



Intro Letter

Romans

Welcome to the INTRUTH Bible Study on Romans.

Studying the Word of God transforms lives!

The Bible is God's message of redemption, as well as our instruction book for life. God speaks to us through His Word so we can understand the TRUTH of His character and His desire for us and His power available to us. Romans, is an extremely valuable book because it explains important doctrinal principles and imparts instruction and help in living an abundant Christian life.

Each lesson has a memory verse and around 25 questions, all aimed at helping the reader first to know what the Bible says, and then to understand what it means and finally how it applies both personally but especially to God's greater purpose. The lessons offer encouragements to Learn, Love and Walk in God's Truth, and include a short summary of the Scripture covered. This study is written with the English Standard Version (ESV), but any translation will enhance your experience and enrich your discussion. The NIV and NLT translations are especially good for understanding difficult passages.

This 16 week study covers the entire book of Romans and is geared toward adults or young adults. To get the most out of this study, first do the lesson on your own, asking God to give you insight. Then you will gain further understanding by discussing the questions in a small group and learning from other people. Relationships become deep and rich when the Bible is the topic of discussion!

In the Book of Romans, God spoke powerful truths which are either alarming or freeing depending on one's response to them. Paul had all the credentials that were considered to be the perfect Jew, yet they amounted to nothing when he was miraculously met by Jesus on the road to Damascus. Because of God's grace, Paul was freed from having to prove himself and live up to the law, which was impossible. He passed on the message of God's holiness and grace not only to Jews, but also to Gentiles, so that everyone might be free from sin and experience unity and the power of God in their lives. This understanding brings hope and promise to the one who clings to God's grace.

May the Lord use this study of Romans to help you grow in your knowledge and love for God and develop a life-long love for the Bible. May it also encourage you to connect in a community that prays, supports and shares life together.

"For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor power, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:38-39



Romans



THEME VERSE: "...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by His blood to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in His divine forbearance He had passed over former sins."
Romans 3:23-25

Author

The apostle Paul, a Jew who studied under Gamaliel, a teacher of the Pharisees. He was a tentmaker by trade, and originally persecuted the Christians in his mistaken zeal to please God. Paul wrote 13 of the 21 epistles in the New Testament.

Date

Paul likely wrote Romans from Corinth during his 3rd missionary journey in A.D. 57 (Acts 20:2-3). He was not the founder of the church in Rome, nor had he ever been to Rome, though eventually was imprisoned in Rome, where he wrote more epistles.

Purpose

The Roman Church included both Jewish and Gentile Christians. Paul wrote in order to clarify important truths- that no one could be justified by obeying the law; that all are sinful, deserving of death and in need of salvation; that God's provision for salvation is through faith in His Son, the crucified and risen Lord Jesus Christ. Paul confronted those who were trying to get new believers to go back under the law.

Method

Jewish and Gentile Christians were very different from one another, the Jews having been set apart and given the law by God, the Old Covenant, while the Gentiles had come to faith under the New Covenant, faith in Jesus Christ alone. Paul contrasts the two covenants in order help people truly be free from sin and the constant striving to earn or maintain salvation. God delivered us FROM sin in order that we might live FOR Him.

Outline

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| Chapters 1-8 | Doctrine- God's Perfect Justice and Divine Grace |
| Chapters 9-11 | Israel's Place in the History of Salvation |
| Chapters 12-16 | Practical Application for the Christian Life |

The Good News – Romans 1:1-17



MEMORY VERSE: 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.
Romans 1:16

DAY 1 MEET THE APOSTLE PAUL — Romans 1:1-7

1. What three ways does Paul describe himself in verse 1?
2. What truths does Paul teach about “the gospel of God” and the Bible?
vv.2-3a
3. How is Jesus Christ both human and divine? vv.3-4
4. What did Jesus Christ our Lord do for us? vv.5-6
5. Who are “saints” and how are they blessed by God? v.7 See also Psalm 31:23, Ephesians 1:1,15-20
6. Paul was Christ’s servant, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, and he was also a saint. Which of these do you think also apply to you?

LEARN THE TRUTH

The Apostle Paul was a man on a mission. He lived to tell anyone who would listen the good news of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. As you learn the important doctrinal truths in Romans, ask God to lead you so you too may join Him on the mission of spreading the Good News!

DAY 2 A HEART FOR PRAYER — Romans 1:8-10

7. Why was Paul thankful for the believers in Rome?

8. Considering that Romans was written in roughly AD 57, how might Paul have learned about their faith?

9. How do you think people might describe your faith? How would you want them to describe it?

10. Which phrases reveal Paul's heartfelt affection for both the Lord and the Romans?

DAY 3 A HEART FOR COMMUNITY — Romans 1:11-13

11. What reasons did Paul give for his longing to visit Rome?

12. How do you think believers encourage each other? Hebrews 10:23-25

13. What do you think kept Paul from visiting Rome earlier? Romans 15:20-23

14. What "harvest" did Paul hope to reap in Rome? John 4:31-38

DAY 4 A HEART FOR GOD'S CALLING — Romans 1:14-15

15. What does it mean to be obliged or obligated?

16. What was Paul's attitude toward his obligation?

17. To whom or what do you feel obligated?

18. What is your attitude toward your obligations? Do you see them as a distraction, or as a calling?

DAY 5 A HEART FOR THE GOSPEL – Romans 1:16-17

19. What is the “gospel?” I Corinthians 15:1-8

20. How did Paul feel about the gospel? Why?

21. Why do you think believers might be “ashamed of the gospel,” or hesitant to share it?

22. Who does God want to receive the gift of salvation? 2 Peter 3:9

23. Can you think of people in your life who need salvation? What is your attitude towards them?

24. What must one do to receive salvation? John 3:16

LOVE THE TRUTH

Salvation through Jesus Christ is offered to everyone. Do you know this truth? Have you accepted the sacrifice Christ made on the cross for you? If you haven't already, now is the time to thank God for His provision and accept His offer of forgiveness and eternal life.

Romans 1:1-17

The Good News

The book of Romans is a letter from the Apostle Paul to the believers in Rome. Originally named Saul, he was a devout Jew, Pharisee and persecutor of the followers of Christ. The account of his dramatic encounter with Jesus Christ is told in Acts 9, when Saul (Paul) was traveling to Damascus. The Lord, who had already been crucified, risen from the dead and ascended to heaven, spoke to Saul and changed his life forever. The Lord told Saul that he was, “a chosen instrument of Mine to carry to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. (Acts 9:15) Saul believed in Christ and became, “God’s servant, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God.” Paul’s life was transformed by the grace and power of God.

Paul’s mission was to share the radical good news with both Jews and Gentiles. It was radical because it went against everything people had previously thought. People felt they were in good standing with God due to their bloodline, either as a Jew descended from Abraham or as a person of power and privilege by their standing in society, or because of obeying the Law. The truth is that no one can be in good standing with God, no matter who they are because everyone is guilty of sin, and deserving of death. Everyone needs a Savior.

The gospel was especially radical to people in Rome because, at the time this was written, Rome controlled most of the known world- at sea, in commerce, in all power and influence. Caesar was considered to be a god, and the arbiter of right and wrong. The Roman standard displayed an eagle, the symbol of invincible authority and power. The message that people needed a Savior who died for every human being sounded like nonsense to this powerful people. It was because of this thinking that Paul said, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.” Romans 1:6

Jesus Christ is indeed our only hope, the Savior who loves us and gave His life for us. He is fully God, has been with the Father since the beginning of creation and time, and holds the world together even today. Jesus humbled Himself by becoming fully human, lived a sinless life, and bore the sins of the world on the cross. He rose from the dead and was exalted by God once again, having conquered death once for all. It is only through faith in Jesus Christ, and no other that we can be saved. (Colossians 1:15-17, Philippians 2:5-10, Acts 4:12)

WALK IN TRUTH



Paul’s deep love for God, His Word, prayer and people is to be admired and imitated. But how did he so drastically change? How did he go from hate to love, and from being so terribly misled to wholeheartedly embracing the call on his life to tell people the good news about Jesus Christ? Did his own self discipline change him? No! Only God can transform people from the inside out. Belief in God opens the door to change, but the power to change lies in the source of belief- the God of the universe. He can do anything, and He chose Paul, “the worst of sinners” (1 Timothy 1:12-16) to be “God’s chosen instrument.”

Like Paul, we are “saints” set aside for God’s purpose if we follow Christ. His Spirit will do powerful works in us if we trust Him as Savior and yield to Him as Lord. When the grace of God’s unconditional love meets human unworthiness with surrender, saints are born, lives are changed and we join God on mission.

Deserved Wrath – Romans 1:18–32



MEMORY VERSE: For although they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks to Him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Romans 1:21

DAY 1 ROMANS 1:18-20 — Suppressed Truth

1. What incurs the wrath of God? v.18
2. What has God revealed about Himself for all to see?
3. Why do you think ungodliness and unrighteousness suppress the truth about God?
4. What further insight does Isaiah 5:20 add to your understanding of this?
5. Why are some people “without excuse” regarding the wrath of God?

LEARN THE TRUTH

Our attitude toward God is revealed in our choices, and our choices are determined by our beliefs. We can believe truth or we can exchange truth for a lie. Ask God to help you recognize the difference between truth and lies, and to transform your life as you believe and embrace truth.

DAY 2 ROMANS 1:21-23 — The Path of Rejecting God

6. Describe the progression that happens when people choose to reject God.
7. Why do you think failing to honor and thank God leads to futile thinking and darkened hearts?

8. How can a person claim to be wise but actually be a fool? See also 1 Corinthians 1:18-20

9. How can a person actually gain the wisdom of God? Proverbs 2:1-12

10. What common excuses do people make for rejecting God? Why are such excuses foolish?

DAY 3 ROMANS 1:24-27 — Exchanging Truth for a Lie

11. What does God do when people continue to reject Him? v.24

12. How does verse 25 describe the mindset and behavior of such people?

13. In what dishonorable passions that go against nature will some people indulge?

14. Why is sexual sin especially harmful to us? 1 Corinthians 6:13,18-20

15. Why is God's plan for sexuality and marriage so important for understanding the gospel?
Ephesians 5:25-33

DAY 4 ROMANS 1:28-30 — A Debased Mind

16. What is the root cause of a debased or depraved mind?

17. What is the effect or evidence of a "debased mind?"

18. Have you ever seen this extreme negative progression happening in your life? If not why not?

19. We all struggle with sin, often the same sin over and over. No one but Jesus is perfect, and thus worthy of being our Savior. What insight does 1 John 3:1-10 give regarding habitual sin?

20. What should we do when we sin? 1 John 1:8-10

DAY 5 ROMANS 1:32 – God’s Forgiveness, or His Wrath?

21. What are the two signs of a truly debased mind?

22. God made everyone in His own image. He loves us all and sent His Son for each one of us. Why then does He give those who reject Him over to their own passions and sin?

23. Why do you think people keep on practicing sin instead of practicing righteousness, knowing that doing so means they are incurring God’s wrath?

24. Compare verse 32 with verses 16-17. What is needed in life?

25. Look again at the sinful progression in Romans 1:18-32. What opposite attitudes and actions from those sins should we adopt so we can be righteous, living by faith?

LOVE THE TRUTH

Reading about the wrath of God is frightening, but remember, God loves us and does not “wish that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.” (2 Peter 3:9) May your faith in Christ and resulting lifestyle reveal truth rather than suppress it, so that others may come to know and follow God.

Romans 1:18-32

Deserved Wrath

We live in a time where the very concept of “the wrath of God” is not only rejected, but mocked. Instead of honoring God and seeking Biblical truth, it is common to embrace what people call “their own truth,” which places emotions and experience above actual truth. While painful experiences do affect one’s perspective, they do not change what God says is true. Biblical truth is actually more important than ever for one who has been wounded. A philosophy based on anything other than the Word of God does the very thing that brings on the wrath of God- it suppresses truth!

It’s been said that God deals as gently with us as He can and as harshly as He must. He first gently reveals Himself through creation where we see His strength, creativity, power, order and beauty. “The heavens declare the glory of God and the sky above proclaims His handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.” (Psalm 19:1-4) And this is only what we see in the heavens! Think of the oceans, rivers, wildlife, birds, flowers, and the human body. We are without excuse if we do not see evidence of God’s power, love and goodness through His creation.

When people refuse to follow the Lord after He has revealed Himself through creation and the Bible, God will then be harsh in order to get their attention. They are free to reject God and when they do, He gives them over to their own evil desires. The wrath of God is real and it is deserved by those who reject Him. This is harsh, but just, and often the only way some will finally recognize their own depravity and need for a Savior.

Rejecting God begins with some knowledge that He is God, but refusing to repent, honor and follow Him. This is not a mistake or a momentary lapse but rather

deliberate rebellion. We are free to rebel against God, but we are not free from the consequences of rebellion. The progression of evil when rejecting God is staggering, culminating not only in the practice of every kind of sin but also in the approval and even celebration of sin indulged in by others. This mindset suppresses truth because it exchanges the fact that Jesus died to pay our deserved death penalty for sin for the lie that sin does not really matter and does not actually lead to death. But true love does not lie. True love “speaks the truth in love.” (Ephesians 4:15) And the one who truly loves God practices righteousness instead of sin. (1 John 3:9-10)

WALK IN TRUTH



God may “give some people up to the lusts of their hearts,” but this does not mean He gives up on them! God is FOR us! He is FOR you! When we repent, He forgives us and gives us His Holy Spirit to help us become people who are “righteous, living by faith.” (Romans 1:17)

Do not be deceived, the unrighteous practitioners of sin will not inherit the kingdom of God. But Paul also said, “And such **were** some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.” (1 Corinthians 6:9-11) Have you been washed by the blood of Jesus?

Righteousness is not a prerequisite for God’s love, but rather a **result** of His love. Here on earth, we will still sin, but whatever we make a habit of practicing reveals the true condition of our hearts. Practice righteousness rather than sin, and you will experience grace and peace.

God's Righteous Judgment – Romans 2



MEMORY VERSE: ... do you presume on the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?
Romans 2:4

DAY 1 ROMANS 2:1-5 — The Judgement of God

1. Why is it wrong to pass judgment on other people? vv.1-3
2. How is God's heart in judgment different than our own? vv.4-5
3. Why might we "presume" on God's kindness, forbearance and patience?
4. Can you think of a time when you were impacted by someone who treated you with kindness, forbearance and patience?
5. What insight do the following verses give you regarding judgment and hypocrisy?
Matthew 5:21-22, 27-28

Matthew 7:1-5

DAY 2 ROMANS 2:6-11 — God's Impartiality

6. What is God going to do because of His justice? v. 6
7. Describe the character and fate of a person who is a true God-seeker. v.7

LEARN THE TRUTH

It is easy to condemn others whose lives seem more sinful ours. But focusing on other's sins instead of our own is hypocritical because we are all actually guilty of the same sins. Ask God to help you admit your own sin and to be kind and forbearing with others as God always is with you.

8. Describe the character and fate of the one who is merely a self-seeker. v.8

9. Why do you think the words, “practice” or “persist,” are often used to describe the lifestyle of both those who live for God and those who live only for themselves?

10. Why might the fact that God shows no partiality or favoritism be encouraging to some but frightening to others?

DAY 3 ROMANS 2:12-16 — Law vs. Heart

11. What truth applies to everyone regarding salvation or judgment through obedience to God’s Law? vv.12-13

12. The Jews were given God’s law, but the Gentiles (non-Jews) were not. Why is it just for God to judge Gentiles for sinning when they weren’t given the law?

13. What amazing truth is revealed in verses 14-16?

14. What do you think determines whether one’s own conscience can be trusted?

15. Do you find your conscience to be reliable? Why or why not?

DAY 4 ROMANS 2:17-24 — Dishonoring God

16. In what did the Jews of Paul’s day take great pride? vv. 17-20

17. What was God’s plan for the Jews when He first called Abram (Abraham)? Genesis 12:1-4

18. What were the Jewish leaders guilty of doing, and failing to do? vv. 21-24

19. Jesus had harsh words for hypocritical Jewish leaders. Do you think His words apply to anyone besides the people in His day? Matthew 23:27-28

20. Why is God's name blasphemed among non-believers because of hypocritical people who claim to know God?

DAY 5 ROMANS 2:25-29 – The Heart of the Matter

20. What was God's purpose for commanding that Jewish males be circumcised? Genesis 17:9-11

21. What does Scripture teach about true circumcision and what makes a person a true Jew?

22. What do circumcision and baptism have in common? Colossians 2:8-15

23. What in your life- circumcision, baptism, bloodline, good works, good intentions, knowledge, common sense, experience... might you be tempted to rely on in place of Jesus Christ?

24. How is God speaking to you to help you honor instead of dishonoring His name?

LOVE THE TRUTH

Praise God for His kindness! Instead of judging others, repent of your own sin and have His law written on your heart. Then you will have joy and purpose.
"We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. Ephesians 2:10

Romans 2 God's Righteous Judgment

In Romans 2, we see two kinds of judgment, the just judgment of God and the hypocritical judgment of man. Those who reject God by choosing sin over salvation do deserve death, but it is God's place, not ours, to condemn others for eternity. God's kindness is meant to lead people to repentance, so they may be forgiven and become part of God's family. Human judgment is selfish. It justifies one's own sin, forgetting God's mercy while condemning another. Such hypocrisy is worthy of the wrath of God. "Judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment!" James 2:13 NIV

We also see two kinds of "works," those of the flesh and those of the Spirit. We are told that God will render to each one according to his works. Those who trust in their own works of the flesh and refuse to follow God will die. Jesus said, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent." John 6:29 The works of the Spirit do not result **in** salvation but are the result **of** salvation. Those who do the work of seeking after God will have glory, honor and peace.

Paul also contrasts two kinds of people- hearers of the law and doers of the law. One might hear the law and know it well because of upbringing or education, but still miss the point and choose to ignore God's will, presuming to be entitled and beyond accountability. On the other hand, doers of the law may not have the same advantages as the hearers of God's law, but they desire truth in their inmost being and so God writes His law on their hearts. Every person ever born has a fair opportunity to accept or reject the grace of God, to be a hearer of the law or a doer of the law.

The Jews have a unique relationship with God as His "chosen" people, set apart for the purpose of drawing the world to Himself through them. But they grew prideful, believing they had the advantages of the law,

their bloodline and the ritual of circumcision. Failing to obey God and value the truth they had been given, they became hypocrites, doing the very things for which they judged others. Instead of sharing the blessed truth of God with the world, their lives and attitudes turned people away from God and brought dishonor to His name. The Jews are not the only ones who can be guilty of this! Every one of us can fall into this trap. When we are in Christ, we too are "chosen" by God (1 Thessalonians 1:4). "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male or female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." Galatians 3:28 We all must show mercy and bring honor to God.

WALK IN TRUTH



While it is wrong to pass judgment on others, Paul actually instructed believers to judge the extremely sinful behaviors of those within the body of Christ. This is difficult and painful, but is meant to bring a brother or sister in the Lord to repentance and restoration to Christ. Paul also said that when that person repents, we must forgive them take them back into fellowship. (1 Corinthians 5; 2 Corinthians 2:5-8)

Like the people in Paul's day, we can condemn others and fail to appreciate the kindness God has shown us. We can strive in the flesh rather than rest in His saving grace. We must decide if we want to be hearers of the law or doers of the law. Doers of the law have God's law written on their hearts and this is seen in the way we view and treat others. Christ's sacrifice not only saved us FROM sin, but saved us FOR a new rewarding life full of purpose and promise. Walk in this truth and your life will match your beliefs and others will be drawn to God.

Undeserved Righteousness – Romans 3



MEMORY VERSE: ...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus...”
Romans 3:23-24

DAY 1 ROMANS 3:1-8 — The Advantage of the Jew

1. What was the advantage of being Jewish in Paul’s day? vv. 1-2
2. How does a person’s unfaithfulness affect God? Why? vv.3-4
3. Explain the faulty human reasoning Paul describes, as well as the consequence of this way of thinking. vv. 5-8
4. What instruction is given to anyone entrusted with the oracles of God, the Scriptures? Why is this so important? 2 Timothy 3:16-4:5

LEARN THE TRUTH

Why is it so difficult to fully grasp the fact that we cannot do anything to save ourselves? It makes human sense that we must earn God’s favor, but in truth, we cannot. Ask God to give you great faith in Him and in Christ’s perfect sacrifice for your sin. Put your faith and hope in Christ alone!

DAY 2 ROMANS 3:9-18 — None Are Righteous

5. What does everyone on earth have in common? v.9
6. Paul quotes from the Psalms, Isaiah and Ecclesiastes in verses 10-18. In your own words, describe a person who is under sin.

7. Why do you think these verses include such vivid imagery?

8. What is root cause of sin? vv. 11b, 12a,18

DAY 3 ROMANS 3:19-20 — The Purpose of the Mosaic Law

9. What is the purpose of God's law?

10. What is the law not able to do?

11. What do you think God wants to happen when one understands the purpose and limitation of His law?

12. Why do you think it is natural to try to earn God's favor by obeying the law?

13. Compare the danger in relying on obedience to God's law for salvation with the blessing of relying on Christ. See also Galatians 3:10-14

DAY 4 ROMANS 3:21-26 — Justified by Grace Through Faith

14. What is the one and only way for any human to be righteous in God's sight? vv. 21-22

15. Why is this the only way to be saved? v. 23 and Romans 6:23

16. How does justification by grace work? vv. 24-26

17. Why was a blood sacrifice required to fulfill the law? Hebrews 9:22-28

18. According to the Hebrews passage, what is the difference between the Old Testament sacrifices and Christ's sacrifice on the cross.?

19. How does Christ's death on the cross confirm both the witness of the Law and Prophets (v. 21) and the fact that God is both "just and the justifier?"
Isaiah 53

2 Corinthians 5:21

DAY 5 ROMANS 3:27-31 – The Law of Faith

20. What happens to boasting about our good behavior when we place our faith in Christ?
1 Corinthians 1:30-31
21. Why can't our good deeds make up for our guilt? James 2:8-10
22. When you fall into the trap of trying to justify yourself or earn God's favor, what does it look like?
23. Why is our faith, whether Jew or Gentile, enough to justify us and uphold the law?
24. Since good deeds can't save us, where do they fit into the Christian life? Ephesians 2:8-10
25. Considering all the Scriptures in this lesson, what does it mean to you to have faith in Christ?

LOVE THE TRUTH

What a relief it is to know that we cannot possibly earn our way to heaven! It is hard to imagine that justice is served when God calls sinners righteous through faith in Christ, but it's true! Praise God that He did not have to overthrow the law in order to save us. He saved us and still upheld the law!

Romans 3 Undeserved Righteousness

In chapter 2, we learned that being a true Jew refers to an inward condition of the heart, by the Spirit, rather than bloodline or the act of circumcision. Paul now asks if there is any advantage in being a Jew by birth. The answer is “yes,” because they were given the oracles of God- the Law of Moses. With this blessing came the responsibility to make God known to people outside the Jewish faith. They not only failed to do that, but also failed to remember God’s love, faithfulness and mercy in their own history. The same can be said of people today who have the whole Bible yet fail to embrace it, let it equip them for God’s service, and teach others. Fortunately, God’s faithfulness is unaffected by the unfaithfulness of people, and His truth does not change because of people’s sin and lies.

One might then ask, “If a person’s unrighteousness and faithlessness do not affect God’s righteousness, why is the one who continually practices sin condemned? Can’t God work through one’s sin to draw another to Himself?” Of course He can, but the one who lives to practice sin has actually rejected the truth of God’s love and plan for salvation and so deserves God’s wrath.

Salvation by faith is an actual legal standing before God, received through relationship with Christ. God does not overthrow the law, nor does He compromise truth by calling us righteous by grace through faith. In fact He upholds the law and truth because Christ legally paid the price for our sin. Think of parents who bend the rules to justify their child’s behavior. Changing the rules does not make the child ok. Lowering the bar does not make one innocent. God did not lower the bar or change the rules. He upheld the law because Christ was the sinless blood offering who legally atoned for our sins. God is both JUST and the JUSTIFIER.

Does this mean God’s law is useless today? If it were He would not have had to uphold it. But we are free

from constantly striving to live up to it. During Paul’s day, false brothers secretly slipped into the church in order to undermine the freedom people found in Christ so that they might put them back into slavery under the law. (Galatians 2:4) At the same time, some people were so glad that their sins were forgiven that they “presumed on God’s grace” and lived as though they could sin whenever they wanted because they knew they’d be forgiven. We must walk the path of faith, which is one of freedom. We do fall off the path into legalism on one side or license to sin on the other, but God’s grace gets us back on the straight and narrow path.

WALK IN TRUTH



It is delusional to think enough good deeds can make up for our sin. Without faith in Christ, even our best efforts are eternally useless. Salvation comes only through Christ and nothing else. But sometimes we believers need to remember that we also cannot “maintain” our salvation by good works. That too comes down to faith. Jesus Christ is the Author and Perfecter of our faith. (Hebrews 12:2)

If you trust in Him, He will transform you from the inside out, and good works will start to come to you naturally. You will come to agree with the Psalmist who said, “Oh how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day. Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is ever with me...I hold back my feet from every evil way in order to keep your Word...How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Through your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way.” Psalm 119:97-104

The Faith of Abraham – Romans 4



MEMORY VERSE: For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.”
Romans 4:3

DAY 1 ROMANS 4:1-3 — Abraham’s Belief

1. Who is Abraham? v. 1
2. Abraham was originally named Abram. What was God’s plan for Abram and how did he respond? Genesis 12:1-4
3. Abram obeyed God, but still had no heirs. What did God promise Abram during this time of waiting? Genesis 15:1-6
4. Abram changed his whole life in order to obey God. Could he boast about this? If not, why not? v. 2
5. If not because of his obedience, why then was Abraham counted as righteous? v. 3

LEARN THE TRUTH

Do you believe that God is good and will do all that He promises? His promises are based on His character, not on yours. Do you trust in your own good deeds, or is your faith in Jesus Christ? As you learn about Abraham, follow his example of believing God, and you too will be counted as righteous.

DAY 2 ROMANS 4:4-8 — The Blessing of Belief

6. What is the difference between a wage and a gift? vv. 4-5
7. According to King David, what blessings does God’s gift of righteousness provide? vv. 6-8

8. What do you learn about guilt and forgiveness from the Psalm of David? Psalm 32:1-5

9. Read Luke 18:9-14. How was the tax collector's attitude and fate different from that of the Pharisee? How did Jesus explain the difference?

10. Can you relate to the Pharisee or the tax collector, or both? If so, how?

DAY 3 ROMANS 4:9-12 — The Father of All Who Believe

11. Why is it important to understand that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness **before** he had been circumcised instead of **after**?

12. Why might this have made some people angry, but been extremely encouraging to others?

13. Circumcision was commanded by God in the Old Testament (Genesis 17:9-14), as is baptism in the New Testament (Mark 1:4-8; Matthew 28:18-20). What is the connection between rituals or rites ordained by God and actual righteousness? vv. 11-12

14. In what valid expressions of Christianity today might one wrongly value over belief? How do you think we can keep from doing this?

DAY 4 ROMANS 4:13-17 — The Law vs. Faith

15. Why did the promise that Abraham would be **heir of the world** have to come through faith rather than through the law? vv. 13-14

16. If righteousness cannot be gained by obeying the law, for what purpose did God give the law? Galatians 3:19-23

17. What does it mean to you that God's promise depends on faith but rests on grace?
(see Ephesians 2:8-9 from last week for help)

18. In what particular power of God did Abraham believe? v. 17

19. What does this aspect of God's character mean to you? Have you ever experienced it, or is there an area of your life where you would like to experience it?

DAY 5 ROMANS 4:18-25 — God is Able!

20. What obstacles stood in the way of God's promise for Abraham being fulfilled? vv. 18-19

21. Instead of turning away from God, what did he do? Why was he able to do this? vv. 20-22

22. How does Abraham's experience relate to ours? vv. 23-25

23. Are you fully convinced that God will count you righteous if you simply believe?

24. What promises has God given in the Bible that you have either seen fulfilled or are still believing will be fulfilled in "hope against hope?"

LOVE THE TRUTH

Abraham had great faith, yet he failed and sinned, as do all of us. We too are Abraham's children if we "believe in Him who raised from the dead Jesus Christ our Lord" (v. 24). Read verses 20-22 aloud, replacing your name with Abraham's. Embrace this truth and apply it to your own life.

Romans 4 The Faith of Abraham

Long before the time of Christ, God called Abram to leave his people and homeland to follow God to a new place. His journey of faith is recorded in the book of Genesi. It includes lapses of integrity, but in his heart, He trusted God and believed His promises and so God counted him as righteous. When Abram was 99, God established His everlasting covenant of circumcision with Abram and his offspring and changed his name to Abraham, promising he would be the father of many nations. (Genesis 17) Abraham believed God before the covenant of circumcision was made, so it was impossible for his justification to have been earned by obedience to God's law. His justification came only by belief in God. He is a hero to the entire human race because the fact that he was justified because he believed, frees us from the lie that we must continually prove we are good enough to earn God's favor.

God promised Abraham that he would have more descendants than the stars in the sky. That is rather an impossible promise considering he was 75 years old when he received the promise, and his wife, Sarah was barren. It was 25 years before he had a flesh and blood heir with Sarah. In the mean time he and Sarah took shortcuts to *help* God fulfill His promise. Short cuts are easy and seem to make sense at the time, but are actually costly and destructive. Are we any different? It is all too easy to either cut corners to get where we think God wants us, or to claim by faith something we want that God never actually promised. We need to believe what He *has* promised! When we believe God, instead of holding our sins against us, He forgives us. As King David said, "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin."

Think about the words that describe Abraham's faith as he waited for God's promise to be fulfilled. "*In hope he believed against hope*, that he should become the

father of many nations...*He did not weaken in faith*" when he considered the circumstances. (4:18-19) "*No distrust made him waver* concerning the promises of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised."(4:20-21) Abraham held on to the truth and character of the One who created heaven and earth and who cared enough about him to call him to a new life. He did indeed end up having more descendants than there are stars in the sky. And those stars include not only Jews, but anyone who believes in Christ who died for our sins and rose from the dead. We too are the children of Abraham.

WALK IN TRUTH



Believing that God is who He says He is frees us from the trap of having to be perfect or make our own way. We can't be perfect nor can we *help* Him fulfill His promises. We also cannot do enough good deeds to *maintain* our salvation. When we believe in Him, we are not only deemed righteous, forgiven of our sins, but we can rest in knowing that His plan for this life and eternity will indeed come to pass. His love inspires and empowers us to live in obedience to Him. He changes our desires!

Sin is an expression of a wavering or lack of belief and yet Abraham is remembered, not for his sin, but for his belief. What do you want to be remembered for? Belief! Praise God that He does not hold our momentary wavering in trust against us! When we believe God, He calls into existence the things that do not exist in our lives. What does God want to exist in your life that is not there now? Ask Him what that is, and trust Him bring it to pass.

The Triumph of Grace – Romans 5



MEMORY VERSE: ...but God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
Romans 5:8

DAY 1 ROMANS 5:1-5 — Peace Through Christ

1. What happens when we put our faith in Jesus Christ? vv. 1-2
2. Why does being justified by faith also cause us to rejoice in suffering?
3. Why do you think each step of growth through suffering is necessary for the next?
4. What do you think it means that, “hope does not put us to shame?” How is this encouraging to you?
5. What does the Holy Spirit do for us? v. 5

John 14:25-27

DAY 2 ROMANS 5:6-11 — Reconciliation Through Christ

6. For whom did Christ die?
7. Why is this so astonishing? vv. 6-8

LEARN THE TRUTH

We all want and need peace, but it is elusive if we don't know where to find it. And when we lack peace, we also lack joy. God wants us to have both and they only come by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Ask God to help you understand and experience grace so you can have true peace and joy.

8. Using a dictionary and/or other Biblical translations, write down your understanding of these words:
Justified

Saved

Reconciled

9. How do these words, the result of Christ's sacrifice, impact both our present and our future?

10. What was God's motive for Christ's death? How does knowing this affect you?

DAY 3 ROMANS 5:12-14 — The Reign of Death

11. What happened through the life of the one man, Adam?

12. Does this mean we can blame Adam for our sin? see also James 1:13-15

13. If something is not "counted" as sin because there is no law against it, does it still matter?
See also Romans 1:18-20

14. What is the difference between sin committed before the law was given and sin committed after.
What do both have in common?

15. What do you think it means to say that "death reigned" in verse 14?

DAY 4 ROMANS 5:15-19 — The Reign of Grace

16. List the words and phrases that describe Adam's trespass, sin and the legacy he left to the world.

17. List the words and phrases that describe Christ's sacrifice and His legacy.
18. Why is sinful Adam called "a type" of Christ in verse 14? See also 1 Corinthians 15:20-22
19. Adam was one man. Christ was one man. You are one person. What is God's desire for each one of His people? vv. 18-19 2 Corinthians 5:18-21
20. Think of the people who helped you understand salvation in Christ. Why did they impact you so?

DAY 5 ROMANS 5:20-21 – Life Through Jesus Christ

21. What is one result of the law? See also Romans 7:7
22. While sin reigns in death, what does grace accomplish? see also 1 Corinthians 15:54-57
23. What does the abundance of grace mean to you personally?
24. Concepts that have been explained in previous chapters become personal in this chapter. Which of these confuse, encourage or are especially relevant in your life right now: peace, hope, wrath, suffering, justification, reconciliation, sin, death, righteousness, reign, grace, guilt, ambassador?

LOVE THE TRUTH

Nothing compares with the transforming power of grace. No sin you have ever committed is too big for God to forgive. Instead of allowing sin and death to reign in your life, trust in Jesus Christ's free gift for justification, and let the abundance of grace reign in your life now and forever.

Romans 5 The Triumph of Grace

Peace. We all need it and crave it, but it can seem far out of reach. If we are honest with ourselves, we know we have a serious problem that we are unable to fix on our own. We do good deeds hoping to make up for our bad deeds. We say nice things to cover up the evil thoughts in our hearts. But we cannot hide the truth. No effort, self-discipline, good intention or illusion can solve the problem of our sin nature. Deep down, we know we are God's enemies because our own merit is nothing compared to God's infinite goodness.

Sadly, the world will give us props for our efforts and tell us that we are "ok" no matter what we believe or how we live. But the world's opinion cannot make us ok. Without God, sin and death reign in our hearts and we have an enemy who wants it this way because he hates us. But God loves us. Jesus said, The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." John 10:10

God wants us to have peace. He does not want us to sit in failure, at odds with Him. Because of His love for us, He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to live a sinless life and become the unblemished sacrifice to atone for our sins. Our human sense of justice has difficulty accepting this because Christ's death for our sin does not seem to be a fair trade. Something in us wants to prove our worth or at least give our best effort to make us good. But no effort or work can justify us. God's love and grace is totally undeserved, but it is just. The war for your soul is over. The price has been paid by Christ.

Adam was the first to sin and left a legacy of sin and death. God intended for us to live forever, but even before the law was given, people died because of their sin. Adam's one act of disobedience influenced all of humanity, while Christ's one act of obedience led to life and forgiveness for anyone who would receive it. We each have to decide- do we trust in the way of Adam,

resulting in death, or in Christ, which leads to life? When put our faith in Christ, we really and truly are redeemed, reconciled with God, saved from His wrath, justified. He is not mad at us! We can rejoice, knowing that God will use every bit of pain and suffering to develop our character and give us hope. This hope is not a wish or a pipe dream, but rather a certainty that God's promises are true. We will not be disappointed and we will indeed have eternal life. Jesus gave us this promise, "I have said these things to you that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." John 16:33

WALK IN TRUTH



Do you have peace in your life? We often feel peaceful, but then discover the good feelings are simply because there is a current lack of turmoil in our lives. True peace is not just a feeling of tranquility, but an absolute certainty that we are not guilty, but forgiven. We are friends with God, His beloved children, safe in His hands. When we understand this, we have a peace that passes understanding.

If you need to be reconciled with God, accept Christ's death as atonement for your sins. If you have done this, instead of continually dwelling on your failures, meditate on the truth that God loved you so much that He sent His Son to die for you in the midst of your sin. Confess your sins as they arise, knowing that you are not only in a position of righteousness before God, but you are also still in process of becoming all that He intended you to be. The Holy Spirit is transforming your life as you yield to Him. Rejoice in this truth!

Dead to Sin, Alive to God – Romans 6



MEMORY VERSE: For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Romans 6:23

DAY 1 ROMANS 6:1-4 — New Life out of Death

1. Read all of chapter 6. How many times do you see the word, “sin,” or a word that refers to sin? Why do you think it is mentioned so many times?
2. Why do you think Paul posed the question in verse 1? see also 5:20-21
3. What was his reasoning as he answered his own question?
4. What is your understanding of baptism according to these verses? See also Acts 2:37-39.
5. What do you think it looks like to “die to sin,” and to “walk in newness of life?”

LEARN THE TRUTH

Sin can be mighty appealing, but while it satisfies for a moment, it leads to death in the end. Without Christ, we are enslaved to sin, but Christ’s death *for* us has broken the power of sin *over* us. Think about your habitual choices. Are you choosing life or death? Who is your master?

DAY 2 ROMANS 6:5-11 — United with Christ

6. What can we know with certainty when we are united with Christ in baptism? v. 5

7. Why did our “old self” have to be crucified with Christ? vv. 6-7

Galatians 2:20-21

8. What assurances do we have because Christ was raised from the dead? vv. 8-10

9. What mindset are believers to have? Do you feel you have this mindset? Why or why not? v. 11

Ephesians 4:17-24

10. Why is being *free* from sin different from simply *refraining* from sin? 2 Corinthians 5:17

DAY 3 ROMANS 6:12-14 — The Believer’s Responsibility

11. In order to live as a new creation, what must believers be careful *not* to do? Why?

12. What should we do instead? Why?

13. Why does sin have no dominion over followers of Christ?

14. Jot down actions that will help us grow in our new position in Christ. Colossians 3:1-17

15. What have you found to be especially difficult, or helpful, in your journey from being an instrument of unrighteousness to one of righteousness?

DAY 4 ROMANS 6:15-19 — Choose Your Master

16. Paul asked a similar question in verse 15 to the one in verse 1. What was he concerned about?

17. Why is it so important that we stop sinning, even though we know we will be forgiven?
18. Slaves historically have no free will. How does the slavery described here include free will as well as a lack of free will?
19. What do you think it means to be a slave to righteousness? See also Luke 16:13
20. How does knowing the truth of this Scripture encourage you as you make daily decisions?

DAY 5 ROMANS 6:20-23 – Wage or Gift?

21. What is true about a person who is enslaved to sin? vv. 20-21
22. What lies or mindset do you think keep a person enslaved to sin?
23. What most appeals to you about being free from sin and a slave to God?
24. Are you concerned about anything in your life that threatens to own you, or might be keeping you from experiencing true freedom in Christ?
25. How does Psalm 103:10-12 encourage you if you are troubled by sin in your past or current life?

**LOVE THE
TRUTH**

The strongest person on earth is a slave- either enslaved to sin, or to God. No one is stronger than their master. If we offer ourselves to sin, it will own us and control us. If we offer ourselves to Christ, He will not only forgive us, but transform us. The weakest person on earth can be strong in the Lord.

Romans 6

Dead to Sin, Alive to God

Obviously sin is a very serious matter. Because God loves us, He hates the devastation sin causes in our lives, especially as it puts a wedge in our relationship with Him and leads to death. God moved heaven and earth to provide a way for us to be free from sin and spend eternity with Him. Through faith in Christ, we are deemed righteous, free from the eternal death penalty of sin. He paid the price! Sin also has no more power over us because Christ defeated death at the cross. It is vital that we choose daily to rely on the power of the Holy Spirit, the same power that raised Christ from the dead. When we do, we *experience* freedom from sin and live in righteousness. It is possible to be saved by Christ's sacrifice, yet still live in bondage to sin.

Sin and righteousness, law and grace are *authorities* that legally bind us to obedience. We *will* obey one or the other. Aristotle said that each of our actions are voluntary, but with each voluntary action our disposition becomes increasingly involuntary. As time goes on, we continue to make choices, but each of our choices are influenced by former choices until a predisposition toward right or wrong develops. We choose our master by our repeated choices.

Paul exhorts believers to become in experience what they are in position- dead to sin and alive to God! While salvation in Christ is immediate upon believing, it takes time to fully grasp what this means. While sin no longer has power over us, sometimes it *feels* like sin is our master because we are still tempted, and still give in to sin at times. The more we choose to live in obedience to God, the more He changes our desires, empowering us to live in freedom. We choose to "put off" the old life and "put on" the new life. We choose to present ourselves to God and his Word, and let Him renew our hearts and thoughts. We choose to learn and to love His Word and walk in truth. Sin has no power over us when we choose God as our master. When we do this,

we are not only IN Christ, but we are all about Christ.

There is no reason to hold on to guilt for sin that has been forgiven, and no reason to keep replaying it in our minds. Because Satan is "the accuser of the brethren," he, and sometimes people who know us, will continually remind us of shameful deeds from our past. (Revelation 12:10) But God does not look at us that way. He is the only one who has a right to measure us, and He measures accurately! Because of faith in Christ, we measure up! God counts us as righteous and He remembers our sins no more!

WALK IN TRUTH



Are you bothered by the sin in your life, either from your past or in the present? Do you realize that you are forgiven when you are IN Christ? The truth is that, upon believing in Christ, God has "removed our iniquities as far as the east is from the west" (Psalm 103:12) Why did God use the analogy of east and west to describe forgiveness? Think about the globe. If you travel north, you will eventually arrive at the north pole. If you keep going, you will then be traveling south and will eventually come to the south pole. But if you travel east or west, you can keep going in that direction indefinitely. In this sense, the east and west never meet. Our sins are remembered no more unless we turn back in the direction of our past! God forgets our sins, so we must too!

"By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before Him; for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and He knows everything."
1 John 3:19-20

Two Natures at Battle – Romans 7



MEMORY VERSE: But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code. Romans 7:6

DAY 1 ROMANS 7:1-6 — Dying to the Law

1. When is the law binding on a person? v.1
2. What is the law regarding a married woman and her husband? vv.2-3
3. Why is it necessary for the believer (wife) to die to the law (husband)? v.4
4. Consider the illustration of marriage. Why do you think it is the believer (wife) who dies rather than the husband (law)?
5. What is the difference between being bound to the law and belonging to Christ? vv.5-6

Ephesians 5:8-10

DAY 2 ROMANS 7:7-12 — The Law and Sin

6. What is true about God's law and commands?
v.7
v.10
v.12

LEARN THE TRUTH

We know that, because of Christ Jesus, our sins are forgiven and sin no longer has power over us. And yet we still sin! Over and over! Why? Because our old nature fights against our new nature and we forget what we know, that the only power strong enough to win this battle is Christ Jesus Himself.

7. What is true about our sin nature with regards to the law? vv.8-11

8. What does Psalm 19:7-11 tell you about God's law and commands?

9. How do you think sin deceives us about God's law?

10. What do these passages tell you about God's law?
Matthew 5:17-20

Jeremiah 31:33

DAY 3 ROMANS 7:13-17 — The Root Cause of Spiritual Death

11. What does not cause death? _____ What does cause death? _____
12. Why is it so important to recognize sin as sin and understand how it works in us? vv.13,14

James 1:13-15

13. In chapter 6 we learned that, when we are in Christ, sin has no dominion over us, and we are dead to sin and alive to God. And yet, what trouble still persists?
14. What do you think verse 16 means?
15. What is the cause of evil behavior?

DAY 4 ROMANS 7:18-20 — Two Opposing Natures

16. Last week we also learned that when we are in Christ we are a new creation, the old has passed away and the new has come (2 Corinthians 5:17). How do you reconcile this truth with verse 18?

17. Why is understanding this dilemma important?
Genesis 1:27

John 14:15-17

18. What two different aspects of sin do you see in verses 18-19?

19. Why is verse 20 true, and not just a way of avoiding personal responsibility?

DAY 5 ROMANS 7:21-25 – Christ is our Victory

20. Describe the battle that goes in in even the most devoted Christian.

21. Do you find this information encouraging or discouraging? Why?

22. Do you identify with verse 24? Do you feel more, or less, “wretched” as you mature in your faith?

23. What is the triumphant truth about our predicament?

24. What helps you experience the victory of Christ in the daily battle against the flesh?

25. How can Psalm 51 help our desires and behavior to match up?

LOVE THE TRUTH

When we were saved by Christ, not only were our sins forgiven, but God gave us a new nature and the Holy Spirit to help us live in victory over sin. It can be very discouraging to realize that we still fall into sin. But God is faithful to forgive us over and over again as He patiently shapes and matures us.

Romans 7

Two Natures at Battle

Romans 7 is an extremely important chapter which can easily be misunderstood. We know that those who are “saved” through Christ’s death on the cross are set apart for God and are being sanctified by Him. God’s law is good, but powerless to make us holy. Even the most well intentioned Christian stands condemned by the law because they simply cannot keep it by their own efforts. Peter rebuked those who tried to force new Gentile believers into going back under the law of Moses, by saying, “why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke on the neck of disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will.” Acts 15:10-11

Paul used marriage to explain the limitation of the law. According to the law, a wife cannot be married to one man and marry another while she is still married to her first husband. She also cannot live with a different man while still married to her husband. When her husband dies, she is no longer a wife, but a widow, and so she is free to marry again. In this analogy, the first husband is the law, and death reigns when the law rules. The second husband is Christ, and through Him many are made righteous, which the law cannot do. Believers, both male and female, are the wife- the bride of Christ, and our loyalty must be to Him. We cannot be “married” to both the law and to Christ.

“...we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.” Galatians 2:15-16

Paul insists that the law is good and holy because it tells us what sin is and points us to the good life that God intended. But if our focus is on keeping the law, we can only fail because we lack the power to obey it.

In fact our nature fights against it, making us desire sin more than God. But when our loyalty and focus are on Christ, His redemptive love and the power of His Spirit living in us results in gratitude and a love for His law. We still sin, but we are forgiven and our very nature changes. We long to obey because we see the fruit of that obedience.

Pride and self-centeredness are enemies to living in obedience to God. When we think we are beyond temptation, or judge others for their sin, we set ourselves up for failure. Recognizing our weakness, confessing our sins and trusting in God are key to ongoing victorious living.

WALK IN TRUTH



Every new believer comes to the saving grace of God through the power of the Holy Spirit. He convicts us of sin and our desperate need of a Saviour. We understand and appreciate Christ’s sacrifice and grace at the time we surrender to Christ because we realize we are dead without Christ. The problem is that we fall back into operating in the flesh, trying to prove we are indeed in the Lord. We try to maintain our salvation by behaving ourselves in the useless power of our flesh. We fail miserably. It is vital that we continue to walk in the power of the Spirit and rely on Christ daily for mercy, forgiveness of sin and strength to move on.

“Who has bewitched you?...Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?” (Galatians 3:1-3) Our flesh will never perfect us, but thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! Our hope lies in Him.

Our Present Help – Romans 8:1-17



MEMORY VERSE: There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. Romans 8:1-2

DAY 1 ROMANS 8:1-4 — No Condemnation

1. While we understand from Romans 7 that we are in a battle between our flesh and spirit, what wonderful news are we given in verses 1-2?
2. According to the dictionary, what does it mean to be condemned?
3. Why is the person who is in Christ free from condemnation by the law?
4. What facts do verses 3 and 4 reveal about the law?
5. How might you describe the person who is no longer condemned by the law according to verses 1-4.

LEARN THE TRUTH

Romans 8 is one of the most powerful chapters in the Bible because it tells us about how the Holy Spirit works in our lives. We do not have to be tormented by our inability to live as we ought because, when we are in Christ, the Spirit of God dwells within us, giving life to our mortal bodies.

DAY 2 ROMANS 8:5-8 — A New Mindset

6. What is the mindset and outcome for those who live according to the flesh?
7. What is the mindset and outcome for those who live according to the Spirit?

8. What are the “things of the Spirit?”

9. Look up the word, “mind” in the dictionary. How do the definitions expand your understanding of the power of our minds? What do these words add to your understanding of the power of our minds?

10. What do the following verses teach about God’s will for our minds?
Matthew 22:37-38

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

Ephesians 4:20-24

DAY 3 ROMANS 8:9-11 — Christ In Us

11. What is true of everyone who belongs to Christ? v. 9

Ephesians 1:13-14

John 14:15-17

12. How is the Christian described in verse 10?

13. What promise is given to God’s children in verse 11?

14. How do, or should, these truths affect our lives?

15. What must we do to experience the fullness of the Holy Spirit in our lives? John 15:5

DAY 4 ROMANS 8:12-14 — Spiritual Victory Over Sinful Nature

16. What are we in debt, or obligated, to because of God’s Spirit living in us?

17. Why do you think one might feel obligated to live according to the flesh?

18. Even the most devoted Christian sins. What is the difference between the devoted Christian and the one who will die from living according to the flesh? 1 John 3:9-10
19. Think about the word, “practice.” How do our practices affect our lives for better or worse?
20. What do our practices reveal about our hearts? Galatians 5:16-25

DAY 5 ROMANS 8:15-17 – Heirs With Christ

21. We are free from condemnation (v.1). What else are we free from because of Jesus Christ?
22. List as many differences as you can think of between a son and a slave.
23. Why do you think “adoption” is a good way to describe our position as God’s children?
24. What has been your experience regarding verses 16 and 17?
25. What might God have you change in your thinking or practices so you could more powerfully experience your position as God’s child, co-heir with Christ and indwelling of the Holy Spirit?

LOVE THE TRUTH

Because of Jesus, we can be free from condemnation for sin and free from the fear of falling back into slavery to sin. The Holy Spirit is more powerful than anything we can imagine, and He lives in every one of us who follow Christ as Savior. Believe in the power of God to help you live in the Spirit!

Romans 8:1-17

Our Present Help

The fact that we are totally free from condemnation for our sins through Christ seems too good to be true, but it is true! We know that laws must be obeyed, and when they are not, there are just consequences. We also know that we are law-breakers, deserving of death. The most wonderful gift ever given was Jesus Christ paying for our sins with His own life on the cross. The requirements of the law have been legally met through Jesus Christ, the only human who actually did not deserve death. We are not guilty if we are in Him! We are legally deemed righteous!

Not only are we not guilty, but we have the Holy Spirit living in us the moment we believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior. It is God's Spirit who helps us walk in the way of the Spirit rather than continuing in the flesh. It is His Spirit who brings life to our mortal bodies, which are doomed to decay and death. The same Spirit who raised Jesus Christ from the dead guarantees that we too will have life after death and receive resurrected bodies as Christ already has. Before receiving Christ, it was most natural to focus on the desires of the world, the things of the flesh. But our new life in Christ requires a new mindset. We must take every thought captive to the Lord, to think about the things He thinks about and value the things He values. The only way this will happen is if we abide in Him and in His Word. When we abide in Him we experience His transforming power to become the kind of people He wants us to be. Jesus said, 'If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.'" (John 8:32-33) Self-effort can be exhausting and discouraging, while abiding in God is uplifting and freeing. When we choose to abide in Him, and He does a mighty work in us.

Are you plagued or disappointed by continuing evil thoughts and desires? You are not alone. When we sin, we must repent and move on. We must learn from our

sins, but not hold our them over our own heads. To do so means our hope is in our own behavior rather than the power of God. "By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before Him; for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and He knows everything." (1 John 3:19-20) Our hearts condemn us because we still sin and we hate it, but we do not have to fear God's anger. He knows our true hearts in Him. We have received God's Spirit of adoption, meaning He picked us! He chose us to be His beloved children and heirs with Christ. In this family, we will suffer with Christ, but we will also be glorified with Him.

WALK IN TRUTH



What are your habits, customs, daily rituals? What is your practice? The fact is, practice makes perfect. We become proficient in that which we habitually pursue, for better or worse. Years ago, Brother Lawrence wrote a book entitled *Practicing the Presence of God*. Imagine how powerful our lives can be when we practice abiding in Christ. There is no greater power for change than the power that raised Christ from the dead.

Ask God to help you desire Him more than anything the world has to offer. Embrace truth and adjust your beliefs to what the Bible says. Devote yourself to loving and learning the Word of God. Ask Him to give you a hunger and thirst for the things He values and to help you love as He loves. He will change you and you will mature and become proficient at walking in the truth, loving as God loves and experiencing freedom from the old way of life.

Our Future Hope – Romans 8:18–39



MEMORY VERSE: And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose.
Romans 8:28

DAY 1 ROMANS 8:18-22 — Suffering and Glory

1. How does the last sentence in v.17 lead to the great promise in v.18?
2. How did Paul's own life lend credibility to the truth of verse 18?
2 Corinthians 11:23-28
3. In using personification, what human attributes did Paul use to describe the plight of creation?
4. What insight do these verses give you about creation?
Genesis 3:17-19

2 Peter 3:13
5. How do these truths make you feel- excited, frightened, hopeful? Why?

LEARN THE TRUTH

We learned last week that the Holy Spirit dwells in believers and His mighty power works in us. This week we will see that the Spirit also gives hope for the future as we suffer and groan during these troubling times. We eagerly wait in hope because God promises the future will be magnificent.

DAY 2 ROMANS 8:23-25 — Personal Suffering

6. Why do followers of Christ both “groan inwardly” and “wait eagerly?”

2 Corinthians 5:1-5

7. What is meant by “firstfruits?” 1 Corinthians 15:20-23

8. What is true about “hope,” especially the hope of those who are in Christ?

9. Why do you think patience so important as we wait in hope?

10. What practices or truths help you as you wait patiently in hope?

DAY 3 ROMANS 8:26-30 — Intercessory Prayer

11. What weakness do we all have and what solution does the Holy Spirit provide? v.26

12. Why is the Holy Spirit better able to intercede for us than we are for ourselves?

13. What magnificent truth is in Romans 8:28? Why is this verse so important, especially in this context?

14. What does the Bible say about people who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior? vv.29-30

15. What is God’s desire for all people, and how should this affect your prayer life? 1 Timothy 2:1-6

DAY 4 ROMANS 8:31-34 — God Is For Us

16. Of what truths can we be certain because of the fact that God is for us? vv. 31-34

17. What is “against us” according to the following three passages?
Psalm 37:12-13

Isaiah 59:12,13

1 Peter 5:8

18. Which opposition is giving you the most trouble lately- wicked people, your own sin, or the devil?
19. Which force are you more aware of in your life lately, the evil which is against you, or the power of God who is for you?
20. How does knowing that it is God who justifies and Christ who died yet also intercedes for us affect your thinking?

DAY 5 ROMANS 8:35-39 – More Than Conquerors

21. What are all the things that threaten but cannot separate us from the love of Christ? vv. 35, 38-39
22. How would you explain the the paradox in verses 36 and 37?
23. Life is constantly changing, rules seem to change every day, persecution is increasing. Why can we be certain that we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us?
Malachi 3:6

Hebrews 13:8
24. What threatens to separate you personally from God's love?
25. How have you seen the truth of Romans 8:28 and Romans 8:37 in your life? What might help you realize these truths more deeply?

LOVE THE TRUTH

God is indeed for us, so NOTHING can succeed against us. God can take the very worst evil, sadness or disaster and use it to accomplish His purpose in our lives. No matter what happens down here on earth, we will spend eternity with the Lord in glory, so we are indeed conquerors.

Romans 8:18-39

Our Future Hope

Are you suffering? Is your body breaking down due to age or sickness? Do the current natural disasters scare you? Are you discouraged by the evil behavior and twisted thinking of this world? Are you tired of constant difficulty? Here on earth, we groan as we are in bondage to decay, as is all creation. But this is only temporary! No matter how bad things get, none of it compares to what we will one day see and experience if we belong to God. He never changes and His glory is incomprehensible. In the midst of our groaning, we must wait eagerly for the redemption of our bodies. "May integrity and uprightness preserve me for I wait for You." Psalm 25:21

Not only must we wait in hope for the glory that will be revealed to us, but we must trust Him every day with the struggles we endure. We must be people of prayer. It is good to lift up our needs to the Lord, but it is also easy to presume we know what is best when we often don't. Sometimes we don't even realize we need prayer. God knows all and sees all. His ways are higher than ours and so the Holy Spirit intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. When we cry out for help in prayer, we must honor God and submit to His perfect will. He promises that He will cause all things to work together for good for those who love Him and are called according to His purpose. "I wait for the Lord, my soul waits and in His word I hope; my soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning." Psalm 130:5

God knew from the beginning who would fear Him and follow Him. Because He forenew His children, He predestined them to be conformed to the image of His Son. He has called, justified and glorified them. This mighty encouraging during the difficult times of waiting in hope. We know that God wants everyone to be saved (2 Peter 3:9), yet many reject Him and instead choose their own destiny which results in separation

from God, eternal judgement and death. But we who are in Christ say, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Psalm 23:6

Christians everywhere face persecution, some much worse than others. Many are already being killed and regarded as sheep to be slaughtered and this his will only get worse as the end draws near. "I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and will execute justice for the needy. Surely the righteous shall give thanks to your name; the upright shall dwell in your presence." Psalm 140:12-13

WALK IN TRUTH



God has given five mighty promises to those who love and are called by Him. 1- He will cause all things to work together for good for His purposes. 2- His Spirit intercedes for us in prayer according to His will. 3- God is FOR US and is stronger than anything against us. 4- We are more than conquerors in everything through Him. 5- NOTHING can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. We can experience these truths, but we can also miss out on the victory. We must not only believe these promises, but live every day in light of them. Imagine the peace and joy from knowing that God is for us and nothing can stand against us. Walk in these truths and let the God's love and power affect every day of your life in every circumstance. "I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living! Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!" Psalm 27:13-14

The Sovereign Mercy of God – Romans 9



MEMORY VERSE: “Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence; and whoever believes in Him will not be put to shame.”
Romans 9:33

DAY 1 ROMANS 9:1-5 — Paul’s Anguish for the Jews

1. For whom did Paul have such great sorrow? vv.1-4a

Acts 28:26-30

2. What did he wish he could do for his people? Do you think getting that wish would actually help his fellow Jews? Why or why not?

3. Why do you think Paul was so insistent that he was not lying about his grief over Israel?

Acts 22:17-21

Acts 23:12

4. What advantages did the Israelites, the Jews, have? vv.4-5

5. Why do you think there is a tendency to become dull to the truth when surrounded by blessings?

DAY 2 ROMANS 9:6-13 — Flesh vs. Promise

6. What is true of the individual descendants in the nation of Israel? vv. 6-9

7. How do the following verses help explain the difference between children of the flesh vs. promise?
Genesis 16:1-4

LEARN THE TRUTH

God chose the nation of Israel to be His special people through whom He would reveal Himself to the world. In spite of their many blessings, the Jews rejected Jesus Christ, the Messiah and a fellow Jew. The nation of Israel proved that salvation comes only through belief in Jesus Christ, not in ancestry.

Genesis 17:15-21

Genesis 21:1-7

Galatians 4:21-31

8. How does the description of Rebekah and Isaac's sons, Jacob and Esau, reinforce the idea of being chosen, or children of the promise? vv.10-13
9. Given this background, what then do you think it means that God "loved" Jacob but "hated" Esau?

DAY 3 ROMANS 9:14-24 — God's Abundant Sovereign Mercy

10. Why is there no injustice on God's part in electing, or choosing certain people? vv.14-16
11. How do the following verses confirm God's sovereign character of both justice and mercy?
John 3:16-17
Romans 3:23
Romans 6:23
12. God continually hardened Pharaoh's heart against the Jews (Exodus chapters 3-14). What was God's purpose in raising Pharaoh up? vv.17-18
13. What is the human line of reasoning behind the question in verse 19?
14. What points does Paul make in answer to that presumptuous way of thinking? vv.20-24

DAY 4 ROMANS 9:25-29 — Sons of the Living God

15. Who are the "vessels of mercy" (see vv.23-24), and what did Hosea prophesy about them? vv.25-26
16. According to the dictionary, what is a remnant?

17. What will happen to the remnant of Israel and what will happen to the rest of Israel? vv.27-28

18. Remembering that God is all good, knowing, wise and wants everyone to be saved, how do you imagine that this scenario could actually be in everyone's best interest?

19. God wiped out Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:23-29). What do the following verses tell you about God's "patience" with vessels of wrath?

Genesis 13:13

Genesis 14:8-16

20. How do you see God rescuing and blessing people today who respond by despising Him?

DAY 5 ROMANS 9:30-33 – The Rock in Zion

21. What have the Gentiles attained? How?

22. What has Israel failed to attain? Why

23. Verses 32 and 33 are a description of Jesus Christ. How is He described?

24. How do these verses enlarge your view of this Rock in Zion?

Ps. 18:1-2

1 Corinthians 10:1-5

1 Peter 2:6-8

25. Why do you think some people stumble over the Rock, while others trust in Him and will never be put to shame?

LOVE THE TRUTH

Is your heart hard, or is it soft towards God? It is easy to take for granted the blessings God has given us through Jesus. Hard hearted people will always find fault with God and with life, while the soft hearted find joy, freedom and forgiveness. Praise God for His never-ending abundant mercy.

Romans 9

The Sovereign Mercy of God

Paul was griefstricken that his own people, the Jews, had rejected Jesus Christ, the Messiah about whom the prophets spoke throughout their history. God chose the Jews to be His special people but their hard hearts prevented them from truly loving Him. They went on to reject Paul when he realized that Jesus was indeed the long awaited Christ, the Savior of the world. When Paul believed in Jesus, the Jews set out to kill him, saying they would not rest until Paul was dead.

Romans 9-11 is vital for understanding God's purpose both for Israel and for all mankind. He chose to reveal Himself and His plan for salvation for any who would believe through Israel. God's love and care for Israel was obvious. He guided and protected them. To Israel He gave promises, the patriarchs, His commandments, covenants, law and hope. Anyone could look at Israel and see that they were a special people loved by the Almighty God and choose to follow the God of Israel. Instead of receiving the blessings of God and loving Him wholeheartedly, most Jews felt entitled, and relied on their ancestry rather than God's mercy.

God's purpose is for mankind to understand that salvation is through faith, not works. He has a way of turning everything upside down to open our eyes. The natural ancestors of Abraham were not necessarily children of God's promise, while those outside of the lineage of the Jews could be children of the promise by faith. Likewise, a family blessing would have been expected to pass through the first born son, Esau, but instead it went through the second son, Jacob. God obviously loved both Jacob and Esau because He created them both in His own image (Genesis 9:6). But in the bigger picture, He "hated" Esau and "loved" Jacob. God hates the lie that birth order, ancestry or good works can be a means to salvation. He loves simple faith in Christ. Without God's mercy, everyone is doomed because of sin. (Romans 6:23)

God stands outside of time and knows who will reject Him, yet He is patient with these "vessels of wrath, prepared for destruction." God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah because they were filthy and defiant of God, yet Abraham and his men rescued them and restored their possessions when they had been defeated in battle. Sodom and Gomorrah could have repented and embraced God because of His kindness but chose to continue living for pleasure. (Genesis 13:13;14:8-16) Likewise, Pharaoh enjoyed privilege, power and wealth, yet steadfastly had a hard heart. God accomplished His purpose of delivering the Jews through hard-hearted Pharaoh.

WALK IN TRUTH



Do you realize that Abram was nothing special when God called him? He was not "Jewish" as "Israel" did not exist. Abram was just a man living in a godless society who left his people to follow God when He called. In spite of his surroundings, He was receptive to God. God gives us free will to choose whether we will be hard hearted or soft hearted and surrendered to God. He will use either to accomplish His purpose. Do God's methods concern you? Beware lest you think you care more about the lost than does God who made them. Our mercy cannot begin to compare to God's mercy. He saved us through Christ and set our feet on solid ground- the Rock of Christ. He tells us to build our house, our lives, upon the foundation of Christ rather than on the shifting sands of worldly thinking. This Rock is offensive to the hard hearted, causing them to stumble, but we who hope in Him will not be put to shame when we stand before God. (Ps 40:2; Mt 7:24)

The Root and the Branches – Romans 10-11



MEMORY VERSE: ...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. Romans 10:9,10

DAY 1 ROMANS 10:1-13 — Misdirected Zeal vs. Faith

1. What is wrong with the zeal of the Jews? vv.1-4
2. What is the difference between righteousness based on the law and righteousness based on faith? vv.5-8
3. Why is verse 8 especially encouraging?
4. Why are both confession and belief necessary for salvation in Christ? vv.9-10
5. What is true of everyone who puts their trust in Jesus Christ to be made right with God?

Galatians 3:28-29

DAY 2 ROMANS 10:14-21 — Hearing and Believing

6. What must happen for a person get to a place where they call on God? vv.14-17

LEARN THE TRUTH

Paul continues sharing his heart and prayers for his people, the Jews, who have much zeal, yet still miss the key to life- faith in Jesus Christ. Salvation by grace through faith is profound, yet simple, and is available to any honest seeker. Do not let religious zeal blind you to the truth.

7. How do these truths impact your understanding of God's methods and our personal responsibility?

8. How has the nation of Israel "heard" the gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ? vv.18-19; Psalm 19

9. According to Israel's own prophets, did the nation of Israel "understand" the good news of Jesus?
Moses v.19

Isaiah v. 20

Isaiah v. 21

10. Why do you think "disobedience" and a "contrary" heart make it difficult to understand God? And why might God provoking one to "jealousy" and "anger" actually help the rebellious person?

DAY 3 ROMANS 11:1-10 — The Faithful Remnant

11. What proofs are given that God has not rejected Israel even though they have rejected Him? vv.1-4

12. What are the Jews who did not reject Christ called and how did they receive salvation? vv.5-6

13. Who is Baal, and what was Israel's grievous sin with Baal? Numbers 25:1-5

14. What was the result of Israel's rejection of God? vv.7-10

15. Knowing that God is good and loves Israel, how do you reconcile verse 10:21 with verses 11:7-10?

DAY 4 ROMANS 11:11-24 — The Root and the Branches

16. What hope and higher purpose of God do you see in verses 11-16?

17. While jealousy is normally considered a sin, how is it a good thing in verses 11 and 14? (and 10:19)

18. Identify each part of the olive tree and describe its fate or purpose. vv.16-20
branches-

wild shoots-

root-

19. What warning is given to the wild shoots in verses 18-21? Why is this warning also important for us today?

2 Corinthians 10:17-18

20. How would you describe the kindness and severity of God in this context? 21-24

DAY 5 ROMANS 11:25-33 – The Mystery of Mercy

21. What mystery did Paul want the Christians to understand, and why was this needed? v.25

Acts 13:38-48

22. What truths are we given about the partial hardening and future hope for Israel? vv.26-29

23. What do both Jews and Gentiles have in common? vv.30-32

24. How do verses 33-36 encourage you as you sometimes struggle to understand God's ways?

25. What one truth, challenge or inspiration stands out to you from Romans 10 and 11?

LOVE THE TRUTH

Jesus Christ is the nourishing root. No one can take pride in their position as either a natural branch or a wild shoot. It is only by God's magnificent mercy that one can be part of the olive tree! All who believe in Christ become one in Christ, Abraham's offspring and heirs according to God's promise.

Romans 10-11

The Root and the Branches

At this time in our study, we must differentiate between nations and individuals. Paul is heartbroken over the nation of Israel, who has rebelled against God. He warned His chosen people, the Jews, that they were continually relying on their bloodline and knowledge of the law for righteousness rather than on God Himself. They valued extra Biblical knowledge and man made laws to make them right with God. The wonderful truth is that what can be known about God is available to us right here and now when the message of His Word, as in the Bible, is in our hearts and mouths.

We are now living in the times of the Gentiles, when the nation of Israel is put on hold, so to speak. Today non-Jewish people more readily recognize Jesus as the Messiah, the Savior, while most Jews reject Him. Individually, anyone can come to Christ at any time in history as God's character is evident through creation and through the Law He gave Israel. People need to hear the truth to believe and God calls each of us to make His Word known to others so they can believe.

No matter what is going on in the world, God always has a "remnant" of believers. Paul is an example of a Jew who recognized Jesus Christ when his kinsmen did not. He once had misdirected zeal for God and for Judaism, but Christ opened his eyes to true knowledge of God, rather than legalistic religious knowledge. If you ever feel like the whole world is against God and hates you for following Him, look for the remnant, those who have not bought into the world's way of thinking. There are always faithful followers of Christ. Even if you see the church turn away from Biblical truth, look for the remnant, the small group who has not bowed down to evil.

Just as God warned the Jews not to take pride in their bloodline, He warns Gentile believers not to take pride in the fact that they seem to have "figured it out" by be-

lieving in Christ. Gentile believers have no business looking down on the Jews who "don't get it," as they have been grafted in to the root of Christ. Gentiles are not the natural branches, but are a "wild shoot," and should be forever grateful for God's grace and mercy. Pray for those who are living in darkness! God cares deeply about the natural branches that have been pruned, and when the time is right Jews will return to Him and be grafted in again. God has shown mercy to the world by revealing Himself through the Jews, and He has shown mercy to the Jews by revealing Himself to the Gentiles. Trust in the ROOT, for all who are connected to Him are one in Christ and will be saved.

WALK IN TRUTH



The way to salvation is quite simple- heartfelt confession and belief in Jesus Christ. God has a purpose for each of His children- to know Him and to bring others to Him. He has a call on each of our lives, but if we choose to live in disobedience with a contrary heart, we miss everything He has for us and actually blind ourselves. His purpose for each of His children is that they not only confess and believe in Him wholeheartedly, but that they learn and love His Word. We must walk in Biblical truth in order to impact people for Christ.

Examine your heart today. Is there anything in your life- a habit, attitude or practice that is keeping you from fulfilling God's purpose? Do you ever feel jealous of people who seem especially close to God? Perhaps God is trying to get your attention. Let that jealousy motivate you to draw closer to the Lord. May you know the depth of His riches, wisdom and glory by trusting in the Root.

A Living Sacrifice – Romans 12:1–13:7



MEMORY VERSE: I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Romans 12:1

DAY 1 ROMANS 12:1-2 — The Transformed Life

1. What “appeal” does Paul make? Why do you think he appeals rather than instructs the believers?
2. Why is each part of ourselves important in our spiritual worship of God?
Body-
Mind-
Will-
3. What does it mean to be “transformed by the renewal of your mind?”

2 Timothy 3:16

4. What is the result of a transformed mind? v.2
5. What do you think it looks like to be a Living Sacrifice for God? Can you think of anyone in particular who attempts to live this way?

DAY 2 ROMANS 12:3-8 — Gifts of Grace in Community

6. How does Paul instruct believers to think? What benefit do you see in having this mindset? vv.3-5
7. What does it mean to have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us? v.6a

LEARN THE TRUTH

Having learned about the doctrinal truths of salvation through faith in Christ, the remaining chapters of Romans explain how to live a life of gratitude, purpose and unity in the body of Christ. May you fully embrace the truths in the remaining chapters and experience God’s blessings as a result.

8. Do any of these gifts seem to describe, motivate or appeal to you? If so, how? vv.6-8
 prophesy- divinely inspired speaking forth God's Word
 service- helping or serving others, meeting immediate physical needs
 teaching- helping others understand God's Word
 exhortation- advising, encouraging, comforting, urging others to spiritual growth and maturity
 contribute/give- sharing generously, often financially
 lead/administrate- organize, unite, direct a body of believers
 acts of mercy- come alongside, understand or share in another's grief or joy

9. What does 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 add to your understanding of God's design for spiritual gifts?

10. What positive results might you expect when the body of Christ takes Romans 12:3-8 to heart?
 What negative results likely result when these verses are overlooked or ignored?

DAY 3 ROMANS 12:9-13: — Genuine Love

11. Verse 9 tells us that love must be "genuine." How does the dictionary define the word, "genuine?"

12. Genuine love abhors what is _____ and holds fast to what is _____. v.9
 How do you think counterfeit love reacts to good and evil?

13. Genuine love loves one another with _____, and outdoes one another in _____. v.10 How do you suppose counterfeit love twists this?

14. What do you think the instructions in verses 11-13 have to do with genuine love?

15. Not everyone has the spiritual gifts of "giving" and "serving," yet all are told to do so. v.13 Why might this be?

DAY 4 ROMANS 12:14-21 — Faith that Overcomes

16. How are we to respond to persecution? Why would this response glorify God? v. 14

Philippians 2:5-11

17. Do you think verses 15-16 come to us naturally? Why are these essential for living in harmony?
18. Why is it wrong to repay evil for evil? What should our goal be instead? vv.17-18
19. What happens when we leave vengeance to God, and instead offer food and water to our enemies? vv.19-21
20. Can you think of a time you loved someone you viewed as an enemy, or received genuine love when you were seen as an enemy?

DAY 5 ROMANS 13:1-7 – Submission to Governing Authorities

21. Why are we instructed to be subject to the governing authorities? v.1 Do you believe this?
22. What is true of the one who resists or rebels against the authority God has appointed? vv.2-4
23. What are the benefits of submitting to the governing authorities? v.5 How have you seen this to be true in your life?
24. Do you think there is a difference between what one owes to an authority and what the authority actually deserves? What is our responsibility in this? vv.6-7
25. What are believers to do when authorities demand sinful obedience? Acts 5:17-29; Acts 24:10-16

LOVE THE TRUTH

Living sacrifices are a lovely witness! People notice when God's children are humble, respectful of others and obedient to authority. Do not use bad authorities as an excuse to rebel. At the same time, we must honor God first and have a clear conscience before Him. This can sometimes be costly.

Romans 12:1–13:7

A Living Sacrifice

Paul has been abundantly clear that salvation and righteousness are a gift of grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone. In light of this, he appeals to believers to present themselves to God as living sacrifices, to be transformed to His ways and will. The fact is, humans conform. If we do not deliberately reject the world's ways and conform to God's ways, we will worship self and created things. Our motivation to live sacrificially is not fear, but gratitude for God's love and mercy!

Sober judgment of self is crucial for living sacrifices. We tend to think we are either superior or inferior to others. Both extremes are wrong and neither are based on truth because both deny the power and need for the cross. Humble and honest self evaluation and a habit of regular admission and confession of sins, invites God to reveal the gifts of grace He has given each of us. This attitude enables us to experience joy as we operate out of our spiritual gift rather than our fleshly talents. This benefits the body of Christ, glorifies God and draws unbelievers to Christ. Whether gifted in prophetically speaking forth the Word of God; serving others; studying and explaining the Word of God so people can understand; encouraging and exhorting others to grow in their faith; giving generously to people or ministries; leading and organizing; or showing mercy and compassion, all the gifts are for the whole church. Regarding the gifts, Paul said, "let us use them," so we must endeavor out how God has gifted us. When everyone serves in their gifts, the needs are met, no one person is carrying too large a load and everyone has purpose. The church is then balanced and values all it's members, without bestowing greater honor to particularly gifted people.

Christians are radically different than those who do not know Christ. The ways of God simply do not match the ways of the world. Worldly wisdom tells us to take revenge on people who have wronged us and that we

must look out for #1. But this attitude lacks humility and genuine love. We want to be strong, but often it takes the greatest strength to return good for evil, love for hate. We are called to submit to authorities with whom we might not like or agree because God placed those people in power, even when they do not respect Him. Long ago, God's people begged Him to give them a king so they could be like the other nations. He warned them that having such authority over them would cost them dearly. It did then and still does today. (1 Samuel 8) Regardless, God can and does use those in authority to accomplish His purpose.

WALK IN TRUTH



God has allowed evil people to be in positions of authority all over the world. We are living in a society today that increasingly dishonors God. When we habitually choose to respect and obey those in authority, our behavior gives us a greater voice when and if the time comes to stand firm FOR God and AGAINST evil. We are not called to blindly obey evil laws. In Exodus 1, the king of Egypt commanded the midwives to kill the Hebrew baby boys when they were born, so that the Jewish race might be wiped out. But the midwives feared God and so they disobeyed the king and even lied about it. Because those brave women did what was right, God blessed them with families. We must glorify God as we abhor evil and cling to what is good. The unbelieving world must see that we are not overcome by evil but rather we overcome evil with good. It all starts with choosing to be a living sacrifice, conforming to God's will and trusting Him to guide us through difficult times, no matter the cost.

The Law of Love – Romans 13:8–14:23



MEMORY VERSE: Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. Romans 13:8

DAY 1 ROMANS 13:8-14 — Love and the Law

1. Paul had just instructed Christians pay taxes and respect to the proper authorities. What does he now say about our true debt? vv.8-9
2. Explain verse 10 in your own words. See also Galatians 5:13-15
3. Describe the urgency Paul seems to feel. vv.11-12
4. How do we “walk properly?” vv.13-14
5. What does it mean to “put on the Lord Jesus Christ?” v.14 See also Ephesians 6:10-18

LEARN THE TRUTH

Loving one another is the one “debt” Paul says believers have in the kingdom. He lays out specific relational aspects of walking in community with fellow believers. Watch for these as you study and ask God to reveal areas in your life that need work, and to help you walk in love and faith.

DAY 2 ROMANS 14:1-4 — Love for the Weak

6. How are we to treat a person who is “weak in faith?” vv.1-2
7. Why would quarreling about food cause difficulty within the fellowship? vv.3-4

8. What kinds of food were causing division, and why is this important? 1 Corinthians 8:4-13

9. How do you think we “pass judgment” on other believers today?

10. What determines whether a person stands or falls? vv.3-4

DAY 3 ROMANS 14:5-12 — Love with Personal Conviction

11. What does Paul mean about “esteeming” days? v.5

12. How do you think we can become “fully convinced in our own minds” about matters of food and days?

13. What is foundational for all believers in regards to behavior? vv.6-9

14. Why is it foolish to pass judgment on, or despise, other believers for their convictions? vv.10-12

15. In giving “an account to God,” what do we pray will happen? Matthew 25:21

DAY 4 ROMANS 14:13-19 — Love and Mutual Respect

16. How do we practically obey verse 13 in our lives?

17. What is true about food? v.14

18. What harsh words did Paul use to describe the effect our actions can have on a young believer?
vv.15-16

19. Why do you think it is easier to be opinionated and judgmental about non-essential personal convictions than it is to pursue righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit? vv.17-19

20. How does following Paul's instructions build up God's kingdom on earth?

DAY 5 ROMANS 14:20-23 – Walking in Love

21. What has the power to destroy the work of God? Why is this? vv.20-21

22. How can we honor one another by the way we handle our personal convictions? vv.21-23

Philippians 2:3-4

23. How can some of our behaviors bring condemnation on ourselves? vv.21-23

24. How do you think we can be blessed instead of condemned by our actions? James 1:6-8

25. Think about your own life. Do any of your behaviors, while not "sin," need to go? Has someone shown you love by refraining from a behavior that causes you to stumble?

LOVE THE TRUTH

True love is self-denial in midst of conviction. We have many opportunities to love others into the Kingdom, so pay attention and be careful not to push people away by your choices. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you how others perceive you, and be willing to change to meet God's

Romans 13:8-14:23

The Law of Love

Ever consider what the “law of love” looks like in your life? As Paul continues his letter to the Roman church, he wrote, “love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.” (13:10) Just a few days before Jesus was crucified on the cross, He said to His disciples, “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this that someone lay down his life for his friends.” (John 15:12-13) The Scripture in this lesson tells us what it looks like to love sacrificially.

The essentials of Christianity are not up for debate, especially that God is One and has always been, and will always be; that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and was born of a virgin; that salvation comes only through belief in His sinless life and death on the cross to atone for our sins; that He rose from the dead and conquered death once for all, that He is coming again... The Bible is clear about what is good and what is evil, but there are also “gray” areas that the Bible does not forbid and about which we are free to form our own convictions. It is these areas that Paul addresses.

Our one debt to people is to love them because Christ first loved us. We do this by casting off the works of darkness and putting on the armor of light (v.13:12), or essentially walking in righteousness. Our sacrifice for others is nothing compared to the Christ’s sacrifice for us, but it is still important. It begins with denying self and making no provision for the flesh. Our goal must no longer be to gratify our physical desires. (13:14)

Our personal choices matter- both to God and to our fellow believers. Young believers look to more mature Christians for answers on how to live, so we must take care how we walk. We would never purposely put toys in the pathway of a child who is learning to walk lest they trip and get hurt. Likewise, we must give special care to new believers who are “weak in faith.” (14:1)

We are to welcome them, but not to try to convince them to believe as we do about non-essentials such as eating, v and traditions about certain days. While something might not be a sin, it can still cause someone to stumble because of their background, personality or limited knowledge. At the same time, making rules about behavior that God has not called sin creates legalism at the expense of righteousness and peace and joy. Our goal must be to protect the Christian community and avoid the distraction of getting caught up in debating the non-essentials. We must pursue unity in the things that matter Biblically and keep the rest between ourselves and God.

WALK IN TRUTH



Are you showing Christ’s love in your actions and interactions with other believers? Is there a sense of grace about how you deal with people, especially those who are young in their faith? In order to truly love, we must make sure our actions do not cause anyone to stumble. We must be willing to forego something we might normally do in order to avoid confusing a young believer. How do others see us? Do people feel loved by us, or judged? Do we give the impression that our comfort and lifestyle are more important to us than the heart and well-being of others? We must not selfish, but instead walk as Christ did, sacrificially. God has entrusted us with the freedom to choose. While we may understand that something is not sin, others may not. “Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.” (1 Corinthians 8:1) Our life is our witness, and we have the power to build people up by our choices and manner. May our lives give glory to God and cause others to thirst for Him and yearn to know Him better.

Harmony in Mission – Romans 15



MEMORY VERSE: May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 15:5-6

DAY 1 ROMANS 15:1-7 — Following Christ's Example

1. What did Paul mean by “strong” and “weak” believers? vv.1; 14:1-2
2. What are the “strong” obligated to do? What does this look like? vv.1-2
3. Why is Jesus Christ the perfect example of bearing with others? vv.3-7
4. Define “endurance” and “encouragement” as Paul used them here.
5. What purpose does harmony in the body of Christ serve?

John 17:20-23

DAY 2 ROMANS 15:8-13 — Christ Confirms the Promises

6. How and why did Christ become a “servant to the circumcised” (Jews)? vv.8-9
7. What point did Paul make in quoting the Old Testament passages? vv.9-11

LEARN THE TRUTH

Our purpose is to glorify God, and a key to this is living in harmony with other believers. Paul continually exhorted believers to be “like minded” in our hope in Christ! It begins with bearing with each other, encouraging others, and pursuing unity. Look for opportunities to promote harmony in Christ!

8. Why will the Gentiles (non-Jews) have hope when the “root of Jesse” (Jesus) comes? v.12

Acts 3:25-26

Romans 3:28-30

9. What will God give those who believe? v.13

10. How do you think hope is connected to joy and peace? v.13

DAY 3 ROMANS 15:14-21 — God’s Holy Purpose

11. What did Paul praise the Romans for? v.14

12. Why did Paul write “very boldy” about some points to the Roman believers? vv.15-16

13. How might his bold speech have been related to his concern about the strong and weak in faith?

14. Describe Paul’s ministry to the Gentiles and tell why each served to accomplish God’s purpose.
Source of power- vv.16-19

Goal for the Gentiles- vv.16-18, 21

Ambition or method- v.18-21

15. Paul knew God’s holy purpose for him. (Galatians 1:11-16) Do you sense God’s calling on your life?

DAY 4 ROMANS 15:22-27 — Paul’s Desire to Visit Rome

16. What is the reason Paul had not yet visited Rome, but now planned to do so? vv.22-23

17. Why did he long to see the Roman believers? Romans 1:11-15
18. What else did Paul hope to accomplish in Rome and his travels? vv.24-27
19. Paul emphasized love, unity and harmony (13:8; 14:7; 15:5). How and why did the Gentile believers in Macedonia and Achaia live this out for the needy Jews in Jerusalem? vv.26-27
20. What evidence do you see today of this kind of harmony in mission?

DAY 5 ROMANS 15:28-33 – Plans and Purpose

21. How did Paul envision his upcoming ministry in Jerusalem and beyond? vv.28-29
22. How did his plan work out in Jerusalem? Acts 21:27-36
23. While Paul couldn't have known what lay ahead, what did he ask of the Roman believers? vv.30
24. Paul eventually made it back to Rome, but as a prisoner, where he wrote Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians. What does this tell you about the difference between plans and purpose/
25. Glance back at chapters 12-15. What attitudes and actions result in effective ministry for God?

LOVE THE TRUTH

God welcomes all who will come to Him in faith. When we have harmony with other believers, God can accomplish much through us as we serve Him together. If Paul needed prayer and refreshment, we certainly do too. Pray for those who lead and serve you. Think of ways to refresh others to God's glory.

Romans 15

Harmony in Mission

Our purpose as believers is to bring glory to God and one way this happens is when those who are strong bear with the failings of the weak. The Greek word for “strong” means “those who are able,” and “weak” refers to “those who are unable.” Bearing with the failings of the weak involves more than just being patient and overlooking their lack of understanding. It means letting setting aside our desire to please ourselves, and instead building the weak one up for their own good. It does not mean being nice and agreeable, but rather just and truthful and welcoming. We are obligated to do this because Christ welcomed each one of us when we were new to faith in Him. He made us able! When we share in another’s journey, pointing them to Christ in Scripture, reminding them that the Holy Spirit guides them into ever-deepening faith, they are enabled to glorify God in their own walk. They understand that, “it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.” (Philippians 2:13) When the strong encourage the weak, the result is harmony and an abundance of mature believers!

Paul was an exceptional Jew who, until he met Christ, hated the movement of Christ and persecuted the church. (Acts 22). Yet God set him apart, before he was even born, to preach Jesus to the Gentiles. (Galatians 1:15) Paul knew God’s law and covenant with Israel but also knew that Jesus was the fulfillment of the law. He brought the new covenant- salvation through faith in Christ and His broken body and shed blood for sin. (John 3:16, Luke 22:19-20) He understood the desire to obey the law, but also that Gentiles had no history with God’s law. No wonder he cared so much about bearing with one another and having harmony in the church, a mix of Jewish and Gentile believers. Anyone new to the faith could be weak. The Jew could struggle with the idea that they were no longer under the law because of Christ. The Gentile had no experience with the law, but might feel pressured to come under the

law. The answer lies in Jews and Gentiles uniting in faith, rejoicing in God together.

Paul understood God’s calling on his life. He knew his purpose and was determined to share Christ with all who would listen. His ambition was that “those who have never been told of Jesus will see, and those who have never heard will understand.” v.21 Paul had a really good plan for fulfilling his purpose, but God had a much different plan. Acts 22-28 gives the account of his arrest, the plot to kill him, and a shipwreck enroute to Rome. Paul witnessed for God while shipwrecked and in chains. He reached more people than he ever could have in his original plan.

WALK IN TRUTH



Do you realize that your purpose in life is to know God and glorify Father of our Lord Jesus Christ? God has gifted each of us differently so we can fulfill His purpose. The problem in discovering our unique calling is that we tend to think it is all about “us,” and God’s wonderful plan for “us.” But it is actually all about Him. This is why we must stop aiming to please ourselves and start living in harmony with other believers, bearing with those who are young or weak in their faith. We naturally make plans in hopes of fulfilling His mission, but we must hold those plans loosely. The truth is, we can’t think big enough! Think of the millions of people through history whose lives have been changed because of Paul’s story, influence and especially the epistles he wrote while in prison in Rome (Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians). His heartfelt plan couldn’t hold a candle to God’s perfect plan. Start by loving other believers, working to help the weak and unite the body of Christ. Ask God to lead you to HIS plan that you might glorify Him.

Commendations and Doxology – Romans 16



MEMORY VERSE: "...to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen." Romans 16:27

DAY 1 ROMANS 16:1-5 — Gratitude to Close Friends

1. How did Paul describe Phoebe? vv.1-2
2. What did Paul ask the Romans to do for Phoebe? What do you think each request might involve?
3. Describe Prisca and Aquila- their work, ministry, personalities and gifts.
4. What else do we know about Prisca (aka Priscilla) and Aquila?
Acts 18:1-3

Acts 18:18-19

Acts 18:24-26

5. Who is Epaenetus? How did Paul refer to him?

DAY 2 ROMANS 16:6-16 — Gratitude to Fellow Saints

6. What various descriptions of people make up the body of Christ? vv.6-16
7. What words do you hope people might use describe you?

LEARN THE TRUTH

Paul's final thoughts as he closed his letter to the church in Rome were of gratitude to God and to the individuals who walked alongside him in ministry. Notice that it takes the entire Christian community to serve those in need and every person has a role in this. You are meant to be one of those people!

8. What does it mean to “work hard in the Lord?”
Ephesians 4:16

Colossians 3:23-24

9. List some people you know who especially exhibit these traits in the body of Christ:
Hard Workers-

Risk Takers-

Motherly, Fatherly, Mentoring-

Generous-

10. Paul commended at least 26 people in this chapter. What does it tell us that most are never mentioned again in Scripture?

DAY 3 ROMANS 16:17-18 — Be Aware of Opposition

11. Who did Paul say to watch out for, and what did he say to do about them? v.17

12. What is true about such people’s motives and methods? v.18

13. How might they cause “divisions” and create “obstacles” contrary to sound doctrine?
1 Timothy 1:3-7

1 Timothy 6:3-5

14. Why do you think their methods could be successful?

15. In addition to avoiding them, how can we further guard against such people? 1 John 4:1-4

DAY 4 ROMANS 16:19-23 — Paul’s Heart for the Roman Christians

16. Why did Paul rejoice over the Roman believers? v.19

17. What did he want for these people he cared so much about? v.19

18. How you think one can be “wise to what is good and innocent as to what is evil?” Acts 17:11

19. What is promised about Satan’s fate? v.20

20. Paul sent greetings from those who were with him in Corinth. How did he describe them?

DAY 5 ROMANS 16:25-27 – Doxology

21. What is God able to do for believers and by what means does He do this? v.25

22. What is the mystery that was kept secret for long ages, but is now revealed? Ephesians 3:6

23. How has this revelation been made known? v. 26

24. For what purpose has the mystery been revealed to all nations? vv.26-27

25. Why do you think these final verses are an especially fitting ending for the book of Romans?

LOVE THE TRUTH

Paul loved people well and willingly served and sacrificed for anyone who needed the Lord because of his own gratitude to God. Can you make a list, as Paul did, of people who have influenced your walk with Christ? Remember them and take time to thank God, and those people, for loving you so well.

Romans 16

Commendations and Doxology

The apostle Paul was strong in his conviction about who Jesus is and thus who he is in Christ. He was sure of his calling by God- to preach to the Gentiles and unite Jews and Gentiles into one body to the glory of God. He also cared deeply about those who ministered alongside him. He won souls and made dear friends. Women were an important part of the community of saints. Paul called Phoebe a “sister” and a “servant,” and wanted her to be not only welcomed, but assisted in whatever she might need in Rome. In Greek, the word, “servant” is the feminine word for “deacon.” It is quite possible that Phoebe was a deaconess in the church in Corinth. Regardless, it appears as though she was the person who carried Paul’s letter to the church in Rome, thus his instructions to give her a warm welcome.

Paul’s beautiful list of mighty saints whom he loved and commended tells us much about the body of Christ. It takes all kinds of uniquely gifted people to do God’s work. Every one of the people Paul listed were beloved and valuable, and an important part of Paul’s ministry. Some were relatives or kinsmen, others were hard-working, had been imprisoned with him for their faith, or loved him as a mother or spiritual mentor. No one had to be like anyone else, but instead just be themselves and work together for God’s glory. Each one of us has people in our lives who do the same for us. Some help us grow in our understanding of God’s word. Others encourage us or even join us in the pain we suffer for our faith. It is vital that we focus on those who have helped us rather than on those who have hurt us. We must be thankful for those who bless us and let go of grumbling and frustration over those who do not.

Because Paul loved the church, he urged them to be on the look-out for dangerous people within the church. There will always be some who thrive on division and

turn people’s attention to issues not in keeping with the teachings of Christ and the Bible, and cause weak ones to re-evaluate what they know to be true. Evil people infiltrate the church and we must be aware of this. We must be wise- always learning and growing in our understanding the Bible so we are able to recognize lies from the enemy. We must be convinced of truth, so that we are not swayed by flattery and cheap substitutes of God’s Word. The truth will win out. Satan will eventually be thrown into the lake of fire to be tormented day and night for eternity. (Revelation 20:10) Meanwhile, we will be with God in glory for all eternity.

WALK IN TRUTH



What is needed in your life today? Perhaps you need better friends, or an appreciation of friends you already have who have walked alongside you in your journey with God. Maybe you need someone to help you understand the Scriptures and apply them to your life, or a person to encourage you as you work through the issues of life. We all need to understand our purpose of loving God and glorifying Him, furthering His kingdom by serving others and speaking truth to those who are lost and in need of Jesus Christ as Savior. We must live as the friends of Paul did- building believers up rather than causing them to stumble. We must also always remain vigilant in our faith, being open to the Holy Spirit moving us toward something or someone, but also recognizing when there is evil around which threatens to cause doubt and division. May you, like Paul, embrace the doxology and may they become a reality in your life, “the obedience of faith- to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.