sometimes when we talk about charismatic gifts, we think only of things like prophecy, or speaking in tongues. You know, the so-called supernatural gifts. Often times in the church the charismatic gifts are treated differently from the regular gifts such as, you know, teaching, administration, hospitality, etc. But in fact, all the gifts should be considered supernatural. In the early church they would not have separated the gifts into two separate categories: one category for "regular" gifts, and the other category for "supernatural" gifts. No, no, no... all are supernatural gifts. And this is something that Craig Keener often notes in some of his lectures and talks about the subject. And, by the way, I highly recommend Craig Keener's material on this topic. And just Craig Keener's material, period. He's got a very active YouTube channel, he's written a plethora of books, he's got a podcast now....Craig is an amazing NT scholar, so please, please – I just encourage you...go subscribe to all of his stuff and buy all of his books. I haven't bought all of his books yet (laugh), but if Craig writes it, I want to read it, because I'm instructed. You know, I probably don't agree with Craig on everything, but anyway, you get my point. He's one of my favorite, I mean all-time favorite, NT scholars out there. I highly recommend his stuff.

15:11 Anyway, we tend to separate the gifts of the spirit into these sorts of categories because we as a people shaped by the influence of scientific modernity, we tend to separate the supernatural from the natural, and the religious from the secular. But, the early church was not influenced by modernity or by the scientific enlightenment world view. The early church was made up of entirely pre-enlightenment people. And Paul was one of them. And that's why he can refer to the act of mutual encouragement between him

and the Christians at Rome...that's why he can refer to that as the working out of a spiritual grace gift. The spirit works through even the smallest acts of kindness. And through even the smallest acts of encouragement. In fact, in the Holy Spirit's economy, no act of love should be considered small or insignificant. So, in verse 15, Paul says that he is eager to proclaim the gospel to you also who are in Rome. Now here we need to be reminded about our earlier discussion in a previous episode about what the gospel actually is. Again, we tend to think that sharing the gospel is nothing more than sharing a message with unbelievers so that they can go to heaven when they die. But if that's the case, then why would Paul want to share the gospel with believers in the Roman church? That's a good question. Again, while I do think it's true...please don't miss this...while I do think it's true that if we die before the coming of the Lord as Christians, we do go to heaven after we die. I believe that. I totally get that. I totally subscribe to that view. That's very biblical. However, we have to remember, that while gospel does make it possible for this to happen –to go to heaven when we die – strictly speaking, the gospel was more about the good news that *today* Jesus rules and reigns. That *today* He is Lord. And because He has come to the earth, the world has changed, a new era has dawned; and as a result of that, people are called to alter their lives in response. Even Christians need to be reminded about the truth that today Jesus Christ is Lord. And, we need to be reminded that today we should be acting and living in ways that showcase the Lordship of Christ.

Okay, so I think something else is going on here as well. Paul is eager to share the gospel with the Roman church because he wants them to know that he himself is committed to the same truth that they have committed themselves to. Paul did not plant the Roman churches, so what he needs to do is to show them that he too believes the same thing about who Jesus is and what Jesus has accomplished.

18:02 This brings us to one of the most important verses in Romans. Namely, to Romans chapter one verses 16 to 17. Many scholars say that these verses contain the main theme of the letter. I don't disagree with this. And to be sure, these verses pack a lot of punch. And unsurprisingly, the meaning of Paul's words here are hotly debated among scholars. So with fear and trembling, let's jump into the text to see what exactly Paul is saying. In Romans Chapter 1:16-17, Paul says this:

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. **17** For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, "The one who is righteous will live by faith."

Okay, so my view on this passage and on the terms and concepts contained in it... my view has been largely influenced by the writing of NT Wright. I mean, listen, I highly recommend his stuff on Romans. He's another one of my favorite NT scholars. And, you know... again, I don't know why I need to say this...it should just go without saying, but I don't agree with everything NT Wright says, obviously. I mean that would be boring, right? I'm a Bible scholar. We're not supposed to agree with one another, okay (laugh). That's just part of it. We want to stretch each other, push each other...but, listen...when it comes to these biblical concepts like justification, and the righteousness of God, and the narrative flow of Romans itself and how to read the story; I think much of what Wright says on that stuff is spot on. So I am just largely indebted to his insights on Romans and especially on this passage. At any rate, when Paul says that he is not ashamed of the gospel, there are two things that we might want to consider. First, as NT Wright says in his commentary – the whole idea of being ashamed and not being ashamed – Paul seems to be alluding back to statements. He might be alluding back to statements of Jesus like we see in Mark chapter 8:38. So you probably know this verse very well. That verse says, "those who are ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father and with the Holy angels." So maybe Paul is alluding to these types of statements of Jesus's. So in this sense, Paul is not ashamed of Jesus. And I

think this would make sense. I think it offers us even today a modern challenge. Namely, that we should not be embarrassed of the truth of the gospel of Jesus's kingdom. And I think it goes without saying, but in today's day and age, the church has many challenges. I don't think this is because we are living in a special time, you know, as if previous generations of Christians did not have it as bad as we do today...No, the truth is that every generation has its own unique challenges and ours is no different. Every era between the first and the second advents of Jesus are marked by trial and tribulation. I mean, think of John 16:33. I was thinking about this verse today...my wife and I were talking about it... that you know that "Jesus is in the world, you have tribulation, be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." I mean, this is a promise in a sense that Jesus gives to all of his disciples; to the first century ones, and I think, to the 21st century, and everybody in-between. We have challenges and we are called to bear the marks of Jesus. We are called to hold fast to our confession. We cannot compromise the truth that Jesus is Lord. I mean that's a fundamental truth. And so I think this idea of not being ashamed, it is for Paul and for us, an important aspect that we need to consider... Are we ashamed of the gospel? No! We are not. We are not ashamed of the gospel. But there's more going on than just not being personally embarrassed. There's so much more going on. The idea of shame in this passage should be, I think, considered in light of how the concept was used in ancient Israel. So once again, in his commentary NT Wright says the same thing. He essentially points to passages like Psalm 71:1-2. Those two verses say this, *"In you, Oh Lord I take refuge. Let me never be put to shame. In your righteousness deliver me and rescue me. Incline your ear to me and save me."*

23:04 I think that's correct. I think that Paul is thinking of verses like that. There are more in the OT of course about shame, but that's an important one. Anyway, in his commentary here's what Wright says about shame. He says:

"Shame in such a context is what God's people feel when their enemies are triumphing. It is what Israel and many other people felt in Paul's day suffering at the hands of Rome. The gospel and the power it carries enables Paul to share the position of the psalmist celebrating God's righteousness and so remaining unashamed in the face of enemies and gainsayers."

Okay, so I think NT Wright's point is definitely on the mark here. It makes sense that Paul, just like in the Jewish tradition in which he grew up, is using the idea of not being put to shame in the sense in of having confidence in God's faithfulness to make things right in the world. And for Paul, the gospel that Jesus is the world's true king; it's that gospel that showcases God's faithfulness of making things right again. In Jesus, God's power is made known and his salvation comes through. Paul says he is not ashamed of the gospel, it is the power of God *for* salvation. What does salvation mean here? We have to remember once more the inscription found at Priene. I mentioned that in the last episode, I believe. It was in that inscription that, you remember, that describes Caesar as a savior. Now they weren't calling him savior because he provided his people with a home in heaven after they died, right? No... the Roman emperor didn't do that. But he was savior for different reasons. He was savior because in their view, he set the world right. The current world under his leadership was at peace; Pax Romana. You are probably familiar with that phrase – the peace of Rome. That's what Romans believed. But Paul would disagree. For Paul, is to the gospel of Jesus, not Caesar that God brings salvation. And salvation is about being rescued from the present age. And of course that would include rescue from sin and salvation spiritually. But we have to understand that the bible, the NT is a very worldly religion. And what I mean by that is that it has a vision for the world; and the vision for the world according to the NT is not that the world that will be destroyed, but that the world will be recreated. So in that sense, Christianity is a very worldly religion. It's not just a spiritual religion that teaches you how to go to heaven when you die so that you can float on a cloud and wear a toga for all eternity, playing the harp. That's not what salvation meant. Salvation was about resurrection... physical renewal of the world that did include the spiritual aspects. Like I said earlier, but again we have to have a thick view of salvation. We have to have an ancient Jewish view of salvation.

Paul goes on and he says that this salvation is for everyone who has faith – “to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” So let’s take a few moments to unpack this for just a bit. By saying that it is for the Jew first, he is reminding the Roman church that the gospel is rooted in the story in the traditions of Israel. The gospel for Paul, is not a new thing, in the sense that it comes a part from the story of Israel. In fact, the gospel was proclaimed and anticipated in the Jewish stories and in the Jewish covenants. And as such, the gospel is for Israel first. That is to say, they were given the prophesies, and the promises, and the covenants that anticipated the gospel before it came to the gentiles. The anticipations and the covenants and the promises came to the Jews before the gospel went to the gentiles. So the Jews, after all, they are elect. They are the chosen people of God. And you read this quite easily and see this truth in OT quite well. And so let’s just chase a rabbit trail for a moment.

26:26 We see this idea of election very clearly in a text like Genesis 12. You’ll recall that it’s there when God calls out Abraham and his family as his own people. But you have to remember that in that story, God calls Abraham’s family not just in order to bless them. He doesn’t, in other words, elect them for the sake of election. No, He calls them to be blessed and to be a blessing to the rest of the world, that is, to the nations. Okay, Genesis 12:1-3. You need to go read Genesis 12. Okay so let’s ask a question...why did the nations need to be blessed by Abraham’s family in Genesis 12? Well, you’ve got to have the full story. You have to think about Genesis 11. The chapter right before Genesis 12...Genesis 11. That’s where the nations were cursed at Babel. You know the story. They rebelled and God gave them over to their sin by confusing their languages. Now with the languages confused, humanity was fractured. Humanity was broken. This happens in Genesis 11. And immediately after that event, God calls Abraham to be a blessing to the nations. Now the idea here, is that Israel is the way in which the world would be fixed. And we see the world repaired by the work of Jesus through the Spirit, particularly at Pentecost when the nations are gathered once more and miraculously they can understand one another through the spirit. And so, Pentecost is the fulfillment in the reversal of Babel. It’s the reversal – not the fulfillment – it’s the reversal of the tower of Babel. And Pentecost is the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant. Okay, and so this is why I call this the Genesis 11, 12 narrative. In Genesis 11, humanity is cursed. In Genesis 12, Israel is elected in order to restore, or save the world. Okay, to save humanity. In other words, Israel is God’s rescue plan for the world. And this is something, again, NT Wright forcefully has argued in his own writings. You can see this in his book called “*Justification: God’s Plan and Paul’s Vision.*” And then... that was his book – I can’t remember when it was published. It was quite a while ago...But then, you can see this again in his big, thick two volume tome, “*Paul and the faithfulness of God.*” Anyway...Israel is God’s rescue plan for the world and I think this is an important point. In fact, if you don’t understand this idea of election, if you don’t understand that election is about Israel’s vocation...that this is what Israel was called to do to be a rescue plan for the world, then you’re not going to understand much of what Paul is saying in Romans. Okay....You’re certainly not going to understand Romans 9-11. You’re not going to understand Romans 2...there’s just so much here that we have to understand. And you’ve got to know the Genesis 11, 12 narrative. You have to know it, if you want to understand what Paul means by election and righteousness, and faithfulness. We’ll have more to say about that in the days ahead. So this brings us to verse 17. Let me read that verse again.

“For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, “The one who is righteous will live by faith.””

What does Paul mean by the righteousness of God? What does he mean by faith? And how exactly is Paul quoting the OT text here? Let’s look at each of these in order

31:06 Okay first, what does Paul mean by the righteousness of God? Here we need to first define what Paul means by “it.” Okay, here “it” means the gospel. In it (the gospel), the righteousness of God is revealed. In it the righteousness of God is revealed. We’ve already said that the gospel is the gospel of Jesus. So it is through Jesus that God’s righteousness is revealed. Okay, the word for revealed is *apokaluptó* (ἀποκαλύπτω), which is a word that we are already familiar with from previous episodes. If you recall

from the first episode from this Romans series, we talked about how Paul described his calling. His Damascus Road experience. He described it as an apocalypse – as a revelation. Go back and read Galatians 1:15-16. He uses the word apocalypse there... or *apokaluptó* (ἀποκαλύπτω). So here we see very similar language...the same language. It's the gospel of Jesus that reveals the righteousness of God. So far, so good.

But what is the righteousness of God that is revealed in Jesus? That is a very, very important question. And I think there are two clues that Paul gives us to help us find the answer to that question. First, we need to look at what Paul says later in Romans chapter 3. And I'll get to this chapter in a future episode of course, but here are the basics of that. In chapter 3, Paul laments how Israel has been unfaithful with the messages it has been given. With the truth that it has been given. It is there in chapter 3 where Paul describes Israel's unfaithfulness in terms of unrighteousness. In other words, in Romans chapter 3, Paul takes faithfulness language and describes it in terms of righteousness language. Read Romans 3:1-5. In fact, it's in that section where Paul talks about God's faithfulness in terms of God's righteousness. He equates God's faithfulness with God's righteousness. So arguably, this give us some clue as to how to understand this phrase "God's righteousness" in Romans 1:17. It seems, arguably, that the righteousness of God is simply another way of saying the faithfulness of God. And this thesis is supported, I think, by a second clue. When Paul says that the righteousness of God is revealed "through faith for faith" in the gospel, he supports this idea by quoting scripture. He says, "As it is written, the one who is righteous will live by faith." Here's why this is important for understanding the righteousness of God as the faithfulness of God. The text that Paul quotes is Habakkuk 2:4. And when you go back and look at this verse, you find out that in the Hebrew OT the text reads that "*the righteous shall live by his faithfulness*", or *his* faith. But in the Greek OT the text reads, "*The righteous shall live by my faith*", or *my* faithfulness. And you can immediately see the difference between the Hebrew and the Greek OT in these two versions of this one verse. In the Hebrew, the righteous person will live by *his* faith or faithfulness to God. In the Greek OT the righteous person will live by *God's* faithfulness. But Paul just says the one who is righteous will live by faith. So he doesn't say God's faithfulness or human faithfulness. He just says by faith. So why doesn't Paul quote exactly like the Hebrew, or exactly like the Greek? He sort of just does his own thing here. In my opinion, I think Paul actually meant both ideas. For example, he believes that the righteous person will live by his or her own faith, and by the faithfulness of God. In fact, this would make sense anyway. A person only has faith in God if they are already convinced of God's trustworthiness and God's faithfulness. You don't place your trust in someone if you don't first think that they are worthy of your trust to begin with. And I think the same could be said here. A person's faith is important but it's founded on God's own faithfulness first. And in this way, I think Paul is placing emphasis upon God's faithfulness here. And when I read the story of Habakkuk, that's pretty much the idea that I see there, too. The prophet is told to wait in faith upon God. Because you know, God is faithful. Go back and check out the story of Habakkuk once again. You can read it really quick... really easily, it's in one sitting, even.

35:55 While it is true that while people are called to have faith in God, we recognize that God's faithfulness is the foundation of our placing faith in Him at all. We have faith in God because is faithful and He is worthy of our faith. Look, it's all about God's faithfulness. Which is His righteousness. Habakkuk the prophet knew this, and I think Paul knew this as well. But here's the thing about how Paul quotes the Habakkuk text...he doesn't merely recite it, he doesn't merely repeat the original meaning; I mean the original meaning had to do with Babylon, and ancient Israel... What Paul does do, however, is Christologize it. In other words, he takes the Habakkuk quotation and re-contextualizes it around what he believes about Jesus the Messiah. For Paul, God's faithfulness is revealed through Jesus the Messiah. God's righteousness is revealed through the life and ministry of Jesus. Habakkuk's text didn't really originally speak about the Messiah; only faith in YHWH. But because Jesus has been raised from the dead, and because Jesus is divine Son of God, Paul can legitimately apply and interpret this text in light of Jesus. He can apply it to a fresh situation. He can see it with fresh eyes. Habakkuk says the righteous will live by faith. And this phrase, for Paul, gains fresh meaning by being re-contextualized around Jesus. Let me put it like this. For Paul, Jesus is the one in whom we place our faith, because Jesus is the one who

revealed in his own person, the divine faithfulness of which Habakkuk speaks. Let me repeat that again because I think it's worth repeating. For Paul, Jesus is the one in whom we place our faith, because Jesus is the one who revealed in his own person, the divine faithfulness of which Habakkuk speaks. In other words, for Paul, this text is all about Jesus.

38:05 So let's come back to Romans 1:16-17 and read it once more:

17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written,
 "The one who is righteous will live by faith."

So what does Paul mean when he says in the gospel "*the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith*" Specifically, what does he mean by that phrase, "*through faith for faith*"? Well, again, not surprisingly, that's debated. Remember that faith and faithfulness are the same words in Greek. *Pistis* can mean faith or faithfulness. So it could be that Paul is saying that the gospel of Jesus the Messiah reveals God's faithfulness completely. In every generation, God has been faithful. He was faithful in the old covenant, all in order to show his faithfulness in the new covenant. Is that what he means? Through faith for faith... or by faith for faith...is that what he's saying? By the way, depending on the translation you're using, NIV, ESV, NRSV, whatever...you're going to see that phrase depicted slightly differently. I'm reading from the New Revised Standard Version. So it says through faith for faith. Anyway, I think a better way to understand this phrase is this: God's righteousness is revealed through His faithfulness for the purpose of bringing about our own faithfulness to him. Let me repeat that. God's righteousness is revealed through His faithfulness for the purpose of bringing about our own faithfulness to him. And to me this makes a lot of sense. So remember how Paul said he was called to bring about the obedience of faith to the gentiles? And remember how he said this meant, and we talked about this, that Paul was called to bring about faithfulness? The obedience of faith means faithfulness, essentially. That would make sense of this passage that we are looking at today, because God's righteousness is revealed in the gospel for the purpose of showing his faithfulness; and for the purpose of calling us to faith in Him. Or, to calling us to faithfulness to Him. So, this makes sense of a lot of things that Paul says in Romans chapter 3, which again we'll get to in a future episode.

If I am correct about this, then the stuff that comes after verse 17 follows perfectly. After this section Paul goes into this discussion about how all of humanity is unfaithful. And because all of humanity is unfaithful and all have sinned, and there's none righteous, no not one...you know that's another way to put that section... you know, as a result of the sinfulness of humans, God has handed them over to their sinful ways. Now, God has been faithful without fail. But as we'll see, starting in Romans 1:18 all the way through chapter 2, everyone including Jews and gentiles; everyone has been unfaithful and everyone has been unrighteous. And that's why Paul thinks the gospel is about calling us back to faithfulness to God. On the basis of God's faithfulness, to us to show us his righteousness through Jesus. And that's sort of the order. For Paul, the gospel is about God revealing his righteousness which is his faithfulness, in the life and ministry of Jesus, so that we too, can pledge our own faith back to Him. This is why Paul says that the gospel is given...or, this is why Paul says that the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith. The righteousness of God is revealed through God's faithfulness for our faithfulness; for the purpose of making us faithful.

42:09 Again, all of this would sense of what comes in the very next passage starting with verse 18 where Paul starts off with that long discussion about why everybody is unfaithful and unrighteous. So, we're going to look at that in the next episode. And I think that's going to be an important discussion. It's going to be super important, in fact. Because once we establish all that Paul is saying in the rest of chapter 1, then we're going to need to stop and take a long pause and carefully take a look at what Paul means by "divine wrath." Because he's going to talk about wrath. And I want to explore that. What is divine wrath and how does it work? How is that consistent with God as being a God of love? And all of this will go hand in hand with another discussion we will have about divine hardening and reprobation. Like, how does that work?

Have you ever thought of that? Do we as humans...do we have free will? If we don't have free will then I guess that would make sense of how God can harden our hearts. If we do have free will, then we have a conundrum. Like, how and why would God harden our heart, if we do in fact have free will? Full disclosure here; I think we do have free will on a significant level. Again, I will say more about that when we talk about reprobation and divine hardening of human hearts. We will get through this section first, in the next episode of Chapter 1:18 and go on. But maybe in the follow-up episode to that, that's when we'll get into all this fun stuff. But we have to build the foundation first. So, it'll be a fun discussion. Yeah...we'll get to that in future episodes. But for now, buckle up friends because the next two episodes in Romans will be interesting. But most importantly, I just hope that I'll be able to offer some encouraging and helpful thoughts for how to think through some fairly difficult issues.

44:12 That's the end of today's episode. And thanks again for listening to The Bible Unmuted. If you like this podcast, consider rating it on your podcast platform, subscribing to it, and sharing with your friends. You can also support the podcast by becoming a patreon member. Go to: <https://www.patreon.com/TheBibleUnmuted> - or simply find the link in the description of this episode. Thanks for listening. Until next time, friends.