

1. Not ashamed of the Gospel

- a) Romans 1:16–17
- b) Why does Paul begin his letter to Christians in Rome by declaring he is not ashamed of the Gospel?
- c) Who might have insinuated Paul should be ashamed of the Gospel he was proclaiming?
- d) Summarize the Gospel as taught by the apostle Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.
- e) Have you ever been ashamed of the Gospel? How did you find freedom from fear of what people might think about you as a follower of Jesus?

2. A better covenant

- a) Hebrews 8:1–6
- b) What does the author of Hebrews mean when he speaks of “better promises”? Are some of God’s promises better than other promises?
- c) The promises that were inadequate in the Old Covenant were those made by the children of Israel. Exodus 19:8
- d) God keeps all His promises. What promises about salvation through faith in Jesus are especially meaningful to you?
 - i) Examples: John 3:16, Romans 10:13, 1 John 5:12–13

3. Challenge in the early Christian community

- a) Acts 15:1, the challenge

- b) Acts 15:2–12, 13–21, how was the dispute settled?
- c) Acts 15:22–29, how was the decision shared?
- d) What important lessons can we learn from the way early Christians addressed this challenge?
- e) Since the Sabbath was not mentioned here, some suggest it is not necessary for Gentiles to remember the Sabbath in harmony with the fourth commandment. How would you respond?
- f) What are some non-essential expectations we might try to impose on new believers today?

4. Persistent challenges from some Jewish Christians

- a) While Paul does not address these false teachers directly in his letter to the Romans, what warning does he give in Galatians 1:1–12?
- b) Is it possible those false teachers visited Christian communities in other regions? Acts 20:29–31
- c) Notice Paul’s clear teaching of “the Gospel of Christ.”
 - i) Romans 3:21–24
 - ii) Romans 5:1–2
 - iii) Romans 10:9–13
- d) What important lessons must we remember when people challenge or try to intimidate us for believing in salvation by grace alone through faith in Jesus?

