



FOR THE WEEK OF AUG 10

WEEKLY WORD

Read Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32

This week's text starts out with a question that stands at the heart of what Paul has been addressing in these chapters in his letter to the Romans. Romans 9:1-11:36 pretty much addresses the question of salvation for Jews and Gentiles, now in a post-Jesus world. So Paul asks questions that these Roman Jews might have been wondering. Has God rejected his people? Did God give up on "PLAN A" and now moved on to "PLAN B?" Paul answers with confidence, based on his personal experience. There aren't too many verses to read this week. This assigned text for this upcoming Sunday skips over 11:2b-28, which is an appeal to the Gentiles to fix their poor attitude about the Jews. As always, reading a few varying translations may help shed some light on this weighty matter. *HAPPY CHEWING!*

WEEKLY CHEW

Please wrestle with these questions during the week and feel free to offer your thoughts or questions on our LIVING WATERS LUTHERAN CHURCH SR WEEKLY WALK page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/251008952628293/>.

1. God made a promise to Abraham that Paul describes as irrevocable. For those of you who participated in the *DIVINE DRAMA* Bible study and/or have been a part of the Rob Bell book discussion, you may remember the story in Genesis where God, in the form of a flaming pot, passes between the pieces of an animal cut in half, basically saying to Abraham, "May what happened to this animal happen to me if I ever become unfaithful to my promise." (It's worth a read in Genesis 15.) Have you ever made any irrevocable promises, and if so, what have they been? (*Share as you feel comfortable in sharing.*) In what ways did you demonstrate the sincerity of your promise(s), and how has it gone keeping it/them?
2. Paul basically tells the Jews that despite their rejection of Jesus and his teachings, God's promise, God's adoption of them remains. What do you think about that? What, if anything, have you been taught about that?
3. In verse 29, Paul says that the "gifts and calling of God are irrevocable." Think about the fact that Paul unites both gifts and calling in this statement, as if you can't have one without the other. Think about those things you consider your God-given gifts and abilities. Have you ever stopped to consider that God intended some purpose in giving those gifts to you? As my (Todd's) Aunt Harriet would tell me, "What good are your God-given gifts if you're not going to share them with anyone!" Do you think she had a point?

4. Now consider your calling, your vocation. (Everyone has a calling, not just pastors.) What gifts has God given you for that calling? Do you think God continues to give gifts as our callings shift over time?
5. As you read these verses and this entire section of Romans, there is no doubt that Paul speaks with confidence, as if he fully understands God's plan here. Do you think he truly does or should he temper his confidence just a bit? Read Romans 11:33, 36. Does this offer a bit of wiggle room for Paul? ARE there certain things regarding God's plan about which we can truly speak knowingly and confidently?

WEEKLY PRACTICE

Consider making a list of what you believe are your God-given gifts and abilities. Look at the list and then think about the ways you put them to use for others. Are there some you've been sharing more than others? Are there any that could use a little dusting off?

PRAYER

God of abundance, thank you for the many ways you shower us with your love and grace, the gifts you instill in us and the desire you give us to share our good fortune with others. Help us to identify those ways we second guess our ability to be your light in this world. Amen.

