

Keener Romans Session07

All right, diving in again with another deep dive. Today, well, we're going deep into Romans, you know, sin, death, righteousness, all that. We've got this lecture by Dr. Craig Keener.

Oh, Keener. Yeah. Really gets you thinking, you know? The thing that really got me, I mean, was how he brings in, like, history.

I mean, baptism, ancient Rome, slavery. Right. Who would have thought? Makes you wonder what else we're missing just reading on our own.

Okay, so Romans, right? Paul's comparing Adam and Christ. Keener calls it lopsided. And it got me thinking, why even bother? Adam versus Jesus, I mean.

Yeah, it's, uh, you got to think about the Jewish tradition behind it. Adam, he wasn't always, you know, the bad guy. Before the fall, he was glorious, actually.

Seriously. So, like, new Adam fixing things? Was that already a thing? Keener thinks so. The Old Testament, Adam, Noah, Abraham, it's all kind of pointing that way.

But then Paul comes along, and as always, he's got... Paul being Paul. Exactly. He kicks it up a notch.

It's not just going back to normal. It's something way better. Right, right.

Okay, so Adam brings sin, death, Christ offers something way, way better. But then there's this reckoning thing. Chapter four, it's all over the place.

Good catch. It's how it all connects. So God, he reckons us righteous, right? Gift, not earned.

But we got to reckon ourselves dead to sin, too. Like changing how we think. Our whole mindset.

Hold on. How's that supposed to work? We're righteous, but still messing up. Million dollar question, right? It's a process.

Keener says the early church, they were all about the mind, changing your thinking to match your new identity. Not just like, poof, I'm different. We got to work at it.

Exactly. And that's where baptism comes in, Romans six. Keener gets into the Jewish ritual baths, mikvah.

Oh, yeah. He talked about that special stone to keep the water pure. Yeah.

Wow. Like ritual cleansing was serious business. So for a Jewish person back then, what would baptism even mean to them? Good question.

Remember, baptism wasn't only Christian, right? Jewish converts. It was part of leaving the old life behind, washing it all away. So early Christians, it's like publicly saying new life in Christ.

But Kiener's clear. It's not the dunk that saves you. It's what's in your heart.

Right. He used the example like an engagement ring, symbol of commitment. But you're engaged whether you have the ring or not.

Makes sense. OK. Baptism, new layer of meaning.

But then Kiener goes and connects slavery in Rome to all this. And my mind is blown. I always thought Roman slavery, that was it.

No way out. What's he getting at? Get ready because here comes a shocker. Half of Roman household slaves, they'd actually get freed.

Can you believe that? Way more common than we think. No way. OK.

But Paul, he's not just talking about like literally being freed. It's deeper than that. It's being free from sin's power.

Christ's death breaks those chains. Real liberation. Not just swapping masters.

It's freedom from sin itself. And Kiener, he contrasts it, right? Sin's wages, death, but eternal life. That's a free gift.

Huge difference. Mind blown. Adam, Christ, baptism, Roman slavery.

It's all connected. But wow. Got to process this.

What stuck out to you from Kiener's lecture so far? I think like the history part really makes it hit home. It's not just, you know, theology in a vacuum. It's real life back then that Paul's talking about.

Totally. It makes the Bible come alive. But there's so much more to unpack.

Like, what does reckoning ourselves dead to sin actually look like? And this freedom Christ gives us, how do we live that out? We'll be back to dig into all that. So, you know, before we were talking about that reckoning ourselves dead to sin thing and it made me think about something else Kiener said. The tension between what theologians call like indicative and imperative.

Oh, that's huge. Yeah. Indicative.

It's what we already are in Christ. Yeah. Forgiven, declared righteous.

But then there's how we're supposed to live, the imperative. And those two don't always line up. It's like, I know I'm forgiven, but I keep making the same dumb mistakes.

Super frustrating. Totally get that. Kiener doesn't pretend it's easy.

He's like, it's a process, right? Surrendering to God's grace, letting him work in us. And this is where that slavery and freedom imagery gets powerful. It's not just saying, yep, believe that.

It's got to change how we actually live. Exactly. Think back to that crazy stat, Roman slaves getting freed.

That's what Kiener uses to show how radical Christ's freedom is. It's not just my situation. It's breaking free on the inside.

Okay. Starting to see it. Adam and Christ, huge difference.

Reckoning ourselves dead to sin, lining up our lives with that. And then slavery, freedom. It's about how deep this change can go.

And through it all, God's grace, not about us being good enough. It's surrendering to what Christ already did. Man, this changes how I think about my own spiritual walk.

It's not about being perfect. It's resting in the freedom Christ gives me. But how do we actually do that? How do we go from knowing I'm free to actually feeling it in my choices? The question, right.

Kiener says, you got to remind yourself of the truth. Renewing your mind, like Paul says. Not just Bible reading, church, though that's important too.

It's letting that truth really sink in. Changing how I see myself, my problems, everything. Seeing ourselves how God sees us.

Forgiven, loved, able to live free. It's ongoing. There'll be times we mess up, fall back into old habits.

So it's like, we've got to keep reckoning ourselves dead to sin. Even when I don't feel like it or I'm acting the opposite way. And that's why we need other Christians to remind us, encourage us, point us back to the gospel.

True. Sometimes I need someone else to help me see straight. But it's not just about not sinning, right? There's that positive side of freedom.

Joy, abundance, walking with the spirit. Oh, absolutely. Kiener doesn't just focus on what we're freed from, but for.

Love that. Not just taking chains off. It's a whole new way of living.

What's that actually look like though? Day to day, how do I experience this? Good question. Different for everyone, maybe. But got to start by seeing where I'm still like holding myself prisoner.

You mean like when I'm trying to be good enough for God, prove myself. Exactly. Maybe it's looking for ways to serve, show grace, live out the forgiveness we've been given.

Letting that freedom flow out to others. That's it. Not just me, myself and I. It's being God's grace to other people.

Wow. Freedom's way bigger than I thought. Not just one moment.

It affects everything. That's the cool part. It's a journey.

Figuring out who we are in Christ and what that means. So much to think about. Feels like we just scratched the surface of what Kiener's saying.

You know what? That's what a good deep dive does. More questions than answers. Wanting to learn more.

Totally agree. Think it's time to wrap up this deep dive. Any last words before we finish up? I'd say if you take one thing from Kiener, it's this.

Don't be afraid of the tough questions. Don't run from the tension between what we are and what we're called to do. Embrace the journey, even the messy parts.

That's where we find grace and God's love changing us. Amen to that. So to everyone listening, think about those words.

Keep diving into Romans for yourselves. Until next time, keep seeking, keep exploring, and keep diving deep. This whole freedom thing, it just keeps coming back to me, you know? Big theme in Romans, but I feel like we get it wrong so often.

Oh, yeah. For sure. We think, no rules.

I can do whatever I want. That's freedom. But Kiener, he makes you rethink the whole thing.

Right. Like, we're so used to me first. But Paul's talking about something much, much bigger.

Absolutely. It's not just woohoo, I'm free. It's freedom to be right with God, with other people, like becoming who we were made to be.

It's like that part Kiener pointed out, sin's wages, death, right? But eternal life, that's a free gift. We're offered this amazing thing, but we kind of resist it. It's like we're hanging on to those old raggedy clothes instead of putting on, like, the best outfit ever, you know, Christ's righteousness.

Perfect analogy. We're so used to striving, proving ourselves, we forget real freedom is just accepting God's grace. And that grace changes everything.

It's not just about sin going away. It's about, wow, I can actually live differently now. Love, joy, purpose, all that.

It's like you're trapped in a tiny dark room and suddenly, boom, wide open field. You can breathe, you can move. It's a whole new world.

And that changes how you see everything. Yourself, other people, your problems. You start to see the good, the potential, even when things are rough.

Yeah, I get that. We get so caught up in our own stuff, we forget to look up, see the bigger picture. We forget we're part of something huge, God's story.

And he wants us involved, you know, bringing his kingdom here. So not just me getting saved, but being part of, like, changing the world. Exactly.

That freedom we get, it's meant to spill over. Our families, work, even just random people we meet. Putting our in Christ identity into action.

And that's where it gets real, right? Talking about freedom's easy, but living it day to day, that's harder. That's why Keener's point about our minds. It's so important, not just knowing the facts, but letting them change how we think, what we believe, and yeah, how we act.

It's that reckoning ourselves dead to sin. We got to keep doing it every day, every choice, lining up with who we are in Christ. It's a tough road, but man, the rewards.

Worth it. When we learn to walk in freedom, that's when life gets really good. We find out real freedom isn't getting to do whatever I want.

It's wanting what God wants. My desires, his will, that's where the joy is. Wow, that's good.

As we wrap this up, I'm just amazed at how deep all this goes. It's not just, okay, I get Romans now. It's a whole new way to live.

I think that's what Keener's doing, you know, not just teaching us stuff, but inviting us to experience God's grace, his freedom for real. An invitation we should say yes to. It's leaving behind the fear, the guilt, all that junk, stepping into God's love, his truth.

It's becoming who we were meant to be all along, free, whole, truly alive. So to everyone listening, here's the challenge. What does it mean for you to live in that freedom Christ won for us? Where are you still holding yourself back? What can you do today to step into that freedom? Keep searching.

Keep exploring. Keep diving deep. And until next time, may you walk in the joy and freedom of knowing you are so loved, so forgiven.