



Mt Lebanon Evangelical Presbyterian Church

Making and Growing Followers of Jesus

October 23, 2025

Greetings in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Thank you to all the people helping out on Saturday for Trunk or Treat! I love that we can present the whole story of the Bible to hundreds of people who may not have ever heard it before. Even if you can't be there, please be praying for the event, that we will be able to boldly proclaim the gospel and that people will have ears to hear. Pray for lasting relationships to be built, and pray that all the Bibles we give out will change people's lives. And pray for Kellyn – this is her first Trunk or Treat, and there are millions of details to manage! We'll see you Saturday, from 11:30am-1:30pm after the parade.

How are you all doing as we continue to dig into Romans? In our small group gathering last night, several people were struggling with a complicated passage. One of the members explained that we need to read Paul like he is trying to anticipate all the questions the Romans might have – “But what about this...?” “So does that mean we can...?” Paul is going back and forth between question and response through most of the first half of Romans, and it's no wonder it is tough to follow! He is actually using a classic Greek teaching technique called a *dialectic* (you don't need to remember that word!), where one person would present both sides of an argument and then show why his side was right. It's almost like listening to a lawyer present his case before a jury.

In the first half of Romans 5, Paul showed that we are reconciled to God through Christ's death on the cross. In the second half of the chapter, Paul is dealing with the questions he anticipates like “But what about the people who came before the Law?” “But what about Adam?” “But how can one person be enough to save everyone?” He keeps coming back to Jesus: “For if, by the trespass of the one man [Adam], death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ” (Rom 5:17). Even though Adam's sin set us on a pattern of destruction, the God-man Jesus Christ is more than able to break that pattern and set all of humanity free. Some of the technical details of how that works are hard to understand and even harder to explain. But the bottom line is clear: “Jesus Christ is more than able.”

As you prepare your hearts for worship this Sunday, think about all the questions you have for the Lord. The first one I want to ask God when we get to heaven is a quote from Ricky Ricardo on *I Love Lucy* – “Okay, Lucy, 'splain!” Okay, God, tell me the story of how all this works! From our earthly vantage point, our finite brains struggle to understand our infinite God with His infinite wisdom. And that's okay. Part of the challenge of faith is asking the questions and then being willing to sit with the mystery that is beyond our understanding. Anselm of Canterbury challenged the church to a stance of “Faith seeking understanding.” Ask God to open your heart to the truth that “Jesus Christ is more than able” as you seek to understand the infinite truth of God's love for us.

Blessings,
Pastor Carolyn