



8-WEEK BIBLE STUDY GUIDE





PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS

Introduction

Welcome to our 8-week journey through Paul's Letter to the Romans, one of the most significant theological works in the New Testament. This letter, written by the Apostle Paul to the church in Rome around 57 AD, systematically presents the foundation of Christian doctrine and has profoundly influenced Christian theology throughout history.

Each week, we will explore key passages from Romans, diving deep into their meaning, context, and application to our lives today. This guide includes both participant materials and leader's notes to facilitate meaningful group discussion and personal reflection.

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE

- Read the assigned passage before your group meeting
- Reflect on the context and key questions
- Use the note spaces to record your thoughts and insights
- Come prepared to share and discuss with your group
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CONTENTS

Week 1 — Intro | Gospel Defined [1:1-17]

Week 2 — Universal Need for Salvation [1:18-3:20]

Week 3 — Justification by Faith [3:21-5:21]

Week 4 — Freedom from Sin [Rom 5-7]

Week 5 — Life in the Spirit [Romans 8]

Week 6 — God's Sovereign Choice [9-11]

Week 7 — Christian Living [Rom 12:1-15:13]

Week 8 — Paul's final Ministry [15:14-16:27]



Introduction to Romans & The Gospel Defined

Romans 1:1-17

Background

Romans was written by Paul around 57 AD while he was in Corinth on his third missionary journey. Unlike most of Paul's other letters, he had not yet visited the church in Rome. He was writing to introduce himself and his teaching before his planned visit. The church in Rome consisted of both Jewish and Gentile Christians, which explains Paul's emphasis on how the gospel applies to both groups.

Romans 1

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,
2 (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)
3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;
4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: .../

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.
17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

Key Themes

1. Paul's introduction and credentials as an apostle
2. The nature of the gospel as the fulfillment of God's promises
3. The power of the gospel for salvation
4. Faith as the means of receiving righteousness





Introduction to Romans & The Gospel Defined

Discussion Questions

1. How does Paul identify himself in the opening verses? What does this tell us about his understanding of his role and calling?

2. What does Paul mean when he says he is "not ashamed of the gospel"? Why might someone be tempted to be ashamed of it?

3. What is significant about Paul's statement that the gospel is "the power of God for salvation"?

4. What does Paul mean by "from faith for faith"? How is righteousness revealed through faith?

5. How does Paul's quote from Habakkuk 2:4 ("The righteous shall live by faith") connect to his argument about the gospel?





Introduction to Romans & The Gospel Defined

Personal Reflection & Application

How have you experienced the "power" of the gospel in your own life?

In what situations might you be tempted to be "ashamed" of the gospel?
How can you overcome this?

How does understanding that righteousness comes through faith impact
how you approach your relationship with God?





The Universal Need for Salvation

Romans 1:1-18–3:20

Background

In this section, Paul establishes the universal human need for salvation. He systematically shows how all people—whether pagan Gentiles who violate natural law, moralists who fail to live up to their own standards, or Jews who have not kept the Law—stand condemned before God. This sets the stage for his explanation of justification by faith.

Romans 1:18–3:20

^{1:18} For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

^{2:1} Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.

^{3:23} For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Key Themes

1. God's wrath against sin
2. Human suppression of truth and rejection of God
3. The moral deterioration that follows rejection of God
4. The hypocrisy of judging others while sinning oneself
5. The inadequacy of merely possessing or hearing the Law
6. Universal human sinfulness





The Universal Need for Salvation

Discussion Questions

1. According to Romans 1:18-23, what is the basis for God's judgment against humanity? What evidence of God have people rejected?

2. Romans 1:24-32 describes a progression of sin. How does Paul characterise this downward spiral?

3. In Romans 2:1-16, Paul addresses the "moral person" who judges others. What is his main point to such people?

4. What advantages did the Jewish people have according to Romans 2:17-29? Why weren't these advantages enough?

5. What does Paul mean in Romans 3:9-20 when he says that "no one is righteous"? How does he support this claim?





The Universal Need for Salvation

Personal Reflection & Application

How does understanding universal sinfulness affect how you view yourself in relation to God?

In what ways might you be guilty of judging others while excusing similar sins in your own life?

How does Paul's teaching that external religious observance is insufficient challenge contemporary religious practices?





Justification by Faith

Romans 3:21–5:21

Background

After establishing the universal need for salvation, Paul now presents the solution: justification by faith in Christ. This section contains some of the most important theological teaching in the Bible about how sinners can be made right with God. Paul contrasts the old way of trying to achieve righteousness through law-keeping with the new way of receiving righteousness as a gift through faith.

Romans 3:21–5:21 Focus

^{3:21} But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

²² Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

²³ For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; .../

.../ ^{3:28} Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

.../ ^{5:1} Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

Key Themes

1. Justification by faith apart from works
2. Christ's sacrifice as atonement for sin
3. The example of Abraham's faith
4. Peace with God through justification
5. Adam and Christ as representatives of humanity



Justification by Faith

Discussion Questions

1. According to Romans 3:21-26, how has God revealed his righteousness apart from the law? What role does faith play?

2. What does Paul mean by "justified" in this passage? How does this differ from other concepts of righteousness?

3. How does Paul use Abraham as an example of justification by faith in chapter 4? Why is his example significant?

4. According to Romans 5:1-11, what benefits come from being justified by faith?

5. In Romans 5:12-21, Paul compares Adam and Christ. What is the main point of this comparison?





Justification by Faith

Personal Reflection & Application

How does understanding justification by faith affect your daily walk with God?

In what ways might you still be tempted to earn God's favor through your own efforts?

How does the peace we have with God through Christ impact how we handle life's difficulties?





Freedom from Sin's Power

Romans 6–7

Overview

Having established justification by faith, Paul now addresses potential objections and implications. If we are saved by grace rather than law-keeping, does that mean we can sin freely? Paul's answer is an emphatic "No!" In these chapters, he explains how believers have died to sin and been freed from the law, yet still experience an internal struggle with sin in this life.

Romans 6–7 Focus

^{6:1} What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?
² God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

¹⁴ For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

^{7:15} For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

^{7: 18} For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

Key Themes

1. Union with Christ in his death and resurrection
2. Freedom from slavery to sin
3. Death to the law and life in the Spirit
4. The ongoing struggle with sin in the Christian life





Freedom from Sin's Power

Discussion Questions

1. According to Romans 6:1-14, what is the relationship between our baptism and our freedom from sin? What does it mean to be "dead to sin"?

2. How does Paul's analogy of slavery in Romans 6:15-23 help us understand our relationship to sin and righteousness?

3. What analogy does Paul use in Romans 7:1-6 to explain our relationship to the law? How does this connect to his larger argument?

4. Romans 7:7-13 discusses the relationship between the law and sin. What purpose does the law serve according to Paul?

5. Who is the "I" in Romans 7:14-25? What internal struggle does Paul describe, and how does this relate to your experience?





Freedom from Sin's Power

Personal Reflection & Application

How does understanding your union with Christ in his death and resurrection change how you view your struggle with sin?

In what areas of your life do you most identify with Paul's struggle described in Romans 7:14-25?

How might viewing yourself as "dead to sin" and "alive to God" change your approach to temptation?





Life in The Spirit

Romans 8

Overview

Romans 8 is often regarded as one of the most uplifting chapters in Scripture. After the struggle depicted in chapter 7, Paul now explains how the Holy Spirit enables believers to live in victory. The chapter moves from "no condemnation" at the beginning to "no separation" at the end, describing the security and hope we have in Christ through the Spirit.

Romans 8 Focus

8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

[.../]

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

[.../]

28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

[.../]

Key Themes

1. Freedom from condemnation in Christ
2. Life according to the Spirit versus life according to the flesh
3. Adoption as God's children through the Spirit
4. The future glory awaiting believers
5. The Spirit's help in our weakness
6. God's sovereign purpose in all things
7. The inseparability of believers from God's love





Life in The Spirit

Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean that there is "no condemnation" for those in Christ (8:1)? How does this connect to Paul's discussion in chapter 7?

2. According to Romans 8:5-11, what is the difference between living according to the flesh and living according to the Spirit?

3. What does it mean to be adopted as God's children (8:14-17)? How does the Spirit testify to our adoption?

4. How does Paul describe creation's longing in 8:18-25? How does this relate to our own groaning and hope?





Life in The Spirit

Discussion Questions

5. How does the Spirit help us in our weakness according to 8:26-27?

6. What is Paul's main point in 8:28-30 about God's sovereign purpose?

7. What is the significance of the rhetorical questions in 8:31-35? What is Paul's ultimate conclusion about the Christian's security?





Life in The Spirit

Personal Reflection & Application

How does the assurance of "no condemnation" impact your daily relationship with God?

In what areas of your life do you most need the Spirit's help in your weakness?

How has Romans 8:28 been meaningful in your life? How might understanding God's sovereign purpose change how you view difficult circumstances?

What circumstances tempt you to doubt God's love? How does Romans 8:31-39 address those doubts?



God's Sovereign Choice

Romans 9–11

Overview

In these chapters, Paul addresses a critical question: If the gospel is the fulfilment of God's promises to Israel, why have so many Jews rejected Christ? Has God's word failed? Paul explores God's sovereignty in election, Israel's responsibility for unbelief, and God's ultimate plan for Israel's restoration. These chapters contain some of the most challenging theological material in Romans.

Romans 9–11 Focus

"As he says in Hosea, 'Those who were not my people I will call "my people," and her who was not beloved I will call "beloved."'" (Romans 9:25)

"For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes."
(Romans 10:4)

"I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin."
(Romans 11:1)

"For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable." (Romans 11:29)

Key Themes

1. God's sovereign choice in election
2. The relationship between divine sovereignty and human responsibility
3. Israel's misunderstanding of righteousness
4. The accessibility of salvation through faith
5. The partial and temporary nature of Israel's hardening
6. The future hope for Israel's restoration
7. God's mysterious wisdom in redemptive history



God's Sovereign Choice

Discussion Questions

1. What is Paul's concern at the beginning of Romans 9? Why is he so deeply troubled?

2. How do the examples of Isaac and Jacob in Romans 9:6-13 illustrate Paul's point about God's sovereignty in election?

3. What does Paul mean by the metaphor of the potter and clay in Romans 9:19-24? How does this help us understand God's sovereignty?

4. According to Romans 10:1-13, why did Israel fail to attain righteousness? What was their fundamental mistake?





God's Sovereign Choice

Discussion Questions

5. What is the significance of Paul's question in Romans 11:1? How does he answer it?

6. What is the meaning of the olive tree metaphor in Romans 11:17-24?

7. What is the "mystery" Paul reveals in Romans 11:25-32 about Israel's future?





God's Sovereign Choice

Personal Reflection & Application

How does understanding God's sovereignty in salvation affect your view of your own faith journey?

In what ways might you, like Israel, be tempted to establish your own righteousness rather than submitting to God's righteousness?

How should Paul's concern for his fellow Israelites influence your attitude toward those who have not embraced Christ?

What does Romans 11:33-36 teach us about the proper response to God's mysterious ways?





Christian Living

Romans 12:1–15:13

Overview

After the doctrinal exposition of chapters 1-11, Paul now turns to practical application. With the theological foundation laid, he shows how the gospel transforms daily life. These chapters cover a wide range of ethical instructions addressing relationships within the church, with governing authorities, and between Christians with different convictions about disputable matters.

Romans 12–15 Focus

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (Romans 12:1)

"Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good." (Romans 12:9)

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." (Romans 13:1)

"Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations." (Romans 14:1)

Key Themes

1. Transformation through the renewal of the mind
2. Proper use of spiritual gifts in the body of Christ
3. Practical expressions of genuine love
4. Christian response to opposition and persecution
5. Submission to governing authorities
6. The centrality of love as the fulfillment of the law
7. Living in light of Christ's return
8. Freedom and responsibility in disputable matters
9. Unity despite diversity in the church



Christian Living

Discussion Questions

1. In Romans 12:1-2, what does it mean to be a "living sacrifice"? How is this connected to "spiritual worship" and the "renewal of your mind"?

2. According to Romans 12:3-8, how should we think about ourselves and our gifts? What principles guide the use of spiritual gifts?

3. Romans 12:9-21 provides practical guidance for loving others. Which of these instructions do you find most challenging? Why?

4. What is the basis for submission to governing authorities in Romans 13:1-7? Are there any implied limits to this submission?



Christian Living

Discussion Questions

5. How does Paul resolve the tension between Christian freedom and responsibility in chapters 14-15? What principles does he provide for dealing with disagreements over disputable matters?

6. What is the significance of Paul's prayer for unity in Romans 15:5-6? How does this relate to his earlier discussion of Jew-Gentile relations?





Christian Living

Personal Reflection & Application

How are you currently presenting your body as a "living sacrifice"?
What areas of your life need to be more fully dedicated to God?

Which of your spiritual gifts could be used more effectively to serve the
body of Christ?

How might the principles in Romans 13 guide your attitude toward civil
authorities, even those with whom you disagree?

What "disputable matters" create tension in your church community?
How can you apply Paul's principles from Romans 14-15 to these
situations?



Paul's Ministry & Final Greetings

Romans 15:14–16:27

Overview

In the final chapters of Romans, Paul shares his personal plans for ministry, including his desire to visit Rome on his way to Spain. He also sends greetings to many individuals in the Roman church, giving us a glimpse into the diverse community of believers there. The letter concludes with final warnings, doxology, and greetings from Paul's companions.

Romans 15–16 Focus

"And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another."
(Romans 15:14)

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." (Romans 16:17)

"And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.." (Romans 16:20)

Key Themes

1. Paul's apostolic mission to the Gentiles
2. The importance of pioneer missionary work
3. The partnership between churches in the gospel
4. The diversity of the early Christian community
5. The significant role of women in the early church
6. Warning against false teachers
7. The ultimate triumph of God over evil



Paul's Ministry & Final Greetings

Discussion Questions

1. What does Romans 15:14-21 reveal about Paul's understanding of his ministry? What principles can we derive for our own ministries?

2. According to Romans 15:22-33, what were Paul's travel plans? Why did he want to visit Rome, and what did he hope to accomplish there?

3. What do we learn about the Roman church from the list of greetings in Romans 16:1-16? What insights does this give us into the early Christian community?

4. What is the significance of Paul's commendation of Phoebe in Romans 16:1-2?





Paul's Ministry & Final Greetings

Discussion Questions

5. What warning does Paul give in Romans 16:17-19? How does this relate to his teaching throughout the letter?

6. How does the doxology in Romans 16:25-27 summarise themes from the entire letter?





Paul's Ministry & Final Greetings

Personal Reflection & Application

How does Paul's missionary vision challenge your own involvement in spreading the gospel?

What can we learn from the diverse community in Rome about building unity across social, ethnic, and economic lines in our churches today?

In what ways can you better recognise and appreciate those who work hard in the Lord, as Paul does with his many greetings?

How can we apply Paul's warning about divisive people while maintaining a commitment to sound doctrine?



Paul's Letter to the Romans

Bible Study Concluding Comments

CONCLUSION

As we conclude our study of Romans, we have journeyed through one of the most profound theological works in Scripture. From the universal need for salvation, through justification by faith, life in the Spirit, God's sovereignty, and practical Christian living, Paul's letter provides a comprehensive view of the gospel and its implications. Our prayer is that this study has deepened your understanding of the gospel, strengthened your faith, and equipped you to live out the truths of Romans in your daily life. As Paul reminds us in

Romans 11:33-36:

³³ O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

³⁴ For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?

³⁵ Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?

³⁶ For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

Suggestions for Continued Growth:

Consider extending this study by focusing on specific themes in Romans:

1. The relationship between law and grace
2. The role of Israel in God's redemptive plan
3. The Holy Spirit in the believer's life
4. Paul's theology of justification
5. Christian ethics and community life

Additional Resources

- "Romans" by John Stott (Bible Speaks Today series)
- "Commentary on Romans" by Douglas Moo
- "Romans: An Exposition of Chapter 1-7: The Gospel of God" by D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones
- "Paul for Everyone: Romans" by N.T. Wright

