

ROMANS

The background of the cover is a dark, grainy image. On the left side, there is a detailed view of the Colosseum in Rome, showing its iconic tiered arches. On the right side, there is a perspective view of a large, semi-circular Roman amphitheater, showing the dense rows of stone seating.

FIRST STEP
READING PLAN

ROMANS

FIRST STEP READING PLAN

ROMANS

First Step Reading Plan

UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT:

Who?

The writer of this letter was the apostle Paul (see 1:1)

When?

The book was probably written in the late A.D. 50s or early 60s. Very likely Paul was on his third missionary journey, ready to return to Jerusalem with the offering from the mission churches for poverty-stricken believers in Jerusalem (see 15:25–27).

Recipients of the Letter?

The original recipients of the letter were the people of the church at Rome (1:7), who were predominantly Gentile. Jews, however, must have constituted a substantial minority of the congregation (see 4:1; chs. 9–11).

What was happening in Paul's life?

Paul wanted to go to Rome, he sent a letter to prepare the Christians there for his intended visit in connection with a mission to Spain (see 15:23–24). For many years Paul had wanted to visit Rome to minister there (see 1:13–15), and this letter served as a careful and systematic theological introduction to the Gospel and its application.

What is the message of Romans?

Romans teaches us that salvation comes to us as a free gift from God by faith in Jesus Christ, and that this salvation is necessary because we have all sinned against God. Sin permeates all that we do, but we can be saved by faith in the risen Lord Jesus Christ! That is the message of Romans.

All Scriptures are Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright ©1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide (unless otherwise noted).

Other references provided by smallgroup.com and biblica.com; outlining and major moments provided by Brooke Hinote.

HOW TO USE THE READING PLAN:

Here is a basic guide of the week to week interactions with the reading plan.

1. Memory Verse Challenge:

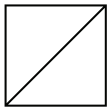
Each week there is a memory verse related to the topic of Scripture discussed that week. Sometimes the verse may come directly from the reading plan, while other times it may relate to the topic. We are challenged to take God's Word and memorize it to our lives to encourage or correct us as needed.

2. Outline:

The outline is included to help you understand the flow of the chapters being read, with major moments included that provide context to the reading.

Reading Plan:

The Reading plan portion includes a Digging in section with questions and study methods that are useful in discover the depths of Scripture.



First Step Reading Plan is a three-day reading plan that covers specific parts with three days of “digging in” that asks questions of reflection and action.

Note: Questions with an asterisk* are found in all three reading plan

FIRST STEP

READING PLAN



FIRST STEP READING PLAN: WEEK 1: ROMANS 1-2

MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE:

Romans 1:16, ***“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.”***

OUTLINE:

Romans 1:1-17

Major Moment: Paul reveals to the Roman church God’s plan of salvation, how both Jew and Gentile can be made right with God.

Romans 1:18-32

Major Moment: We have no excuse for not knowing God. He reveals Himself to us through creation, yet we pursue lesser things that lead to destruction.

Romans 2:1-16

Major Moment: God’s law is written on our hearts. His judgement displays His kind and long-suffering character to lead us to repentance.

Romans 2:17-24

Major Moment: The Jew that follows the law still stands guilty before God.

Romans 2:25-29

Major Moment: It is not through keeping the law or performing an outward ceremony that we are saved, but through an inward heart change.

DIGGING IN:

Day 1: Romans 1:1-17

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God— ² the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures ³ regarding his Son, who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David, ⁴ and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. ⁵ Through him we received grace and apostleship to call all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith for his name’s sake. ⁶ And you also are among those Gentiles who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.

*⁷ To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people:
Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*



⁸ First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world. ⁹ God, whom I serve in my spirit in preaching the gospel of his Son, is my witness how constantly I remember you ¹⁰ in my prayers at all times; and I pray that now at last by God's will the way may be opened for me to come to you.

¹¹ I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong— ¹² that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith. ¹³ I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that I planned many times to come to you (but have been prevented from doing so until now) in order that I might have a harvest among you, just as I have had among the other Gentiles.

¹⁴ I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish. ¹⁵ That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are in Rome.

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."

What is God saying in this passage to me?

How can I live what I have learned today?

*When you think of God's power, what do you normally think of? How is the gospel a display of God's power?



Day 2: Romans 2:1-16

You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge another, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things. ² Now we know that God's judgment against those who do such things is based on truth. ³ So when you, a mere human being, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God's judgment? ⁴ Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?

⁵ But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. 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.

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. ¹⁴ (Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law. ¹⁵ They show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts sometimes accusing them and at other times even defending them.) ¹⁶ This will take place on the day when God judges people's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares.

What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?

*Is there anything in your life right now that God's kindness might lead you to repent of?
If so, what would it look like to turn away from that sin?

Day 3: Romans 2:25-29

²⁵ Circumcision has value if you observe the law, but if you break the law, you have become as though you had not been circumcised. ²⁶ So then, if those who are not circumcised keep the law's requirements, will they not be regarded as though they were circumcised? ²⁷ The one who is not circumcised physically and yet obeys the law will condemn you who, even though you have the written code and circumcision, are a lawbreaker.

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.

What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?

*What are ways that we can put our faith in keeping a tradition as the way we are saved instead of focusing on Christ?





FIRST STEP READING PLAN: WEEK 2: ROMANS 3-5

MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE:

Romans 3:23, *“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,”*

OUTLINE:

Romans 3:1-20

Major Moment: The law silences us by revealing the universal guilt of man yet God is faithful. He uses the unrighteousness of man to accomplish His work and glorify Himself.

Romans 3:21-31

Major Moment: It is through faith in Christ that we are able to fulfill the Law and be set free from the penalty of sin.

Romans 4:1-25

Major Moment: Like Abraham, we are not justified by our works, but declared righteous through faith alone. His grace completely covers our sin.

Romans 5:1-11

Major Moment: Christ's sacrifice demonstrates God's love for us. Through Christ, we have peace with God and hope amidst the suffering.

Romans 5:12-21

Major Moment: Adam's disobedience brought death and condemnation to many, but Christ's obedience brought life and justification to all.

DIGGING IN:

Day 1: Romans 3:1-20

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?* ⁷ *Someone might argue, “If my*



falsehood enhances God's truthfulness and so increases his glory, why am I still condemned as a sinner?"⁸ Why not say—as some slanderously claim that we say—"Let us do evil that good may result"? Their condemnation is just!

No One Is Righteous

⁹ What shall we conclude then? Do we have any advantage? Not at all! For we have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under the power of sin. ¹⁰ As it is written:

"There is no one righteous, not even one;

*¹¹ there is no one who understands;
there is no one who seeks God.*

*¹² All have turned away,
they have together become worthless;
there is no one who does good,
not even one."*

*¹³ "Their throats are open graves;
their tongues practice deceit."*

"The poison of vipers is on their lips."

¹⁴ "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness."

¹⁵ "Their feet are swift to shed blood;

¹⁶ ruin and misery mark their ways,

¹⁷ and the way of peace they do not know."

¹⁸ "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

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.

What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?



* Even after finding Christ we can often place our hope in other things. Is there something in your life right now that you are hoping in that isn't God? What needs to change about how you look at that part of your life?

Day 2: Romans 3:21-31

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. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— ²⁶ he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

²⁷ Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. Because of what law? The law that requires works? No, because of the law that requires faith. ²⁸ For we maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law. ²⁹ Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles too? Yes, of Gentiles too, ³⁰ since there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith. ³¹ Do we, then, nullify the law by this faith? Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law.

What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?



* How freeing is it to know that we will be judged by Christ's works and not our own?
What will look differently in your life this week if you truly embrace that change?

Day 3: Romans 5:1-11

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; ⁴ perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵ And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us. ⁶ You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

⁹ Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! ¹⁰ For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! ¹¹ Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?



* How has this passage helped you fully appreciate what you've been given because of God's grace? What are some ways we can celebrate these gifts in our lives?



MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE:

Romans 5:8, *“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

OUTLINE:

Romans 6:1-14

Major Moment: Since we share in Christ’s death and resurrection, we too are dead to sin and alive in Christ, able to glorify Him in all we do.

Romans 6:15-23

Major Moment: We were once slaves to sin, which led to death, but through Christ we are slaves to righteousness that leads to eternal life.

Romans 7:1-6

Major Moment: An illustration from marriage about how we are to live in the grace of God.

Romans 7:7-13

Major Moment: Sin corrupts God’s perfect law by condemning us to death, but we have been released from the law and united with Christ.

Romans 7:14-25

Major Moment: The problem is not with the law; it is with our flesh. We are set free from the power of sin yet continue to struggle with our sinful nature.

DIGGING IN:

Day 1: Romans 6:1-14

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ² By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? ³ Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to



sin— ⁷ because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. ¹⁰ The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.

¹¹ In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. ¹³ Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. ¹⁴ For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?

* What does Paul mean that our old selves were “crucified with Christ”? How does being crucified with Christ free us from sin’s claims? What does it mean to “walk in a new way of life”?

Day 2: Romans 7:7-13

⁷ What shall we say, then? Is the law sinful? Certainly not! Nevertheless, I would not have known what sin was had it not been for the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.” ⁸ But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of coveting. For apart from the law, sin was dead. ⁹ Once I was alive apart from the law; but when the commandment



came, sin sprang to life and I died. ¹⁰ I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death. ¹¹ For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death. ¹² So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good.

¹³ Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! Nevertheless, in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it used what is good to bring about my death, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.

What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?

* How should we live differently now that Jesus has set us free from the laws of sin and death?

Day 3: Romans 7:14-25

¹⁴ We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. ¹⁵ I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. ¹⁶ And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷ As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. ¹⁸ For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

²¹ So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²² For



in my inner being I delight in God's law; ²³ but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. ²⁴ What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in my sinful nature a slave to the law of sin..

What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?

* Since we have been forgiven through Christ, how should that change how we deal with others who sin against us or who may not yet be saved by the gospel?





FIRST STEP READING PLAN: WEEK 4: ROMANS 8

MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE:

Romans 5:8, ***“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”***

OUTLINE:

Romans 8:1-4

Major Moment: Christ fulfilled the law and broke the power of sin. The spirit that raised Him to life lives within us, making us children of God.

Romans 8:5-8

Major Moment: We eagerly wait with creation for Christ’s return, knowing that our future glorification will far surpass our present suffering.

Romans 8:9-13

Major Moment: A new struggle between the Holy Spirit and the flesh.

Romans 8:14-17

Major Moment: The relationship of the new man and his relationship to the Son of God, thus the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the man.

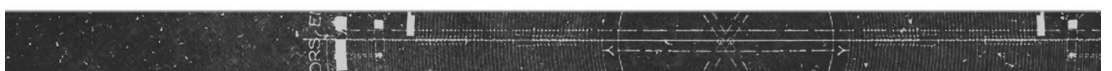
Romans 8:18-25

Major Moment: How are we to understand the difference of bondage and liberty.

DIGGING IN:

Day 1: Romans 8:1-4

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, ² because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. ³ For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.



What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?

* Even though you live by the Spirit, what areas of your life are you easily tempted to live in the flesh? What are some practical ways you can fight that?

Day 2: Romans 8:5-8

⁵ Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. ⁶ The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷ The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. ⁸ Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God.

What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?



* What are some things in your life that would be called “flesh”? Are they governing you? Why is this area a struggle?

Day 3: Romans 8: 14-17

¹⁴ For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. ¹⁵ The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.” ¹⁶ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. ¹⁷ Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?





NEXT STEP READING PLAN: WEEK 5: ROMANS 8-9

MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE:

Romans 10:9-10, *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.”*

OUTLINE:

Romans 8:26-27

Major Moment: The Spirit intercedes for believers.

Romans 8:28-30

Major Moment: God’s purpose is the assurance of the salvation of sinners.

Romans 8:31-39

Major Moment: Nothing can separate us from Christ’s love. We are held secure from all condemnation because of our right standing with God.

1Romans 9:1-19

Major Moment: God chooses people according to His own purposes, not based on the good or bad we do.

Romans 9:20-33

Major Moment: It is God’s right to show mercy on whomever He pleases. We stumble over the great rock when we pursue God through works instead of faith.

DIGGING IN:

Day 1: Romans 8:28-30

²⁸ And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. ³⁰ And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

What is God saying to me in this passage?



How can I live out what I have learned today?

* What is the relationship of the goodness of God and how we are declared justified in Christ?

Day 2: Romans 8:31-39

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.

What is God saying to me in this passage?



How can I live out what I have learned today?

* What is the closest you have come to feeling the despair and loneliness of being separated from God like Paul describes in Romans 8:31-39? How was your relationship with Him impacted? What will you do differently if you are ever in a similar situation?

Day 3: Romans 9:20-33

²⁰ *But 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?’”* ²¹ *Does 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?* ²³ *What 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.”*

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.”*

What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?

* How should our response to God’s sovereignty lead us to be grateful and thankful for the salvation that we stand to inherit from Him?





NEXT STEP READING PLAN: WEEK 6: ROMANS 10-11

MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE:

Romans 10:13, *“Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.”*

OUTLINE:

Romans 10:1-13

Major Moment: Anyone who confesses Christ is Lord and believes that God raised Him from the dead will be saved.

Romans 10:14-21

Major Moment: Israel is shown to reject the gospel in rejecting Christ.

Romans 11:1-10

Major Moment: Not all of Israel has rejected the Lord.

Romans 11:11-24

Major Moment: God’s grace is free and undeserved. He is willing and able to graft those who live by faith into the tree of God.

Romans 11:25-36

Major Moment: God’s sovereign plan of salvation displays His perfect wisdom. Even in our disobedience He loves and never gives up on us.

DIGGING IN:

Day 1: Romans 10:1-13

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.”*

What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?

* What difference does it make in your life to know that you are an “everybody” that can call on Jesus for salvation? How does that impact how we share our faith with others?

Day 2: Romans 10:14-21

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!”*

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.”*

What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?

* How freeing is it to understand that salvation comes by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and not by our own works?

Day 3: Romans 11:25-36

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.

Doxology

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.

What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?

* What impact does it make in your life to know that the Lord has taken away your sins because of His mercy?





NEXT STEP READING PLAN: WEEK 7: ROMANS 12

MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE:

Romans 12:1-2, *“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.”*

OUTLINE:

Romans 12:1-2

Major Moment: True worship of God is a holy, transformed life that contributes to the body of Christ through its unique giftedness

Romans 12:3-5

Major Moment: Paul highlights the teachings of Jesus to instruct us how to live out Christ’s love to all people, both inside and outside the church.

Romans 12:6-8

Major Moment: As believers, we fulfill the law by loving one another, walking uprightly and submitting to authority.

Romans 12: 9-13

Major Moment: Accept those who are weak in faith without judgment and honor Him in all you do, knowing we will all stand before the judgement seat of God.

Romans 12:14-21

Major Moment: We are to learn how to relate to the world for the sake of sharing the gospel.

DIGGING IN:

Day 1: Romans 12:1-2

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.



What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?

* What evidence can non-believers see that God has transformed you? Why is it important for Christians to stand out from the rest of the world?

Day 2: Romans 12:6-8

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.

What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?



* Why does the church need different gifts? How is the Lord using you today to serve Him and others?

Day 3: Romans 12:14-21

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.

What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?

* What are ways that you can encourage others to live in harmony with one another? How does this reflect the love of Christ in our lives to live at peace with others?



NEXT STEP READING PLAN: WEEK 8: ROMANS 13-16

MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE:

Romans 13:12, *“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.”*

OUTLINE:

Romans 13:1-14

Major Moment: Christ fulfilled the law and broke the power of sin. The spirit that raised Him to life lives within us, making us children of God.

Romans 14:1-23

Major Moment: We eagerly wait with creation for Christ’s return, knowing that our future glorification will far surpass our present suffering.

Romans 15:1-21

Major Moment: Nothing can separate us from Christ’s love. We are held secure from all condemnation because of our right standing with God.

Romans 15:22-33

Major Moment: God chooses people according to His own purposes, not based on the good or bad we do.

Romans 16:1-27

Major Moment: It is God’s right to show mercy on whomever He pleases. We stumble over the great rock when we pursue God through works instead of faith.

DIGGING IN:

Day 1: Romans 13:1-14

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.

What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?

* What are some ways you have shown love to your neighbors recently? Do you find Jesus' command easy or difficult to follow when your neighbors don't apply the principle too? Why?

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.



What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?

* In what ways can we affirm others even if we don't agree with their life decisions?

Day 3: Romans 16:17-27

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.

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.

What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?

* Can you think of any changes in attitude or action you might need to take as a result of this study?



FINAL REFLECTION

Answer the following questions:

What further questions do you have after going through this study?

What has been the most affirming to you in this study?

Reflect on this passage:

What is something you have learned from studying these words or phrases today?

Tell someone else what you learned:

How would you state the purpose of this study to someone?

