

A Study
On The Book
Of Romans

Reality of
Righteousness

SUMMER
BIBLE STUDY

Background of Romans

Author:

Paul

Original Audience:

The Christians in Rome

Date Written:

About AD 57 while Paul was in Corinth

Saul, also known by his Roman name Paul, was a zealous Pharisee who passionately defended Jewish tradition and fiercely opposed the early Christian movement. He was present at the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:58) and actively sought to imprison believers. Saul studied under the renowned teacher Gamaliel (Acts 22:3), a respected scholar and member of the Sanhedrin, which meant he had a deep understanding of the Jewish Scriptures and a strong pedigree within the faith.

However, on his way to Damascus to arrest Christians, Saul had a life-changing encounter with Jesus, who called to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" (Acts 9:4). Blinded for three days, his sight was restored by Ananias, who told him that God had chosen him to spread the Gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15-18). From this point, he became known primarily as Paul, using his Roman name as he carried the message of Christ to both Jews and Gentiles, marking his transformation from a persecutor of the church to one of its most influential apostles.

Romans, though a letter, is structured like a carefully crafted legal argument, presenting evidence, anticipating objections, and answering them with clarity. It may have been one of the first major Christian texts the believers in Rome received, as the Gospels had not yet been fully compiled. The early Roman church was unique in that it wasn't founded by an apostle but likely grew from Jewish believers who had been in Jerusalem for Pentecost and returned home with the Gospel message (Acts 2:5-11).

This church was a diverse mix of Jewish and Gentile believers, each bringing different backgrounds and customs to their new faith. Paul's letter emphasizes unity in Christ and the centrality of the Gospel as the means of salvation for all, regardless of background (Romans 12:1-15:13). He carefully builds his case for the righteousness of God being revealed through faith in Jesus, a message that would have been both challenging and encouraging for this mixed congregation.

Paul expressed a deep longing to visit the believers in Rome, as he mentions in Romans 1:11-13, writing that he hoped to encourage them and be encouraged by their faith. Though he eventually reached Rome, it was not as he had planned. After being arrested in Jerusalem, he was transported to Rome as a prisoner following his appeal to Caesar (Acts 21-28). Yet even under house arrest, Paul continued to preach the Gospel, fulfilling God's plan to witness to both Jews and Gentiles in the heart of the Roman Empire (Acts 28:30-31).

The heart of Paul's message in Romans can be found in Romans 1:16-17, where he writes:

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, 'The righteous shall live by faith.'"

This foundational truth emphasizes that salvation comes through faith in Jesus Christ, revealing God's righteousness and offering new life to all who believe. This idea is the cornerstone of the Christian message, establishing the foundation for understanding the relationship between faith, grace, and righteousness in Christ.

Study Schedule

| Week | Text Discussed | Reading for Next Time |
|------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Week 1 - Page 9 | Intro, Romans 1:1–17 | Romans 1:18–2:29 |
| Week 2 - Page 19 | Romans 1:18–2:29 | Romans 3 |
| Week 3 - Page 29 | Romans 3 | Romans 4–5 |
| Week 4 - Page 39 | Romans 4–5 | Romans 6–7 |
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| Week 10 | Romans 15:14-16, Conclusion | |

Memory Verses

Romans 3:23

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

Romans 5:8

“but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Romans 6:23

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Romans 10:9-10

“because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.”

Definitions

Regeneration - literally "born again." God imparts a new spiritual life to us. (concept found in Romans 6:4)

Expiation - removal or cleansing of guilt and the consequences of sin through a sacrificial offering. Jesus's death on the cross was the ultimate act. (concept in Romans 3:23–25)

Redemption - being purchased out of sin, bondage, or destruction. (Romans 3:24, Romans 8:23)

Propitiation - acts of appeasing or satisfying the wrath of God against sin. The atoning sacrifice of Jesus reconciled humanity to God. (Romans 3:25)

Imputation - The righteousness of Christ being credited to believers' account through faith. When Jesus died on the cross, He bore the penalty for the sins of all the people, taking upon Himself the guilt and punishment that humanity deserved. (concept in Romans 4:3)

Adoption - the act of God bringing believers into His family as His children through faith in Jesus. (Romans 8:14–15)

Reconciliation - process of restoring a broken relationship between God and humanity. God has reconciled Himself us to Himself through Christ. (Romans 5:10–11, Romans 11:15)

Justification - God declaring a sinner to be righteous on the basis of faith in Jesus, not by works. (Romans 2:4–5)

Righteous - being morally right, just, and in accordance with God's standards. It encompasses both the character of God and the ethical conduct expected of His people. (Romans 1:16–17)

Grace - unmerited favor and love of God toward humanity. It is the means by which God extends His mercy, forgiveness, and blessing to those who do not deserve it. (Romans 3:24, 5:20–21)

Mercy - God's compassion and forgiveness toward sinners, withholding the punishment we deserve. (Romans 9:15–16)

Sanctification – progressive process by which believers are made holy and set apart for God’s purposes. It involves spiritual growth and transformation, enabling individuals to live in accordance with God’s will and reflect his character (Romans 6:19)

Glorification – final stage of salvation referring to the ultimate transformation and exaltation of believers when they are fully conformed to the image of Christ. It is the future hope of believers, when we will receive glorified bodies, free from sin, suffering, and death. (Romans 8:17, 8:30)

Faith – trust and belief in God and His promises. (Romans 1)

Sin – act of disobedience against God’s commands, literally missing the mark. (Romans 2:12, 3:23)

Salvation – the deliverance from sin and its consequences, granted by God through faith in Jesus Christ. (Romans 5, 10:9–10)

Atonement – the reconciliation between God and humanity through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. (Romans 5:11)

Election – God’s choice of a person or people group for a specific purpose, mission, or salvation. (Romans 9:11–16)¹

Predestination – God chooses in advance persons to a particular end, most commonly to a particular eternal destiny and less commonly to a particular vocation or to a particular task. (Romans 8:29)¹

Hope – a confident expectation of God’s promises, particularly regarding salvation and eternal life. (Romans 4:18)

Condemnation – the guilt of sin, resulting in judgment and punishment for sin. Through Christ, believers are no longer under condemnation. (Romans 2:1)

Faithfulness – the reliability and trustworthiness of God. God is faithful to His promises, and believers can trust in His character. (Romans 3:3)

Impartial Judgment – God judges all people equally, based on their deeds and choices, regardless of their background, status, or identity.

¹ According to The Lexham Bible Dictionary:

Week 1

Day 1

Read Romans 1:1–17.

Faith - trust and belief in God and His promises.

Righteous - being morally right, just, and in accordance with God's standards. It encompasses both the character of God and the ethical conduct expected of His people.

1. How does Paul introduce himself and what does he say about Jesus?

2. Read Paul's conversion in Acts 9:1–22. Why do you think his greeting would have been significant?

3. Paul expresses his desire to visit the church in Rome. What are Paul's primary motivations in wanting to see the church in Rome (1:8–15). What does this teach about the importance of community and support in faith? How can we apply Paul's example today?

Pharisees - a religious group dedicated to Jewish nationalism and rigidly followed the Law of Moses. The Pharisees rejected Greek influences and discouraged friendships with Gentiles.

Gentile - a term used to describe anyone who is not of Jewish descent.

What is an apostle?



4. Explain Romans 1:16–17 in your own words.

5. Verses 16–17 are commonly referred to as Paul's thesis in his letter to the Romans. What do these verses reveal about the nature of salvation and righteousness?



Prayer & Reflection

Paul states, “the righteous shall live by faith.” How does the idea of living by faith challenge or encourage you in your own walk with Christ?

Day 2

Read Romans 1:18–1:27.

1. In verses 18–19, Paul says the unrighteous suppress the truth. What truth is Paul referring to, and how might people suppress it? How have you done the same?

2. How has God demonstrated His divine nature and eternal power? What other ways does God reveal Himself to us? See Colossians 1:15–20, Hebrews 1:1–2, and 2 Timothy 3:16–17.

3. In Romans 1:20, Paul says, "...so they are without excuse." What does he mean by that? And who is Paul referring to?

4. What did people turn to instead of God, according to verses 24 and 25? What was the result?

Going Deeper

Romans 1:19 highlights that God's existence and attributes are evident throughout creation. Is simply knowing about God sufficient for salvation? Explain your answer. See John 14:6 and Acts 4:12.

Prayer and Reflection

Write out a prayer seeking God's help in recognizing and turning away from any areas of your life where you may be suppressing the truth or giving in to sin. Take a moment to pray for the strength to resist temptation and for a heart that desires to honor God in all you do.

The wrath of God is a major topic throughout the book of Romans. To learn more about how to reconcile God's love and His wrath, scan the QR code for a helpful article.



Day 3

Read Romans 1:28–2:11.

Condemnation – the guilt of sin, resulting in judgment and punishment for sin. Through Christ, believers are no longer under condemnation.

Justification – God declaring a sinner to be righteous on the basis of faith in Jesus, not by works.

1. Depending on the translation used, verse 28 uses different words, but two of the most popular descriptions of the human mind are debased and depraved. Write this verse using a synonym of debased. How are we who are believers saved from a depraved mind? See Hebrews 12 for help.

2. Verse 32 suggests that the unrighteous were not only suppressing the truth, but also giving approval to those who practice them. What does that mean? How is it different/worse?

3. In what ways might we be guilty of what Romans 2:1 is saying? How can we cultivate a spirit of humility and self-examination in our lives?

4. How does understanding God's kindness and patience influence our approach to repentance? In what ways can we extend that same kindness to others who may be struggling with sin?

5. At first glance, verses 6-11 may seem to contradict Jesus' teaching about salvation by grace through faith. How can we reconcile Paul's emphasis on works with the gift of salvation?



Going Deeper

Paul challenges the idea that heritage alone can save in verse 9, quoting Habakkuk 2:4 in verse 17 to emphasize that the righteous live by faith. How does this contradict the belief that ancestry alone guarantees salvation? For more context, see verses 12-13 and Matthew 3:7-10.



Prayer and Reflection

Are there areas where you may be judging others while overlooking your own faults? Ask God for humility to recognize and address these areas. Reflect on the grace you have received through Jesus Christ. How does this grace impact your view of accountability and judgment? Consider how you can extend that same grace to others in your life.

“Paul is saying that works matter – not as the basis for salvation, but as the evidence that someone has the faith that saves.”

– Tim Keller

Day 4

Read Romans 2:12–24

1. How does Paul differentiate between hearing the law and actually doing it? What implications does this have for our understanding of faith and works? (James 2:26)



Going Deeper

The concept of moral law refers to a set of universal principles that govern human behavior and distinguishing right from wrong. How does verses 2–15 illustrate the tension between the inherent moral law written on our hearts and the reality of being born with a sinful nature? Also see Galatians 5:17 and Romans 7:18–19.

2. What persuasive techniques does Paul use in Romans 2:17–29 to reach his Jewish audience? How do his questions and comparisons strengthen his argument about what true righteousness really is?

Circumcision

In the Old Testament, circumcision was a physical sign of God's covenant with the Israelites, setting them apart as His chosen people. It symbolized their commitment to follow His laws and be pure in their worship. But God always intended for this outward sign to reflect a deeper, inward reality—a “circumcision of the heart.” This means a heart that is fully devoted to God, cut off from sin and fully committed to living for Him. It's a spiritual transformation marked by true faith and obedience, not just outward actions.

3. In verses 25–29, Paul compares physical circumcision with spiritual circumcision. How does this difference help us understand what it means to be part of God's people in the New Testament? (Colossians 2:11–12; Ephesians 2:11–13)

4. How does Paul's statement that Gentiles who follow the law are considered righteous, challenge the belief that only Jews are part of God's covenant? What does this reveal about how the early church saw Gentile believers? See Romans 2:26–27.

5. In what ways has God's grace and mercy changed your actions in the last week? The last month? The last year? Spend some time reflecting on God's goodness and grace in your life.

Isaiah 42:5a, 6–7

“Thus says, the Lord—[to Israel]—‘I am the Lord; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.’”

6. How would you summarize verse 24?

7. Were the Jewish people of the day fulfilling what God had called them to, according to verses 19 and 20? Why or why not?

This section of Scripture, and the surrounding context, is a great equalizer between Jews and Gentiles. The Jewish people were God’s chosen nation to make His name known and glorified, yet they failed. While the gentiles did not understand God’s revelation to Israel, God did not exile them from his Kingdom.

The church in Rome was made up of Jews and Gentiles, and Paul is clearly communicating that neither is better than the other; as Paul will tell us, “... all have sinned and fallen short.” While this might seem like a repetitive argument to us, the Jewish people in the audience hearing this letter for the first time were still convinced that they were better than others because God had chosen their line to produce the Messiah, and had revealed His law to them first. So, the argument needed to be thorough.

Day 5

Read Romans 2:25–2:29.

Circumcision - *The practice of removing the male foreskin. It is a sign of the covenant between God and Abraham (Gen 17:9–14). Circumcision can also be used metaphorically to refer to the removal of sin, impurity, or uncleanness*

“Paul’s bold declaration, equating a good pagan with a circumcised Jew, would have been an abomination to Pharisaeic ears.”

- Joseph Fitzmeyer

1. Paul begins this passage of Scripture with another argument in verses 25 and 26. What is the premise of his argument? See 1 Corinthians 7:19 and Galatians 6:15 for other places Paul addressed this topic.

2. Circumcision was a physical sign of keeping the covenant with God, not the thing that saves Jewish people (an outward action of an inward change). What public profession of faith do we celebrate today?

3. For this week’s passage, what is Paul’s main idea? How is his argument for the whole book of Romans beginning to take shape?

4. What did you learn about God this week, or what were you reminded of in this week's reading?

**5. What did you learn about humankind and/or yourself this week?
Look back at all the verses for this week. Write a one sentence summary of them below.**

Week 2

Redemption - being purchased out of sin, bondage, or destruction.

Propitiation - acts of appeasing or satisfying the wrath of God against sin. The atoning sacrifice of Jesus reconciled humanity to God.

Grace - unmerited favor and love of God toward humanity. It is the means by which God extends His mercy, forgiveness, and blessing to those who do not deserve it.

Sin - act of disobedience against God's commands, Literally "missing the mark."

Faithfulness - the reliability and trustworthiness of God. God is faithful to His promises, and believers can trust in His character.

Day 1

Read Romans 3:1–31.

1. How would you outline Romans 3? Hint: You can use the subheadings in your Bible. Do you agree with those subheadings? Would you place them in the same spot in the text?

2. What is the main idea that Paul is trying to communicate in each section of this chapter?

“Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required...”

- Jesus, Luke 12:48

“The Jewish nation was to be the guardian of all that God had revealed through his spokesmen. Of all the nations on earth God had chosen the Jews to be the custodians of his redemptive plan for the human race.”

- Robert Mounce

3. What is the overall idea of Romans 3?

Day 2

Read Romans 3:1–8.

1. Paul's words in chapter two are an abomination to Pharisaic ears, how does this passage help smooth their ruffled feathers?

2. What oracles or words are Paul referring in Romans 3:2? See Deuteronomy 4:1–8 and Romans 9:4–5.

3. Why was the nation of Israel entrusted with God's Words and revelation? See Isaiah 42:5–7 for help. How does Paul answer the question about whether or not being a member of the nation of Israel (a Jew) is beneficial?

4. In verse four, Paul quotes from Psalm 51. Who is the 'you' in the quoted verse? Who has the right to judge?



Going Deeper

Psalm 51 is written by David after his sin with Bathsheba. According to verses 13 and 14, what does David say will be the outcome of His forgiveness? In what way does that mirror why God revealed Himself to the Israelites?

5. Verses 7–8 can be difficult to understand because of the language and translation. Paul seems to be anticipating arguments of, “If my sin only highlights God’s righteousness, why does He judge me? After all, I’m doing Him a favor.” How does Paul respond?

6. In verse 8, what does Paul mean by, “their condemnation is just”?

A Note

For the purposes of this study, we are breaking down the chapters into daily reading, but remember that Paul ties one long argument together in the book of Romans. He’s playing the long game. Keep reading if this passage is challenging for you. We encourage you to read the context around the verses, even if we’ve stopped the reading at a specific place, for the purpose of understanding the argument.

Day 3

Read Romans 3:9–20.

1. In the first two verses of this chapter, Paul declares that there is much benefit to being Jewish. However, here he states that Jews are not better than Gentiles. (Notice that Paul uses 'we', indicating that he is Jewish.) . Is Paul contradicting himself? If not, what then is Paul trying to communicate to the church in Rome?

2. Look at each of the verses Paul quoted. See if the context of the verses gives you some idea about who he's talking about, Jew or non-Jew. Make notes on each of the corresponding passage below.

Verses 10–12 quote from Psalm 14:1–3

Verse 13a quotes from Psalm 5:9

Verse 13b quotes from Psalm 140:3

Verse 14 quotes from Psalm 10:7

Verses 15—17 quote from Isaiah 59:7–8

Verse 18 quotes from Psalm 36:1

Based on these passages, is Paul speaking predominantly here to one group, or equally to both?

3. To the Jewish person in Paul's Roman audience, Paul's words would have hit hard: how are God's chosen people not righteous? If you were in his audience, how would you have felt, understanding (perhaps for the first time) that they would not inherit righteousness without faith in Jesus?

4. Verses 19—20 reveal the purpose of the law. No one was able to adhere to the law perfectly and thus obtain righteousness. According to verses 19 and 20, what then was the purpose of the law?

We encourage you to read verse 20 out loud in a gentle tone. Remember, the kindness of God is meant to lead to repentance. If we're not careful, we can insert a tone that might not be what God intended.



Prayer and Reflection

Put verse 20 in a different perspective, think about a culture where driving rules are different, or non-existent. What would happen if there wasn't a set speed limit, lanes, or signals where drivers must take turns? We know the rules of the road are meant to keep us safe and to get us from one place to another efficiently. The law was meant to help us understand the severity of our need for God, our absolute desperation for Him to step in and save us.

Day 4

Read Romans 3:21-31.

1. What does Paul mean when he says that the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law?

2. Because of the culture, sometimes Paul says things in a different order than we're used to reading. Read verses 25b and 26, then read verses 21–25a. According to Paul, how are all justified?

3. According to verse 24, what is the gift? To whom (according to verses 23–24) is the gift offered? According to verse 25, how is that gift received?

4. What is the result of the gift, according to this section?

“The word propitiation only shows up a handful of times in the Bible, all in the New Testament. It’s a big theological word that we need when we try to grasp how God can be around us, sinful people, even when He is holy. Sin is a big deal to God; it’s what originally fractured His relationship with His people. God made another way for us to have peaceful relationships with Him, and that was through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus. In Jesus, God ‘...made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us.’ (2 Cor 5:21a) God is holy (set apart), righteous (there is no sin in Him), and just. Yet, we sinned, and all sin requires a consequence. That might seem harsh, but if you’ve had someone do something wrong against you, your natural, God-given response is usually, ‘That deserves a punishment. Who will make this right?’ We want justice. In the same way, God looks at sin and says, ‘That deserves a punishment. Who will make this right?’ And the answer is Jesus. When Jesus died on the cross, He bore the consequence for our sin. Isaiah 53:4–6 says it this way,

‘Surely [Jesus] took up our pain and bore our suffering,
yet we considered him punished by God,
stricken by him, and afflicted.
But [Jesus] was pierced for our transgressions,
he was crushed for our iniquities;
the punishment that brought us peace was on him,
and by his wounds we are healed.
We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
each of us has turned to our own way;
and the Lord has laid on [Jesus]
the iniquity of us all.’ (emphasis added)

So, the word we use for this idea is propitiation. Jesus paid the price for our sin so we, sinners, can stand before a holy God without fear of His just judgment or condemnation if we believe in Jesus.”

– Allistair Begg

“The principle of faith excludes boasting (Romans 3:27) because faith understands that there is nothing we do that justifies us (v 28). If we are to receive Jesus, we must give up boasting.”

– Timothy Keller

5. Verse 26 uses the phrase, “...the just and the justifier...”. That's a complex phrase. How would you explain that Jesus is the just and the justifier based on your new understanding of propitiation?

Day 5

Read Romans 3:27–31.

1. What does the word boasting mean? Where do you feel like you boast in an everyday situation?

2. Look at Philippians 3:5–11. What did Paul boast in before he recognized Jesus as his Savior? Read Philippians 3:7–9. What does Paul think of those things now?

3. What does it mean that God justifies by faith apart from the law?

Leviticus 4 and 16 outline what was required of a sin offering for the people of Israel. According to those chapters, God allowed a perfect animal to pay for the sin of the people. Paul says in Romans 3:31 that we uphold the law. We do so by trusting that Jesus paid for our sins the same way an animal paid for the sins of the Israelites, and that God accepted His sacrifice in substitution for our sins.

“...[The] gospel upholds the law by demonstrating that law-breaking is so serious that it brings death and judgment; and that law-keeping is so fundamental that no one can pass through judgment without it being kept on their behalf. The law is upheld in Christ’s life and his death, not nullified.”

– Timothy Keller

4. In what ways does this view of the law challenge your previous thinking regarding the law?

5. What did you learn about God this week, or what were you reminded of in this week's reading?

6. What is one thing you learned about humanity this week?

7. Write a one sentence (preferably 5–10 words) summary of your reading for this week.

Week 3

Before you begin this week, we recommend that you look over your sentence summaries from prior weeks, as well as read through all of chapters four and five to understand the gist of Paul's argument at this stage in the book of Romans.

Reconciliation – *process of restoring a broken relationship between God and humanity. God has reconciled Himself us to Himself through Christ.*

Salvation – *the deliverance from sin and its consequences, granted by God through faith in Jesus Christ.*

Hope – *a confident expectation of God's promises, particularly regarding salvation and eternal life.*

“What is sin? Sin is any want of conformity there unto or transgression of the law of God.”

– Westminster Catechism

“Paul knew if he could prove that Abraham had no reason to boast, then the matter was settled for any Jew.”

– Karen Lee Thorp, The Navigators

Day 1

Read Romans 4:1–5:21

1. How would you outline Romans 3? Hint: You can use the subheadings in your Bible. Do you agree with those subheadings? Would you place them in the same spot in the text?

2. What is the main idea that Paul is trying to communicate in each section of these chapters?

Abraham's faith was credited to him as righteousness in Genesis 15:6. Abraham was named the father of many nations in Genesis 17:5, but wasn't circumcised until Genesis 17:24, when he was 99 years old.

3. What is the overall idea of Romans 4:1-5:21?

Day 2

Read Romans 4:1-12

1. Given what we know about Paul and the original audience for the book of Romans, why do you think verses 1-3 were important for his overall argument to the church in Rome?

2. In verses 4-5, how does Paul contrast the concepts of faith and works? What implications does this have for our understanding of salvation?

3. Romans 4:7-8 quote from David in Psalm 32:1-2. How does Paul use David's words in verses 6-8 to support his argument about justification? What does this reveal about the nature of sin and forgiveness?

4. What makes the issue of circumcision important in this passage? How does Paul demonstrate that Abraham's faith was credited to him prior to his circumcision (verses 9–12)?



Going Deeper

How does the principle of justification by faith influence your personal faith journey, and how can you apply its lessons in your daily life while sharing this transformative message with others?



Prayer and Reflection

Reflect on your relationship with God and the concept of justification by faith. List any areas in your life where you may be relying on your own efforts rather than trusting in God's grace. Pray for a deeper understanding of what it means to be justified by faith, and seek guidance on how to live out this truth in your daily life.

Day 3

Read Romans 4:13–25.

Justification - God declaring a sinner to be righteous on the basis of faith in Jesus, not by works. (Romans 2:4–5)

Righteous - being morally right, just, and in accordance with God's standards. It encompasses both the character of God and the ethical conduct expected of His people. (Romans 1:16–17)

Faith - trust and belief in God and His promises. (Romans 1)

1. What is the promise referenced in Romans 4:13 and 4:16? For help, see Genesis 17:2–4 and 12:3.

2. What does Romans 4:15 mean when it says, "...where there is no law there is no transgression"?

3. To which two groups does Romans 4:16 apply the promise to Abraham? What does that reveal about the relationship between faith, grace, and the promise made to Abraham regarding his role as the father of many nations?

"...rightly understood, the law does not mark off Jew from Gentile but rather puts Jew alongside Gentile in need of the grace of God."

- James G. Dunn

"The idea of transgression is that you've broken a boundary. God made these boundaries clear. Once the boundaries were made clear, the unrighteousness that we possess by nature was shown to not merely be an unrighteous standing, but it was shown to be an absolute transgression of God's holy standard."

- Kyle Worley

4. How does Romans 4:18–19 illustrate Abraham's hope in God's promises despite his circumstances? What does it mean to 'hope against all hope'?

5. What does Romans 4:20–21 reveal about Abraham's faith?

6. In Romans 4:23–25, what is the significance of Jesus's role in the context of righteousness being credited to believers? How do these verses encourage you?



Prayer and Reflection

How can we cultivate a faith like Abraham's - a faith that remains strong and unwavering in the face of challenges and uncertainties? Pray and ask God for wisdom to trust in His promises in the same way Abraham did.

To read more about Abraham, see Genesis 12, 15, 18, and 21. You can also watch the first four minutes of this video from The Bible Project.



“It is impossible for God to break a promise. In our sin, we project onto the character of God our own character. We break promises, and we live in the midst of people who break promises routinely. Therefore, we question how, since we are so accustomed to broken promises, we can trust this One who promises us things against all earthly evidence.”

– Romans: An
Expositional
Commentary by R.C.
Sproul

Day 4

Read Romans 5:1–11

1. How does the first sentence of chapter five relate to the ideas at the end of chapter four?

2. Notice the progression in verses 1 and 2. Fill in the blanks below to notice the progression.

Therefore, since we have been _____ by faith, we have _____ with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also _____ by faith into this in which we stand, and we _____ in _____ of the glory of God.

God did not owe us justification, yet He gave it. Not only that, through that justification, we have peace with God. When we're brought near to Him in faith, we stand in grace, and we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

3. Have you ever had an experience where you've reconciled a conflict, but still not felt peace? How does it feel to know that we not only have justification from God through Jesus, but also have true peace with God?

"... 'since we have been justified by faith' summarizes the entire argument of chapters one through four."

- Robert Mounce

"First, there is peace with God (verse 1). This is not the same as the peace of God (Philippians 4:7). The peace of God is a calm and satisfied heart in the midst of troubles and pressures. But peace with God means that the state of hostilities between God and us is now over."

-Timothy Keller

4. Look up the words in verse three: endurance, character, hope. When have you experienced sufferings that end in hope?

"The Greek term in verse four for "character" denotes that which has been proven by trial."
- Robert Mounce

5. Verses 6-11 of chapter 5 repeat some ideas from verses 1-2 but with a different focus. How are they similar or different? What is added or missing? Do you see the same progression here?

Going Deeper

In Romans 5:6-8, Paul uses a clever play on words. In verse 6, he says Christ died for the ungodly, which many Jewish listeners might have thought referred only to Gentiles. But in verse 8, what pronouns does Paul use? Who is he including? How might this have surprised his Jewish audience, and why is it significant that Paul includes himself in this group?

Day 5

Read Romans 5:12–21

To understand the background for 'sin came into the world through one man', see Genesis 3:1–7.

1. What is the main idea of this passage?

2. It might be tempting to read verse 12 and think of God as unfair: why would all be punished because Adam (and Eve) sinned? How does Paul address that in the last few words of verse 12?

3. Verses 15 and 16 start with the same phrase, "...the free gift is not like the..." but the words that follow the phrase are different in each verse.

Verse 15 - "The free gift is not like the _____."

Verse 16 - "The free gift is not like the _____."

Verse 16 continues by stating that the trespass brought "_____", while the gift brought "_____".

4. If our justification is a gift, as Paul is emphasizing, who is the giver of that gift? Spend some time pondering what your life would look like without the gift of justification.

"The second half of chapter five flows out of the first half and introduces a comparison between two "Adams": the first Adam of Eden and the fall, and the second Adam of heaven and the cross — Jesus Christ."

- John Piper

Quote found in Romans 1–7 for You (The Good Book Company), page 123

To read more about what it means that Adam is a type of Christ, please scan the QR code.



5. While it might seem repetitive, verse 18 draws the conclusion of verses 12–21 together. What is Paul's conclusion?

Regarding 5:17: "If the sin of one man caused death to reign, the obedience of one man brings triumph over death to all who believe."

- Robert Mounce

6. Look at verses 18 and 19. These verses suggest that all of humanity will fall into one of two categories: in Adam or in Christ. What is the result of being "in Adam" according to verse 21? And what is the result of being "in Christ"? Also see Colossians 2:12.

"The law was never intended to provide salvation but to convince people of their need for it. Law increased sin. That is the sad story of humanity estranged from God. But where sin increased, "grace increased all the more" (v. 20). God lavished his grace upon us beyond all measure. His grace exceeded immeasurably the extent of human sin. Only by understanding the depths of human degradation can we hope to grasp, even in part, the surpassing wonder of divine forgiveness."

- Robert Mounce

7. What did you learn about God this week, or what were you reminded of in this week's reading?

8. What is one thing you learned about humanity this week?

9. Write a one sentence (preferably 5–10 words) summary of your reading for this week.

Week 4

Sanctification - process by which believers are made holy and set apart for God's purposes. It involves spiritual growth and transformation, enabling individuals to live in accordance with God's will and reflect His character

"Chapters 1–5 explain what God has accomplished for us in the gospel; chapters 6–8 tell us what God will accomplish in us through the gospel."

- Timothy Keller

Day 1

Read Romans 6:1–7:25.

1. Keeping in mind that it can be helpful to look for a main idea in sections of Scripture, how would you divide up chapters six and seven? And what is the main idea of each section?

2. Now that you've divided these two chapters up, what is the main idea of the two chapters as a whole? What is Paul trying to communicate to his original audience?

3. What is the timeless truth we can glean for ourselves today?

Day 2

Read Romans 6:1–14.

1. Look at the following verses and answer the corresponding questions.

| Romans 3:8 | Romans 4:15 | Romans 5:20 |
|--|---|---|
| And why not do evil that good may come?—as some people slanderously charge us with saying. Their condemnation is just. | For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression. | Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more... |
| What does Paul say some are claiming? Are they correct or incorrect, according to Paul? | How are these verses similar? How are they different? And how do they relate to Romans 3:8? | |

2. How do the verses in question 1 relate to Paul's claim in Romans 6:1?

3. See the verses below. Highlight every time you see the word "into".

"Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life."

For a deeper look at the idea of grace abounding, sin increasing, and the response of a believer, scan this QR code.



Understanding 6:3–4 is critical to understanding today's reading. "One of the great things about this text [Romans 5:20–6:4] is that it shows that, if you understand what baptism portrays, you understand what really happened to you when you became a Christian."
– John Piper

To what does the first “into” refer?

To what does the second “into” refer?

Baptism is a symbol of our union with Christ. We are first 'in' Him, and if we are in Him, His death is our sin's death. So, the baptism symbolizes the death of every believer's sin; the power of our sin died when Christ did. But baptism also symbolizes new life. We're raised to a new way of life.

4. The idea of reign and dominion are important in this part of Romans, as Paul is trying to argue one point that has many ramifications. Look up the words reign and dominion. Write the definitions for each word below.

5. Look at Romans 5:17, 5:21, 6:9, 6:12, and 6:14. If you are a king, you reign over a certain territory and have dominion there. According to Paul, when sin reigns, what is the result? And when Christ reigns, what is the result?

“...having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.”

Colossians 2:12–14

“Baptism portrays what happened to us when we became Christians. This is what happened to us: we were united to Christ. His death became our death. We died with him. And in the same instant, his life became our life. We are now living out the life of Christ in us. And all this is experienced through faith.”

– John Piper

“Paul uses the term ‘slave’ to describe a person under the complete control of someone or something. Prior to faith in Christ and baptism, believers were enslaved to sin and suffered its effects. Paul presents salvation as deliverance from spiritual bondage. He illustrates it as a transfer from one master to another— from sin to God.”

– Faithlife Study Bible
Commentary

6. According to Romans 6:14, under what (and therefore whose) dominion are believers?

Day 3

Read Romans 6:15–6:23.

Sanctification - progressive process by which believers are made holy and set apart for God's purposes. It involves spiritual growth and transformation, enabling individuals to live in accordance with God's will and reflect his character (Romans 6:19)

1. Paul starts this section by asking a similar rhetorical question as 6:1. According to 6:15, what are the two dominions? And how does one determine to which he or she belongs?

2. What do you think it means to be obedient from the heart (6:17)? See Romans 2:29 for more.

3. In chapter 7, Paul will describe his own struggles with sin, so Romans 6:18 cannot mean that Christians no longer sin, or no longer struggle with sin. How, then, would you interpret 6:18, when Paul says that believers have been 'set free from sin'?

"As he was raised victor over death, so also are we set free from the bondage of sin."

- Robert Mounce

4. According to Romans 6:19 and 6:22, what does being a slave to righteousness lead to?



Prayer and Reflection

Romans 6:21 asks a sobering question of Paul's audience: what fruit were you getting from the things of which you are now ashamed? Spend some time answering that question and thanking God for removing the burden of sin and shame from your life.

Day 4

Read Romans 7:1–7:20.

1. To whom is Paul speaking in Romans 7:1? Who are “those who know the law”?

2. What analogy does Paul give in verses 1–5? And how does it relate to verse 6?



Going Deeper

Look at Romans 6:14. We see Paul again use the contrasting relationship of sin and death versus grace and life. What does Paul say Christians are no longer under? See Jeremiah 31:31–34.

3. Paul once again presents a very contrasting relationship between sin and life, this time in terms of bearing fruit. According to Romans 7:4–5, what kind of fruit do we bear under sin? What kind of fruit do we bear after we're spiritually resurrected with Christ?

4. How does your answer to question three and 7:6 shed light on the 'new life' we're to walk in that Paul referenced in Romans 6:4?

5. Paul seems to give a personal account of his struggle with sin in Romans 7:9–20. For the purposes of our study, we had to divide up this Scripture into sections. However, this section is rather discouraging without a look forward. Look at Paul's conclusion to his conundrum in Romans 7:25. Now look at Romans 8:1–4. How does the sacrifice of Jesus provide an answer to Paul's problem as presented in Romans 7:9–20?



Going Deeper

“Paul realized that apart from Christ he was condemned to death. He discovered that although the commandment was designed to bring life (Lev 18:5; Luke 10:25–28), it turned out to be a sentence to death (Rom 7:10). How did this happen? Sin deceived him (v. 11).”

– Robert Mounce

How do we see this principle Paul presented in Romans 7:7–20 played out in the Garden in Genesis 3?

“In [Romans 7:8] and the following verses sin is personified as a powerful enemy, who has established a base of operations within the citadel of Mansoul.”
– F. F. Bruce

For a helpful perspective on this section of Romans, listen to how Allistair Begg contrasts the end of Romans 7 with Romans 8:1–8.



In Adam →
Sin Reigns →
Death

In Christ →
Righteousness →
Life

Day 5

Read Romans 7:21–7:25.

1. Paul's conclusion to his struggle is powerful and one in which we can all identify. Who does Paul say in verse 25 delivers him?

Going Deeper

Much ink has been shed considering if Paul is portraying his struggle before he was stopped on the Damascus road or after. Thus, the question: is Paul speaking to a struggle of the Christian or to one who is unsaved? Look at Romans 6:12 and 7:25. We know that the Bible does not contradict itself, so how can we work to reconcile these ideas? To what other verses would you point to support your argument?

2. What did you learn about God this week, or what were you reminded of in this week's reading?

3. What is one thing you learned about humanity this week?

4. Write a one sentence (preferably 5–10 words) summary of your reading for this week. You may also write one sentence per chapter, if you prefer.

Week 5

Day 1

Read Romans 8:1—8:39.

Adoption - the act of God bringing believers into His family as His children through faith in Jesus.

Glorification - final stage of salvation referring to the ultimate transformation and exaltation of believers when they are fully conformed to the image of Christ. It is the future hope of believers, when we will receive glorified bodies, free from sin, suffering, and death.

Predestination - God's choose in advance persons to a particular end, most commonly to a particular eternal destiny and less commonly to a particular vocation or to a particular task

1. How does Romans 8:1—8 relate to Romans 7:9—25?

2. How would you outline Romans 8? Hint: You can use the subheadings in your Bible. Do you agree with those subheadings? Would you place them in the same spot in the text?

3. What is the main idea that Paul is trying to communicate in each section of this chapter?

4. What is the overall idea of Romans 8?

5. What new hope does Paul introduce in Romans 8 for those wrestling with sin and suffering?

Day 2

Read Romans 8:1–8:11.

1. Paul starts the chapter with a bold claim: “There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” and then moves to support his claim. However, as believers, many times we feel guilt or shame when we sin. According to Hebrews 12:6, what might that feeling be, if not condemnation?

2. Paul spends verses 5–8 stating the contrasts between life in the flesh and life in the Spirit. Fill in the chart below with Paul's descriptions of life in the flesh and life in the Spirit.

| Life in the Flesh | Life in the Spirit |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| | |

3. Paul asserts that those who live 'in the flesh' submit to God's law. Why do you think that is? What (or whom) empowers a believer to submit to God and His ways?

4. Romans 8:9 states that people are either in the flesh or in the Spirit. While this is true, this is often not our lived experience. How do you respond to either living in the flesh or in the Spirit? And how aware are you of that truth in your daily life?

For a thorough discussion on what Paul means when he says “flesh” and “spirit” in Romans 8, listen to the last fifteen minutes of this podcast.



From Knowing Faith:
#129—Freedom In
Christ, Dec 2, 2021

5. There were two groups of Jewish religious leaders at the time Paul is writing Romans: the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Paul was a Pharisee and believed in a bodily, physical resurrection. The Sadducees, however, did not believe in a bodily resurrection. What does Paul teach us regarding the indwelling and resurrection of our bodies in Romans 8:11, both now and in the future?

Day 3

Read Romans 8:12–8:17.

1. Paul states that we (believers) are not debtors to the flesh, but never states to whom we are debtors. Based on the context of Romans 8:12–13, to whom are believers in debt?

2. What does Paul mean when he says we're to put to death the deeds of the body?

3. In Romans 6, Paul used the language 'slaves to righteousness'. Why would slaves potentially 'fall back' into fear? On what does their security depend? The word 'Abba' loosely translates to 'Daddy'. Romans 5:2 states that believers have been justified by God's grace and allows us to stand before the Father. This passage makes it seem as though we can now stand before God as a sibling of Christ. Is that your typical posture before God? Why or why not? See also Hebrews 4:16.

4. What does Romans 8:17 mean when it states that we're heirs provided that we suffer with Christ? See Matthew 10:38–40.

Day 4

Read Romans 8:18–8:30.

1. What does Paul mean by the 'sufferings of the present time' (8:18)? What are we enduring now that we will not always have to endure?

2. In Romans 8:15, Paul says we have already received adoption. In Romans 8:23, though, Paul says we're waiting eagerly for our adoption. What do you think that means, in this context?

In Romans 8:12, Paul uses the word 'flesh' to mean our sin nature, or the way in which we live according to our human desires.

To see more about the heart of our Father, read Luke 15:20. We are not just pardoned from our sin, but welcomed to His Kingdom as children.

Regarding Romans 8:26–27: “No passage of Scripture provides greater encouragement for prayer. The Spirit comes to the aid of believers baffled by the perplexity of prayer and takes their concerns to God with an intensity far greater than we could ever imagine. Our groans (v. 23) become his (v. 26) as he intercedes on our behalf.”

– Robert Mounce

3. We often hear about Christianity in terms of “already, not yet”. How do verses 18–25 display that idea?

4. In the context of suffering, when we don't know what to pray, what guarantee do believers have through the Spirit?

5. In the context of this entire passage (suffering, adoption, prayer, Spirit interceding), read 8:27b–28 in the NIV:

“...because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”

In this translation, who is doing the work? And the good is in accordance with the will of whom? How does this encourage you as you suffer?

6. Romans 1:5–7 defines Paul's audience. What is the defining characteristic in Romans 1? Is it the same characteristic in Romans 8:28?

Day 5

Read Romans 8:31—8:39.

1. The context for Romans 8 is suffering. Throughout the chapter, we've seen Paul remind his audience that God is working, even in the suffering, and providing a way for us to reach Him. Even in that suffering, what is Paul's encouragement in Romans 8:31—39?

2. Paul's encouragement is victorious. Does suffering often feel victorious? How can these Scriptures encourage you today?

3. What did you learn about God this week, or what were you reminded of in this week's reading?

4. What is one thing you learned about humanity this week?

For the purposes of our study, we will not be able to thoroughly cover Romans 8:29—30. For a helpful treatment on these topics, please listen to the two sermons by Allistair Begg on the topic.



5. Write a one sentence (preferably 5–10 words) summary of your reading for this week.



Prayer and Reflection

Ultimately, Paul's encouragement is that whatever we're walking through, He is with us. Nothing, not one thing, can separate us from the love of God. He is in us and we are in Him, and nothing can come between us. Ask God to convince you of that truth to the deepest level of your soul today. Thank Him for His love for you, even at your worst. Thank Him for staying with you even in the midst of suffering. Thank Him for taking on the worst of suffering for our sake.

Study Tip

When things are tough, praying Scripture can be powerful. Romans 8:31–39 is a great passage to pray with confidence, remembering that true victory is often what is good for us, not just what feels good to us, and that ultimate victory belongs to those who trust in Jesus.

You can pray something like this:

“If God is for me, who can be against me? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for me—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give me all <eternal> things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns <me for my sin>? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for me. Who shall separate me from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written:

“For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.” No, in all these things I am more than a conqueror through him who loved me. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate me from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus my Lord.”

Week 6

Day 1

Read Romans 9:1–11:36.

Mercy – God’s compassion and forgiveness toward sinners, withholding the punishment we deserve.

Election – God’s choice of a person or people group for a specific purpose, mission, or salvation

“The emphasis in Romans 9 is on Israel’s past election, in Romans 10 on Israel’s present rejection, and in Romans 11 on Israel’s future restoration.”
– Warren Wiersbe

1. How does Romans 9:1–5 relate to Romans 8?

2. How would you outline Romans 9–11? Hint: You can use the subheadings in your Bible. Do you agree with those subheadings? Would you place them in the same spot in the text?

3. What is the main idea that Paul is trying to communicate in each section of these chapters?

4. What is the overall idea of Romans 9–11?

Day 2

Read Romans 9:1–9:29.

The big question Paul seems to be concerned with in Chapter nine of Romans is not *if* God is faithful, or *if* God's Word (understood to be the promises of God made to Israel through the covenants) was true, but *how* will God be faithful to His word.

1. According to Romans 9:1–5, how does Paul feel about what he's about to say in the rest of chapter 9? Pray and ask God to give you the same heart as you think about your lost friends, and as we read and study the rest of the chapter.

Romans 9:6 can be difficult to interpret. One way to think about it is as America: in the past, America was sometimes called a “Christian nation.” That is not to say that all Americans were or are Christians, but that the foundation of the country was thought to be based on Christian principles. In the same way, not all who descended from Israel have continued to follow the Torah. Therefore, not all of ethnic Israel will be considered ‘children of the promise’ (Romans 9:8).

2. According to Genesis 16 and Genesis 21, how many sons did Abraham have? And according to Genesis 21:12, through whom will the promises given to Abraham be applied? And according to Romans 9:9, who are the 'children of promise'? See Genesis 18:10–14 for help, since Paul quotes Genesis 18:10 in Romans 9:9.

3. The Greek word used in Romans 9:11 for election is *eklogē*, which refers to a choice or selection. Given that information and Paul's use of Exodus 33:19 in Romans 9:15, how does Paul support his claim that not everyone born of Abraham is considered God's chosen, Israel?

4. In Biblical times, the firstborn son was usually the main heir, or the one chosen to carry on the family line and business. What do both Isaac and Jacob have in common, according to Paul? And what point does Paul make in 9:15–17?

5. In Romans 9:25–29, Paul quotes from Hosea 2:23, Hosea 1:10, Isaiah 10:22–23, and Isaiah 1:9. What is he communicating with all of those quotes?

Read more about the story of Abraham's sons by scanning the QR code.



Romans 9:9 quotes Genesis 18:10, 14.

Romans 9:12 quotes Genesis 25:23.

Romans 9:15 quotes Exodus 33:19.

Romans 9:13 is a reference to Malachi 1:2–3, which indicates that this is likely not speaking of a person, but of the actions of the nation of Edom.



Prayer and Reflection

“What then shall we say” is a literary technique Paul uses to conclude and summarize part of his larger argument; it’s his way of closing one section while continuing the whole thought.

“In Romans 10:2, ...the end of the law here doesn’t mean that Christ has destroyed it; rather, it means that Christ has fulfilled it. ... Therefore, the law no longer for the Christian must be a tyrant. The law can now be a tutor. The law is meant to shape us into the likeness of Christ, as it says in Romans 8:29.”

- Kyle Worley, Knowing Faith Podcast #137

The words of Paul in Romans 9 seem harsh if we forget the anguish with which he opened this chapter. Paul has obviously spent a lot of time wrestling through these questions before he wrote them to the church in Rome, as he was likely thinking through the same questions on his own. What do we make of the law? How can God do this? To whom are the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament applied? Ultimately, Paul trusts God, the Potter, knowing that he is clay. Only a master potter can make something out of nothing, and God’s hands are capable, gracious, merciful, and trustworthy. Let’s pray that we can have the humility and passion of Paul for our lost friends and family. Spend some time thanking God for His faithfulness to His promise of mercy. Ask God to give you the same passion as Paul for the lost.

Day 3

Read Romans 9:30–10:21.

1. According to Romans 9:32, how are the Jewish people who are not included in the remnant trying to receive salvation? And how is that different from Paul’s argument in the letter to Rome?

2. Romans 10:6–8 quotes several verses from Deuteronomy 30:11–14. Read Deuteronomy 30:1–14. Where does God tell them to put the word in Deuteronomy 30:6 and 30:14? And how does Romans 10:6 connect the law to faith?

3. According to Romans 10:9–10, several things happen when we believe. What do we confess? What do we believe? How does this connect to Paul's next statement in Romans 10:11–13?

4. Romans 10:14 discusses “they”. Based on the previous sentence, to whom do you think Paul is referring?

5. Romans 10:18 and 10:19, Paul states that Israel has heard and understood. What then is his conclusion in 10:21 (which is also his conclusion of the whole chapter)? What does it mean that God held out His hands?

Romans 10:15 quotes Isaiah 52:7 and Nahum 1:15.

Romans 10:16 quotes from John 12:38, which quotes Isaiah 53:1.

Romans 10:18 quotes Psalm 19:4.

Romans 10:19 quotes Deuteronomy 32:21.
Romans 10:20 quotes Isaiah 65:1.

While Scripture teaches that God desires all to come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9), it also affirms His sovereign choice in salvation (Ephesians 1:4–5).

The tension between God's sovereignty and human responsibility is a theme throughout the Bible. In Romans 10:13, it states, “For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved,” indicating that the offer of salvation is available to all.

Ultimately, while we may not fully understand how predestination and free will coexist, we can trust in God's perfect justice and mercy. His desire for repentance reflects His love and grace, inviting all to respond to His call, even as He works out His divine purposes.

Romans 11 is a lot to take in and consider. This sermon from John Piper can be very helpful if you're seeking further clarity.



Day 4

Read Romans 11:1–11:24.

1. According to Romans 11:1–10 and 12b, did God reject Israel? Has He given up on them? And why is this important for us today?

2. What is Paul's goal in chapters 9–11 as Paul reveals in Romans 11:14b? And what does this reveal about the heart of God for His people?

3. Paul again equates Jews and Gentiles in Romans 11:19–22. What is his message to Gentiles?

4. In Romans 11:16–17, Paul contrasts the roots with the branches. In his analogy, who are the branches? And who represents the root?

5. According to Romans 10:23, is it ever too late (before the second coming of Christ) for either Jew or Gentile to call on the name of the Lord and be saved?

Day 5

Read Romans 11:25–11:36.

1. Many scholars disagree on the meaning of Romans 11:25, so while we might not understand all of it, at first glance, what does Paul seem to be saying?

2. In Romans 11:28–32, Paul makes a statement and then expounds on it. What is Paul saying in these verses? Why do you think he repeats it so often?

3. What did you learn about God this week, or what were you reminded of in this week's reading?

4. What is one thing you learned about humanity this week?

Romans 11:26–27 quote
Isaiah 59:20–21.

To understand what
'consigned' (ESV) or
'bound' (NIV) means
in Romans 11:32, read
Galatians 3:21–29. The
same word is used in
3:22 and 23.

5. Write a one sentence (preferably 5–10 words) summary of your reading for this week.



Prayer and Reflection

Paul concludes this section of his letter to the church at Rome with a beautiful doxology that includes the merging of Isaiah 40:13 and Job 41:11. Pray that out loud back to God. What stands out most to you this week in Romans 11:33–36?

Week 7

Day 1

Read Romans 12:1–13:7

1. How do you think Romans 12:1–13:7 connects to the arguments in Romans 9–11?

2. How would you outline Romans 12:1–13:7? Hint: You can use the subheadings in your Bible. Do you agree with those subheadings? Would you place them in the same spot in the text?

3. What is the main idea that Paul is trying to communicate in each section of the reading?

4. What is the overall idea of Romans 12?

"The Christian life is to be a daily giving over of our lives and our bodies in obedience to God, motivated by the view of God's mercy that we have as we stand at the foot of the cross and see his Son dying there for us."

- Timothy Keller

Day 2

Read Romans 12:1–2.

1. Paul has just finished a doxology, praising God for his depth of wisdom, judgement, and knowledge; he obviously believes that God knows what He's doing. In light of that wisdom, what does Paul ask his fellow believers to do in the first verse of Romans 12?

2. Paul claims that presenting our bodies as living sacrifices is an act of worship. How often, then, should we be worshipping in this way?

3. "Sacrifice" means "kill," so Paul is imploring his fellow believers to live sacrificially, or to live as dead ones. How does that line up with what we have already read in Romans? For help, see Romans 6:13, 6:16, 6:19.

4. The only other time Paul uses the word 'transform' in Romans 12:2 is in 2 Corinthians 3:18. Go read that passage. What is it that we're to be transformed into?

5. How does that transformation help us to discern the will of God?



Prayer and Reflection

Ask the Lord, what ways do you need to offer your body as a living sacrifice, including renewing your mind on the things of the Lord?

Day 3

Read Romans 12:3–8.

1. In Romans 12:3, Paul tells us to think of ourselves in two ways. What are they? Note: Paul does not tell us here to be humble.

2. In Romans 12:3, the phrase 'measure of faith' uses a word for meter, as in metering out or distributing. Thus, it likely refers to the measuring standard of Christian faith, of which all believers have equal measure. In this context, why is that important? What is Paul trying to establish at the beginning of this mini-argument?

"In Ephesians 4:23 Paul tells us to 'be renewed in the spirit of your minds' (ESV). This probably means not just that we think true thoughts, but that the governing influence of our mind is reoriented."

– Timothy Keller

It can be helpful to view our gifts as assignments from the Lord. Humans aren't great at seeing things as the Lord sees them, so we rank according to human scales of importance, but the Lord sees stewardship as important.

For other lists of spiritual gifts see: 1 Cor. 12:4-11; 1 Peter 4:8-11; Eph. 4:11-12.

3. Paul uses a metaphor of the human body in verses 4–6. How are the interdependent systems of the body like the Church, or body of believers? How important is it, then, that you actively use your spiritual gifts?

4. What are the seven gifts listed by Paul in Romans 12:7–8? Which of these listed do you most identify with?



Going Deeper

What would happen if even one of these gifts weren't present in the church? Think through it like this: If we didn't have prophecy, then the church would lack...? If we didn't have teaching, then the church would lack...? If we didn't have gifts of mercy, then the church would lack...?

5. Why do you think Paul first established a balance of how we should see ourselves, how we have the same measure of faith, just before he discussed the employment of gifts in the body of Christ?

Day 4

Read Romans 12:9–21.

1. Romans 12:9 tells us to do three things. What are they?

2. What does genuine love look like? How could love be insincere? And how does that relate to abhorring what is evil?

3. The rest of the chapter lists ways that Paul implores believers to act. Verses 10–16 seem to be talking about how to act toward believers. What stands out to you about how we are to act to other believers?

4. Verses 16–21 seem to turn toward how believers act toward their enemies. These verses quote from Proverbs 25, but Jesus says something similar in Luke 6:27. How do our actions towards our enemies accomplish Paul's charge in Romans 12:21?

“Each believer has a different gift, and God has bestowed these gifts so the local body can grow in a balanced way.”

–Warren Wiersbe

“The great thing to remember is that, though our feelings come and go, His love for us does not. It is not wearied by our sins, or our indifference; and, therefore, it is quite relentless in its determination that we shall be cured of those sins, at whatever cost to us, at whatever cost to Him.”

- C. S. Lewis, Mere Christianity

5. Which of these is most challenging for you? Which of these comes most naturally to you?

Day 5

Read Romans 13:1–7.

1. According to Romans 13:4, what is the purpose of any government or earthly authority?

2. While Paul's words seem absolute, how do Acts 5:29 and Daniel 6 help us understand the limits of obedience to authority?

3. In Romans 13:7, how does Paul's list move from outside obedience to concern for our inner lives?

4. What did you learn about God this week, or what were you reminded of in this week's reading?

Jesus says "yes" to paying Caesar taxes but "no" to paying Caesar worship.

- Timothy Keller

5. What is one thing you learned about humanity this week?

6. Write a one sentence (preferably 5–10 words) summary of your reading for this week.

Week 8

Day 1

Read Romans 13:8–15:13.

1. How would you outline Romans 13:8–15:13? Hint: You can use the subheadings in your Bible. Do you agree with those subheadings? Would you place them in the same spot in the text?

2. What is the main idea that Paul is trying to communicate in each section of the reading?

3. If you look at what Paul is trying to communicate in each section, how would you summarize this whole chunk of Scripture? What is Paul's main idea in this whole section of the letter?

For a helpful treatment of citizenship, listen to this sermon by Allistair Begg.



Day 2

Read Romans 13:8–13:14.

1. According to Romans 13:8, what do we owe one another? And what does that do, according to Romans 13:10?

2. As a reminder, how does Paul tell us to love in Romans 12:9–21?

3. What does it look like practically to love like this? What tension does it create in us?

4. Loving like this seems counter-cultural, thus Paul moves to being sober-minded in the present age in 13:11. How does this relate to loving each other?

“Any love that is afraid to confront the beloved is not really love, but a selfish desire to be loved. This kind of selfish love is afraid to do what is right (toward God and the beloved) if it risks losing the beloved’s affection. It makes an idol out of the beloved.”

– Timothy Keller

5. The last three verses of our reading today deal with walking as in the light. Look at Ephesians 5:6–14. What does Paul say in Ephesians that echoes what he says in Romans 13:12–14?

Going Deeper

What does 'putting on the armor of light' then entail? And why do we need armor considering the present age?

Day 3

Read Romans 14:1–14:12.

1. Paul instructs the church in Rome to not quarrel over opinions. What is the difference between opinions and truth? As believers, are there things that are okay to quarrel about?

David Platt has a helpful and short article/podcast about uniformity amidst convictions. You can find that by scanning the QR code.



2. “Passing judgment” in verse 4 likely means to offer a condemnation rather than giving opinions; Paul has already said not to quarrel over simple opinions. What does it mean, then, to pass judgment on a servant of another?

3. What is Paul saying matters most about observing the Sabbath?

4. Romans 14:9 is at the heart of this argument. What is Paul's conclusion of this section? Who is the final judge?

Day 4

Read Romans 14:13–14:23.

1. How could a judgement on another believer cause him or her to stumble?

2. Read Mark 7:14–23. What is it that defiles a person, according to Jesus? How does verses 15–19 connect to Jesus' teachings.

Romans 14:11 quotes
Isaiah 45:23.

3. The heart of this section is found in Romans 14:18–19. What is the main idea that Paul is trying to communicate to his Jewish and Gentile brothers and sisters in Christ?

“For people to insist on eating whatever they want (since nothing is unclean in itself) is to reduce the kingdom to matters of dietary preference. God’s kingdom simply cannot be trivialized in this way. His kingdom has to do with righteous living.”

– Robert Mounce



Going Deeper

If the goal is mutual building up, then that means that the weak and the strong both need growth. How can a weak Christian help a strong one? And vice versa?

4. In Romans 14:20–22 differentiates between what is lawful and a person's convictions. For example, your friend might make a choice to never drink alcohol, while you might see it as permissible as long as one does not get drunk. Should Christians let matters of conscience divide them?

5. Romans 14:23 is not saying that those who have general doubts are condemned; rather, if you doubt that something is right and do it anyway, you have sinned. What convictions do you have that others might not?

Day 5

Read Romans 15:1–15:13.

1. Paul stated in Romans 13:8 that believers are only to be indebted in love to one another. How does 15:1–2 state a similar principle?

2. Paul states that the prior instruction (what we now consider the Old Testament) was written for instruction and encouragement, which produces hope. Is that your experience when you study the Old Testament? If not, how can this passage help change your perspective?

3. Remember that Romans is written to a mixed audience including Jews and Gentiles. What is Paul's goal for them, according to Romans 15:5–6?

4. In Romans 15:8, Paul states that Jesus came in order to fulfill the prophecies of the Old Testament. How does that give you the hope that Paul spoke of in Romans 15:4?

“There is a beautiful progression in the promises that Paul quoted in Romans 15:9–12.

- The Jews glorify God among the Gentiles (Romans 15:9, quoting Psalm 18:49)
- The Gentiles rejoice with the Jews (Romans 15:10, quoting Deuteronomy 32:43)
- All the Jews and Gentiles together praise God (Romans 15:11, quoting Psalm 117:1)
- Christ shall reign over Jews and Gentiles (Romans 15:12, quoting Isaiah 11:10)”

–Warren Wiersbe

5. What did you learn about God this week, or what were you reminded of in this week's reading?

6. What is one thing you learned about humanity this week?

7. Write a one sentence (preferably 5–10 words) summary of your reading for this week.

Week 9

Day 1

Read Romans 15:14–16:27.

1. How do you think this section of Romans ties to the previous parts? What is repeated? What is new?

2. How would you outline Romans 15:14–16:27? Hint: You can use the subheadings in your Bible. Do you agree with those subheadings? Would you place them in the same spot in the text?

3. What is the main idea that Paul is trying to communicate in each section of the reading?

4. If you look at what Paul is trying to communicate in each section, how would you summarize this whole chunk of Scripture? What is Paul's main idea in this whole section of the letter?

To read more about the 'wonders and signs' of which Paul speaks in Romans 15:19, see Acts 4:30, Acts 5:12, Acts 14:3, Acts 15:12, among others.

Day 2

Read Romans 15:14–15:21.

1. How does Paul encourage the church in Rome in the first verse of this section? What does he comment on about those in their church?

2. Why, according to Romans 15:16, did Paul speak boldly in Romans, his letter to the church in Rome?

3. Paul is confident that he's fulfilled the mission God has given him so far. However, he still aims to preach. Where is Paul trying to go next (15:20)? And why?

4. Look up Isaiah 52:15. What is Paul trying to do in his preaching ministry?

5. It might be easy to read this section and think of Paul as boastful. However, what does he say in 15:18? How is it that Paul is able to continue his work?

Day 3

Read Romans 15:22–15:33.

1. Why does Paul say he's been unable to come to Rome thus far in his ministry?

2. In verse 23, Paul says the work in his current regions is complete. According to 15:19, what region is that?

3. In 15:26, Paul mentions that churches in Macedonia and Achaia have made contributions for him to visit Jerusalem. That means that Gentile churches have contributed to him visiting Jewish places. How does this demonstrate what Paul has been emphasizing in the book of Romans?

4. What does Paul ask the believers in Rome to pray in Romans 15:31? In what ways is this demonstrating a love that is described in Romans 12:10–11?

5. What was Paul anticipating experiencing according to Romans 15:32, had he gotten a chance to visit Rome before he was taken as a prisoner?

Day 4

Read Romans 16:1–23.

1. It is very likely that Phoebe brought Paul's letter to the church in Rome. How does Paul ask them to accept her? In what ways is this language reflective of the language Paul used in the beginning of Romans 14 and Romans 15?

2. Prisca and Aquila are likely the women in Acts 18:2–3, 18, and 26. They are mentioned together in 1 Corinthians 16:19. What labor did they do for the church?

3. What does Paul tell the members of the Roman church to do in Romans 16:17 to those who teach a contrary doctrine, causing divisions and obstacles? Does that advice still prove true to us today?

4. If the church of Rome is known for their obedience (16:19), why would it be especially important for Paul to tell them to avoid false teachers?

5. How has Paul helped them recognize the difference between good and evil over the course of his letter?

Day 5

Read Romans 16:25–27.

1. What mystery has been revealed and fulfilled prophetic writings?

2. How would you describe 'the obedience of faith'?

A great resource from John Piper on the glory of God as seen in Romans can be found by scanning the QR code.



“The heart of the gospel is that Jesus Christ, the righteous one, died for our sins and rose again, eternally triumphant over all his enemies, so that there is now no condemnation, but everlasting joy, for those who trust him. You never, never, never outgrow your need for this gospel. You don’t begin the Christian life with this and then leave it behind and get stronger with something else. God strengthens us with the gospel to the day we die.”

– John Piper

3. Why does it matter that God is the only wise one? And what are we to do because of it?

4. What did you learn about God this week, or what were you reminded of in this week's reading?

5. What is one thing you learned about humanity this week?

6. Take some time to record your sentences from each week of the study into two paragraphs. (1–7, 8–16). Do those paragraphs describe your overall understanding of the book of Romans? If so, we challenge you to memorize it and review it often, and share it as God leads.

