



ROMANS 9-16

ST MATTS LIFE GROUP BOOKLET

Term 2, 2022

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Introduction

Romans is possibly the most influential letter ever written. The list of names who have been converted from reading this letter would be countless. Below are some who have written about their own conversion from reading Romans:

“At the end of this sentence, a clear light flooded my heart and all the darkness of doubt vanished away” – St Augustine, describing his conversion in 386 (After reading Rom 13:13-14)

“This passage of Paul became to me a gateway into heaven” – Martin Luther, describing his conversion in 1518 (After reading Rom 1:17)

“... an assurance was given to me that Christ had taken my sins away, even mine” – John Wesley, describing his conversion in 1738 (while listening to a reading of Martin Luther’s Preface to Romans)

This term we are finishing off this epic letter. There are three main sections we will cover:

Romans 9-11 – God’s Righteousness to Israel and the Gentiles. In this section Paul defends the Gospel in relation to the problem of Israel not mass converting when the Messiah appeared. Paul deals with the past, present and future of the Jews.

Romans 12-15:13 – God’s Righteousness in Everyday Life. In this section we see the transforming power of the Gospel lived out in our Christian conduct in relation to rulers, each other, and everyone in-between.

Romans 15:14-16 – God’s Righteousness extended through Paul’s Mission. Paul closes with stating his aim to visit Roman and beyond, and he passes on his greetings to the church.

About These Studies

One of the goals of our St Matt's Life Groups is to help give everyone a tool to read and understand the Bible for themselves. This is because if you want to know God, have a relationship with Jesus and live the Christian life knowing what God wants from you, you must do more than read and study what others have said about the Bible. You must interact with God's word personally.

The Inductive Bible Study Method presents a tool to read, understand, and apply what the Bible says. It is *inductive* which means we are to let the text guide us in our understanding. As we approach the text with an attitude of discovery, we must be willing to put aside our assumptions and to just simply see what the text says. This is both a science and an art.

The basic elements in the framework presented in this booklet are as follows:

Observations - *Seeing what the text says.* We need to look objectively at the text and to see what is there. The text is our only "evidence" in our "crime scene", so any detail, which may not seem significant can and should be noted. These could be repeating words, ideas or themes. Look at the structure or the flow of the passage, pay attention to the pronouns, locations, conjunctions, etc. Note the verses where these appear.

Questions - *Going deeper in understanding the text.* Using the standard Who? What? When? Where? How? questions on the text can help us go deeper in our understanding. We may have questions that the text doesn't answer. We can ask, but we must not force an answer from the text, if an answer simply isn't there. We are letting the text guide us and not our own hang ups, hobby horses or even theology.

Key - *Summarising the main point of the text.* After analysing the text, we step back and work out what is the main point of the passage. Why is this section of scripture written here? What would we lose if this text wasn't in our Bible? What key verse holds this whole passage together, so if that verse wasn't there the rest wouldn't make sense?

Application - *Applying the Key of the text to our lives today.* The Key may adjust or reinforce a belief we may have or may call us to a behaviour or action. How might we now live after reading and understanding the text? The more specific and contextual the better.

Prayer - *Thanking God for the main point and asking for help to apply the text.* All of the Christian life is by grace, from salvation, through sanctification to our glorification. We need thank God for the truths He has revealed to us and ask Him for help to live out our faith to those around us.

Week 1 Beginning April 25: Romans 8:31-9:6

³¹ What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? ³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶ As it is written:

“For your sake we face death all day long;
we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

9 I speak the truth in Christ—I am not lying, my conscience confirms it through the Holy Spirit— ² I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. ³ For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my people, those of my own race, ⁴ the people of Israel. Theirs is the adoption to sonship; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises. ⁵ Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of the Messiah, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.

⁶ It is not as though God’s word had failed. For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel.

OBSERVATIONS

(Mark up the text, noting ideas, and the flow of the passage. Share what stands out to you)

INTERPRETATION

(List your questions & then after a re-read, answer questions that the text itself addresses.)

KEY VERSE

(What is the big idea of this passage?)

APPLICATION

(This is based on the Key above. What does this mean for us today?)

ADDITIONAL (OPTIONAL) QUESTIONS

What are Paul's answers the rhetorical questions asked in verses 31-35? If someone believed this, what would their life look like? How do these promises help you in your Christian walk?

Why is Paul in anguish in Chapter 9? Do you feel the strength of Paul's grief? Who do you feel that for?

How do you live with this tension of sweet and sour aspects of the Christian life? What help or hope do you have with this tension?

PRAYER

(Don't forget to pray the application of the text, asking God to help you put it into practice.)

GROUP PRAYER POINTS

SERMON NOTES

Week 2 Beginning May 2: Romans 9:1-29

⁹ I speak the truth in Christ—I am not lying, my conscience confirms it through the Holy Spirit— ²I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. ³For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my people, those of my own race, ⁴the people of Israel. Theirs is the adoption to sonship; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises. ⁵Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of the Messiah, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.

⁶ It is not as though God's word had failed. For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. ⁷Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham's children. On the contrary, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned." ⁸In other words, it is not the children by physical descent who are God's children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham's offspring. ⁹For this was how the promise was stated: "At the appointed time I will return, and Sarah will have a son."

¹⁰ Not only that, but Rebekah's children were conceived at the same time by our father Isaac. ¹¹Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God's purpose in election might stand: ¹²not by works but by him who calls—she was told, "The older will serve the younger." ¹³Just as it is written: "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."

¹⁴ What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all! ¹⁵For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion."

¹⁶ It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God's mercy. ¹⁷For Scripture says to Pharaoh: "I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." ¹⁸Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden.

¹⁹ One of you will say to me: "Then why does God still blame us? For who is able to resist his will?" ²⁰But who are you, a human being, to talk back to God? "Shall what is formed say to the one who formed it, 'Why did you make me like this?'" ²¹Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for special purposes and some for common use?

²² What if God, although choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath—prepared for destruction? ²³What if he did this to make the riches of his glory known to the

objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory— ²⁴ even us, whom he also called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles? ²⁵ As he says in Hosea:

“I will call them ‘my people’ who are not my people;
and I will call her ‘my loved one’ who is not my loved one,”

²⁶ and,

“In the very place where it was said to them,

‘You are not my people,’ there they will be called ‘children of the living God.’”

²⁷ Isaiah cries out concerning Israel:

“Though the number of the Israelites be like the sand by the sea, only the remnant will be saved. ²⁸ For the Lord will carry out his sentence on earth with speed and finality.”

²⁹ It is just as Isaiah said previously:

“Unless the Lord Almighty had left us descendants,
we would have become like Sodom, we would have been like Gomorrah.”

OBSERVATIONS

(Mark up the text, noting ideas, and the flow of the passage. Share what stands out to you)

INTERPRETATION

(List your questions & then after a re-read, answer questions that the text itself addresses.)

KEY VERSE

(What is the big idea of this passage?)

APPLICATION

(This is based on the Key above. What does this mean for us today?)

ADDITIONAL (OPTIONAL) QUESTIONS

The Jews were expecting the long-awaited Messiah foretold in God's word, and yet when Jesus comes, they don't follow Him. Has God's word failed (v 6-13)? How does Paul answer this question?

If only some (Jewish) people are saved does this mean that God is unjust (v 14-18)?

If salvation is entirely of God's discretion to give mercy and compassion to whoever He wants, then why does God still blame us (v 19-29)? How do you wrestle with this tension in your own setting?

PRAYER

(Don't forget to pray the application of the text, asking God to help you put it into practice.)

GROUP PRAYER POINTS

SERMON NOTES

Week 3 Beginning May 9: Law and Salvation in Romans

On Sunday it was Mother's Day. Feel free to discuss the passage that was used at Church, or in this study we step back and look at the Romans argument so far about Jews, Gentiles, and salvation. What Paul has already said in the first 4 chapters of Romans reenforces what he says in Romans 9-11. You do not need to spend too much time in each of these verses, as we are simply seeking an overview of the argument.

ROMANS 1:16-17

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. ¹⁷ For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

Q1. What is the power of the Gospel? Who is salvation for? How will the righteous live?

ROMANS 1:18-21

¹⁸ The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, ¹⁹ since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

²¹ For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Q2. Why are people without excuse for not believing in God? What is the result of those who do not glorify God?

ROMANS 2:6-11

⁶ God “will repay each person according to what they have done.” ⁷ To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. ⁸ But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. ⁹ There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; ¹⁰ but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. ¹¹ For God does not show favoritism.

Q3. From these verses, how are people judged before God? How fair does God treat Jews and Gentiles?

ROMANS 2:12-13

¹² All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law. ¹³ For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous.

Q4. What is the relation between the law and being judged right? How are people declared right?

ROMANS 2:28-29

²⁸ A person is not a Jew who is one only outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. ²⁹ No, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a person's praise is not from other people, but from God.

Q5. How does Paul define what a Jew is?

ROMANS 3:1-6

¹ What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew, or what value is there in circumcision? ² Much in every way! First of all, the Jews have been entrusted with the very words of God.

³ What if some were unfaithful? Will their unfaithfulness nullify God's faithfulness? ⁴ Not at all! Let God be true, and every human being a liar. As it is written:

“So that you may be proved right when you speak and prevail when you judge.”

⁵ But if our unrighteousness brings out God's righteousness more clearly, what shall we say? That God is unjust in bringing his wrath on us? (I am using a human argument.) ⁶ Certainly not! If that were so, how could God judge the world?

Q6. What do the Jews have that the Gentiles don't? If some Jews didn't obey God's word, does that mean God is unjust?

ROMANS 3:19-20

¹⁹ Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. ²⁰ Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin.

Q7. After talking about the standard by which people are judged before God, what is the conclusion about God's law and us?

ROMANS 3:21-25A

²¹ But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. ²² This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. ²⁵ God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith.

Q8. Apart from the law, how are people declared righteous? How are Jews and Gentiles the same in regard to their standing before God and how they are saved? (See also Romans 3:28-30)

ROMANS 4:20-25

²⁰ Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, ²¹ being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. ²² This is why “it was credited to him as righteousness.” ²³ The words “it was credited to him” were written not for him alone, ²⁴ but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. ²⁵ He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

Q9. Romans 4 uses Abraham as an example of living by faith and not by law. This is the conclusion of this section. How did righteousness come to Abraham (see also Romans 4:13-15)? How does this also relate to us?

Q10. From this quick fly through of Romans 1-4 what can we say about:

- The Law

- Everyone's (Jews and Gentiles) standing before God apart from Jesus

- Who is Israel?

- How both Jews and Gentiles are made right before God

There has been a great emphasis on faith in Jesus and our unrighteousness in this section. As we dig into Romans 9-11 there will be a great emphasis on God's action in Salvation. For now, one last question to ponder, that we do not need to resolve now:

Q11. If being considered right with God comes from faith in Jesus and yet if everyone doesn't naturally seek God, then why do some people have faith in Jesus?

The way we answer this question brings into tension people's freedom over God's discretion. It should affect how we tell people about Jesus and what we pray for others. Romans 9-11 helps us in this area.

PRAYER

Thank God for Jesus, that because of him we are no longer condemned by the law, but by faith considered right.

GROUP PRAYER POINTS

SERMON NOTES

Week 4 Beginning May 16: Romans 9:30–10:15

³⁰ What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; ³¹ but the people of Israel, who pursued the law as the way of righteousness, have not attained their goal. ³² Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone. ³³ As it is written:

“See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes people to stumble
and a rock that makes them fall,
and the one who believes in him will never be put to shame.”

10 Brothers and sisters, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. ² For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. ³ Since they did not know the righteousness of God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness. ⁴ Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

⁵ Moses writes this about the righteousness that is by the law: “The person who does these things will live by them.” ⁶ But the righteousness that is by faith says: “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’” (that is, to bring Christ down) ⁷ “or ‘Who will descend into the deep?’” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). ⁸ But what does it say? “The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,” that is, the message concerning faith that we proclaim: ⁹ If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. ¹¹ As Scripture says, “Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.” ¹² For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, ¹³ for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

¹⁴ How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? ¹⁵ And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

OBSERVATIONS

(Mark up the text, noting ideas, and the flow of the passage. Share what stands out to you)

INTERPRETATION

(List your questions & then after a re-read, answer questions that the text itself addresses.)

KEY VERSE

(What is the big idea of this passage?)

APPLICATION

(This is based on the Key above. What does this mean for us today?)

ADDITIONAL (OPTIONAL) QUESTIONS

In light of week 2 and the tension of God showing mercy to whoever He wants and people still being disobedient to God's law so are deemed as unrighteousness, what is Paul's conclusion in this matter? (v 30-33) How are Jews and Gentiles saved?

What is the difference between trying to establish our own righteousness and submitting to God's righteousness (10:2-4)? Who is God's righteousness, and how does the connection with 9:32-33 help us understand this?

What is the logic of verses 14-15? Who might you be a witness to in your life? Pray about those who you are in contact with that you might help them to call on the name of the Lord.

PRAYER

(Don't forget to pray the application of the text, asking God to help you put it into practice.)

GROUP PRAYER POINTS

SERMON NOTES

Week 5 Beginning May 23: Romans 10:16–11:10

¹⁶ But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our message?” ¹⁷ Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ. ¹⁸ But I ask: Did they not hear? Of course they did:

“Their voice has gone out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.”

¹⁹ Again I ask: Did Israel not understand? First, Moses says,

“I will make you envious by those who are not a nation;

I will make you angry by a nation that has no understanding.”

²⁰ And Isaiah boldly says,

“I was found by those who did not seek me;

I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me.”

²¹ But concerning Israel he says,

“All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and obstinate people.”

11 I ask then: Did God reject his people? By no means! I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. ² God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew. Don’t you know what Scripture says in the passage about Elijah—how he appealed to God against Israel: ³ “Lord, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars; I am the only one left, and they are trying to kill me”? ⁴ And what was God’s answer to him? “I have reserved for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal.” ⁵ So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace. ⁶ And if by grace, then it cannot be based on works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.

⁷ What then? What the people of Israel sought so earnestly they did not obtain. The elect among them did, but the others were hardened, ⁸ as it is written:

“God gave them a spirit of stupor,

eyes that could not see and ears that could not hear,
to this very day.”

⁹ And David says:

“May their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a retribution for them.

¹⁰ May their eyes be darkened so they cannot see, and their backs be bent forever.”

OBSERVATIONS

(Mark up the text, noting ideas, and the flow of the passage. Share what stands out to you)

INTERPRETATION

(List your questions & then after a re-read, answer questions that the text itself addresses.)

KEY VERSE

(What is the big idea of this passage?)

APPLICATION

(This is based on the Key above. What does this mean for us today?)

ADDITIONAL (OPTIONAL) QUESTIONS

In 10:16 Paul goes back to the question that has caused him such anguish, "Why are so many of the Jews refusing to believe in the Messiah?" What do we learn about different responses to the preaching of Christ in 10:16-21?

Is salvation (only) a work of hearing and understanding? Why/why not?

Since salvation belongs to the Lord, and in Paul's time the Jews were not believing Jesus was the Messiah, did God reject the Jews? How does the verses about Elijah (v 2-5) help us to understand about Jews who will become real believers in Christ?

PRAYER

(Don't forget to pray the application of the text, asking God to help you put it into practice.)

GROUP PRAYER POINTS

SERMON NOTES

Week 6 Beginning May 30: Romans 11:9-32

⁹ And David says:

“May their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a retribution for them.

¹⁰ May their eyes be darkened so they cannot see, and their backs be bent forever.”

¹¹ Again I ask: Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious. ¹² But if their transgression means riches for the world, and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their full inclusion bring!

¹³ I am talking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I take pride in my ministry ¹⁴ in the hope that I may somehow arouse my own people to envy and save some of them. ¹⁵ For if their rejection brought reconciliation to the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? ¹⁶ If the part of the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, then the whole batch is holy; if the root is holy, so are the branches.

¹⁷ If some of the branches have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, ¹⁸ do not consider yourself to be superior to those other branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you. ¹⁹ You will say then, “Branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in.” ²⁰ Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but tremble. ²¹ For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either.

²² Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off. ²³ And if they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. ²⁴ After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree!

²⁵ I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in, ²⁶ and in this way all Israel will be saved. As it is written:

“The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob.
²⁷ And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins.”

²⁸ As far as the gospel is concerned, they are enemies for your sake; but as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarchs, ²⁹ for God’s gifts and his call are irrevocable. ³⁰ Just as you who were at one time disobedient to God have now received mercy as a result of their disobedience, ³¹ so they too have now become disobedient in order that they too may now receive mercy as a result of God’s mercy to you. ³² For God has bound everyone over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all.

OBSERVATIONS

(Mark up the text, noting ideas, and the flow of the passage. Share what stands out to you)

INTERPRETATION

(List your questions & then after a re-read, answer questions that the text itself addresses.)

KEY VERSE

(What is the big idea of this passage?)

APPLICATION

(This is based on the Key above. What does this mean for us today?)

ADDITIONAL (OPTIONAL) QUESTIONS

Paul asks if there is any hope for the Jews in verse 11. How does Paul answer this question?

What is Paul saying in the branch/root analogy? What comfort and warning do you take from this?

How is God's mercy showered on both Jews and Gentiles in verses 25-32?

PRAYER

(Don't forget to pray the application of the text, asking God to help you put it into practice.)

GROUP PRAYER POINTS

SERMON NOTES

Week 7 Beginning June 6: Romans 11:33–12:2

³³ Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!

How unsearchable his judgments,
and his paths beyond tracing out!

³⁴ “Who has known the mind of the Lord?

Or who has been his counselor?”

³⁵ “Who has ever given to God,

that God should repay them?”

³⁶ For from him and through him and for him are all things.

To him be the glory forever! Amen.

12 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. ² Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

OBSERVATIONS

(Mark up the text, noting ideas, and the flow of the passage. Share what stands out to you)

INTERPRETATION

(List your questions & then after a re-read, answer questions that the text itself addresses.)

KEY VERSE

(What is the big idea of this passage?)

APPLICATION

(This is based on the Key above. What does this mean for us today?)

ADDITIONAL (OPTIONAL) QUESTIONS

Verses 33-36 end chapter 11 by using the rich traditions of Hebrew praise from Isaiah and Job. How does Paul want us to feel and respond at the end of this amazing discussion of God's grace and his covenant faithfulness?

What is true worship and what does a transformed mind really want to do? What do these look like in your life today?

In what areas are you tempted to conform to the patten of this world? How can you be transformed by renewing your mind?

PRAYER

(Don't forget to pray the application of the text, asking God to help you put it into practice.)

GROUP PRAYER POINTS

SERMON NOTES

Week 8 Beginning June 13: Romans 12:3-21

³ For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. ⁴ For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. ⁶ We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; ⁷ if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; ⁸ if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

⁹ Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. ¹⁰ Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. ¹¹ Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. ¹² Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. ¹³ Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. ¹⁸ If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. ¹⁹ Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. ²⁰ On the contrary:

"If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head."

²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

OBSERVATIONS

(Mark up the text, noting ideas, and the flow of the passage. Share what stands out to you)

INTERPRETATION

(List your questions & then after a re-read, answer questions that the text itself addresses.)

KEY VERSE

(What is the big idea of this passage?)

APPLICATION

(This is based on the Key above. What does this mean for us today?)

ADDITIONAL (OPTIONAL) QUESTIONS

What do you think you are gifted in? How might you use your gifts today? How might our attitude make a big difference as we express our gifts?

How is Christ himself an example of living out what Paul calls for in verses 14-21? What do you find particularly challenging in these verses?

The early part of Romans 12 (v 1-13) deals with what we might call the inner life of the church. The last section (v 14-21) is about how Christians behave within the wider public world. How would the wider world respond to seeing the church live out what's described in 9:14-21?

PRAYER

(Don't forget to pray the application of the text, asking God to help you put it into practice.)

GROUP PRAYER POINTS

SERMON NOTES

Week 9 Beginning June 20: Romans 13:1-14

¹ Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. ² Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. ³ For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended. ⁴ For the one in authority is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. ⁵ Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also as a matter of conscience.

⁶ This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. ⁷ Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

⁸ Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law. ⁹ The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not covet," and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁰ Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

¹¹ And do this, understanding the present time: The hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. ¹² The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. ¹³ Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. ¹⁴ Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.

OBSERVATIONS

(Mark up the text, noting ideas, and the flow of the passage. Share what stands out to you)

INTERPRETATION

(List your questions & then after a re-read, answer questions that the text itself addresses.)

KEY VERSE

(What is the big idea of this passage?)

APPLICATION

(This is based on the Key above. What does this mean for us today?)

ADDITIONAL (OPTIONAL) QUESTIONS

Why must the Christian be subject to the laws of the government? What are the reasons Paul gives?

Verses 8-14 show Paul using the idea of fulfilling the law through love. How can love fulfill all of the law?

Paul's solution to avoiding the activities of the night is to "put on the Lord Jesus" (v. 14). How are we to do this?

Think about your Christian community, your church or life group. In what ways can your community live in a way that is more attractive to the surrounding culture? Also think back to Romans 12:14-21

PRAYER

(Don't forget to pray the application of the text, asking God to help you put it into practice.)

GROUP PRAYER POINTS

SERMON NOTES

Week 10 Beginning June 27: Romans 14:1–15:13

14 Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters. ² One person's faith allows them to eat anything, but another, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. ³ The one who eats everything must not treat with contempt the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does, for God has accepted them. ⁴ Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To their own master, servants stand or fall. And they will stand, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵ One person considers one day more sacred than another; another considers every day alike. Each of them should be fully convinced in their own mind. ⁶ Whoever regards one day as special does so to the Lord. Whoever eats meat does so to the Lord, for they give thanks to God; and whoever abstains does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God. ⁷ For none of us lives for ourselves alone, and none of us dies for ourselves alone. ⁸ If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. ⁹ For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰ You, then, why do you judge your brother or sister? Or why do you treat them with contempt? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. ¹¹ It is written: "As surely as I live," says the Lord, "every knee will bow before me; every tongue will acknowledge God."

¹² So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.

¹³ Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister. ¹⁴ I am convinced, being fully persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean in itself. But if anyone regards something as unclean, then for that person it is unclean. ¹⁵ If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died. ¹⁶ Therefore do not let what you know is good be spoken of as evil. ¹⁷ For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, ¹⁸ because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and receives human approval.

¹⁹ Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification. ²⁰ Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a person to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble. ²¹ It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother or sister to fall.

²² So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who does not condemn himself by what he approves. ²³ But whoever has doubts is condemned if they eat, because their eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin.

¹⁵ We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. ² Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up. ³ For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: "The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me." ⁴ For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.

⁵ May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, ⁶ so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁷ Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. ⁸ For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, so that the promises made to the patriarchs might be confirmed ⁹ and, moreover, that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written:

"Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles; I will sing the praises of your name."

¹⁰ Again, it says,

"Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people."

¹¹ And again,

"Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles; let all the peoples extol him."

¹² And again, Isaiah says,

"The Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; in him the Gentiles will hope."

¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

OBSERVATIONS

(Mark up the text, noting ideas, and the flow of the passage. Share what stands out to you)

INTERPRETATION

(List your questions & then after a re-read, answer questions that the text itself addresses.)

KEY VERSE

(What is the big idea of this passage?)

APPLICATION

(This is based on the Key above. What does this mean for us today?)

ADDITIONAL (OPTIONAL) QUESTIONS

What principles of guidance did Paul give for gray areas? What are some examples of these areas? Which do you struggle with? How can we as believers know on which issues we can live with differences of opinion and which we cannot?

How can we edify one another according to Romans 14:13-23? How would you rate yourself in this area?

What can we do to please one another in view of Romans 15:1-7?

PRAYER

(Don't forget to pray the application of the text, asking God to help you put it into practice.)

GROUP PRAYER POINTS

SERMON NOTES

School Holidays 1 Beginning July 4: Romans 15:14-33

¹⁴I myself am convinced, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with knowledge and competent to instruct one another. ¹⁵Yet I have written you quite boldly on some points to remind you of them again, because of the grace God gave me ¹⁶to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles. He gave me the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God, so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

¹⁷Therefore I glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God. ¹⁸I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done— ¹⁹by the power of signs and wonders, through the power of the Spirit of God. So from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ. ²⁰It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation. ²¹Rather, as it is written:

“Those who were not told about him will see,
and those who have not heard will understand.”

²²This is why I have often been hindered from coming to you.

²³But now that there is no more place for me to work in these regions, and since I have been longing for many years to visit you, ²⁴I plan to do so when I go to Spain. I hope to see you while passing through and to have you assist me on my journey there, after I have enjoyed your company for a while. ²⁵Now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem in the service of the Lord's people there. ²⁶For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the Lord's people in Jerusalem. ²⁷They were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in the Jews' spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings. ²⁸So after I have completed this task and have made sure that they have received this contribution, I will go to Spain and visit you on the way. ²⁹I know that when I come to you, I will come in the full measure of the blessing of Christ.

³⁰I urge you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. ³¹Pray that I may be kept safe from the unbelievers in Judea and that the contribution I take to Jerusalem may be favorably received by the Lord's people there, ³²so that I may come to you with joy, by God's will, and in your company be refreshed. ³³The God of peace be with you all. Amen.

OBSERVATIONS

(Mark up the text, noting ideas, and the flow of the passage. Share what stands out to you)

INTERPRETATION

(List your questions & then after a re-read, answer questions that the text itself addresses.)

KEY VERSE

(What is the big idea of this passage?)

APPLICATION

(This is based on the Key above. What does this mean for us today?)

ADDITIONAL (OPTIONAL) QUESTIONS

What seems to be Paul's concern in coming to visit and minister in Rome (v 14-24)?

There is no evidence that Paul ever got to Spain. But his desire to go there and, perhaps, establish a new "home base" was one of the reasons he wrote the letter to the Romans.

What lesson is there for us in the fact that Paul wrote Romans in preparation for a dream that he may never have realized?

What does Paul ask them to pray for him for (v 30-33)?

PRAYER

(Don't forget to pray the application of the text, asking God to help you put it into practice.)

GROUP PRAYER POINTS

SERMON NOTES

School Holidays 2 Beginning July 11: Romans 16:1-27

¹I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church in Cenchreae. ²I ask you to receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of his people and to give her any help she may need from you, for she has been the benefactor of many people, including me.

³Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my co-workers in Christ Jesus. ⁴They risked their lives for me. Not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them.

⁵Greet also the church that meets at their house.

Greet my dear friend Epenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in the province of Asia.

⁶Greet Mary, who worked very hard for you.

⁷Greet Andronicus and Junia, my fellow Jews who have been in prison with me. They are outstanding among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was.

⁸Greet Ampliatus, my dear friend in the Lord.

⁹Greet Urbanus, our co-worker in Christ, and my dear friend Stachys.

¹⁰Greet Apelles, whose fidelity to Christ has stood the test.

Greet those who belong to the household of Aristobulus.

¹¹Greet Herodion, my fellow Jew.

Greet those in the household of Narcissus who are in the Lord.

¹²Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, those women who work hard in the Lord.

Greet my dear friend Persis, another woman who has worked very hard in the Lord.

¹³Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother, who has been a mother to me, too.

¹⁴Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas and the other brothers and sisters with them.

¹⁵Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas and all the Lord's people who are with them.

¹⁶Greet one another with a holy kiss.

All the churches of Christ send greetings.

¹⁷ I urge you, brothers and sisters, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them. ¹⁸ For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people. ¹⁹ Everyone has heard about your obedience, so I rejoice because of you; but I want you to be wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil.

²⁰ The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.

The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

²¹ Timothy, my co-worker, sends his greetings to you, as do Lucius, Jason and Sosipater, my fellow Jews.

²² I, Tertius, who wrote down this letter, greet you in the Lord.

²³ Gaius, whose hospitality I and the whole church here enjoy, sends you his greetings.

Erastus, who is the city's director of public works, and our brother Quartus send you their greetings. ^[24]

²⁵ Now to him who is able to establish you in accordance with my gospel, the message I proclaim about Jesus Christ, in keeping with the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, ²⁶ but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all the Gentiles might come to the obedience that comes from faith— ²⁷ to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen.

OBSERVATIONS

(Mark up the text, noting ideas, and the flow of the passage. Share what stands out to you)

INTERPRETATION

(List your questions & then after a re-read, answer questions that the text itself addresses.)

KEY VERSE

(What is the big idea of this passage?)

APPLICATION

(This is based on the Key above. What does this mean for us today?)

ADDITIONAL (OPTIONAL) QUESTIONS

What is the significance of so many personal greetings?

Why did Paul give such a long benediction (16:17-27)?

If you were out of town and writing a letter to your church, who would you greet and what would you say to them?

What has changed in your life since studying the letter to the Romans? How has it helped you to give all the glory to God?

PRAYER

(Don't forget to pray the application of the text, asking God to help you put it into practice.)

GROUP PRAYER POINTS

SERMON NOTES

References

In the **Introduction** the section break-ups used the following:

Romans (BECNT) by Thomas R. Schreiner

The Epistle to the Romans (NICNT) by Douglas J. Moo

In **About These Studies** some of the content was taken from:

The New How to Study Your Bible by Kay Arthur

Questions in this booklet have been drawn from a number of sources, including:

Be Right (Romans): How to be right with God, yourself, and others by Warren W. Wiersbe

Romans (For Everyone Bible Study Guides) by N. T. Wright

Teaching Romans, Volume 2 by Christopher Ash

The Message of Romans (BST) by John Stott