

ROMANS



Romans Ignatian Study

Schedule:

Day 1	Romans 1:1 – 2:16
Day 2	Romans 2:17 – 3:20
Day 3	Romans 3:21 – 4:25
Day 4	Romans 5:1–21
Day 5	Romans 6:1 – 7:6
Day 6	Romans 7:7 – 8:13
Day 7	Romans 8:14-39
Day 8	Romans 9:1-29
Day 9	Romans 9:30 – 10:21
Day 10	Romans 11:1-32
Day 11	Romans 11:33 – 12:8
Day 12	Romans 12:9 – 13:14
Day 13	Romans 14:1 – 15:13
Day 14	Romans 15:14 – 16:27

Bible passages:

All scripture taken from the NIV translation

Study Author:

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Basic Information about the book of Romans:

Author: Paul

Audience: house churches in the city of Rome

Date: 50-60 AD

BibleProject Guide to Romans: Key Information and Helpful Resources¹

This section is taken in its entirety from [the Bible Project](#)



The book of Romans is one of the longest and most significant things written by the Apostle Paul, formerly known as Saul of Tarsus. Paul was a Jewish rabbi belonging to a group called the Pharisees, and he passionately devoted his life to observing the Torah of Moses and the traditions of Israel. He viewed Jesus and his followers as a threat to these traditions, so he persecuted them. His life was changed, however, when he had a radical encounter with the risen Jesus himself. Paul was commissioned to become an apostle for Jesus, an official representative to the world of non-Jewish people (or Gentiles).

As part of this new vocation, he started going by his Roman name, Paul, and he traveled about the ancient Roman empire telling people about the risen King Jesus. These new converts would form communities called churches, and Paul would occasionally write letters to these churches to foster their faith, address specific problems, or answer questions. The book of Romans is one of these letters written later in his career.



Who Wrote the Book of Romans?

Christian tradition holds that the Apostle Paul wrote the book of Romans.

Context

The events described in Romans take place primarily in the Greco-Roman empire. Romans was likely composed during Paul's third missionary journey between 50 and 60 C.E.

Literary Styles

The book of Romans is a letter written in prose discourse to approximately 6-10 house churches in Rome.

Key Themes

- God's gift of rescuing humanity through Jesus
- God maintaining his promises to Israel
- Love unifying the diversity of the Church

¹ This section is taken from [the Bible Project](#)

Structure

Romans has four main parts. Chapters 1-4 introduces the need for human rescue. 5-8 focus on how Jesus forms a new covenant family. 9-11 describes how God will not give up on his covenant people. And 12-16 discuss how love heals and unifies Jesus' family.



Background of the Book of Romans

We know from Acts 18:1-2 that the church in Rome had existed for some time and was made up of both Jewish and non-Jewish followers. The crisis for this church began when the Roman emperor Claudius expelled all of the Jewish people from Rome. About five years later, all those Jews, including many who followed Jesus, were allowed to return. When they did, they found a church that had become non-Jewish in its customs and practice. This culture clash created lots of tension, and by Paul's day, the Roman church was divided. They disagreed about how to follow Jesus, debating about whether or not non-Jewish Christians should observe the Sabbath, eat kosher, be circumcised, and so on.

Paul wrote this letter to accomplish a few things. He wanted this divided community to become unified once again. For a practical purpose, he hoped that the Roman church could become a staging ground for his mission to go even further west, reaching to Spain. These tense circumstances motivated Paul to write out his fullest explanation of the Gospel, the good news that announces Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

While the letter is designed to have four main movements, it is also unified as one long, flowing exploration of the Gospel, which "reveals God's righteousness" (Rom. 1-4), "creates a new humanity" (Rom. 5-8), and "fulfills God's promise to Israel" (Rom. 9-11). As a result, it is this Gospel alone that can "unify the Church" (Rom. 12-16).



Romans 1-4: The Gospel Reveals God's Righteousness

Paul opens by introducing himself as an apostle appointed by God to spread the Gospel about Jesus (Rom. 1:1-17). This is the message announcing that Jesus is the Messiah of Israel, who was raised from the dead as the Son of God and King of the nations. As a result, Jesus now calls all humanity to come under his loving rule. Paul says that this good news about Jesus is God's power to save people who trust in him and that it "reveals God's righteousness."

For Paul, "righteousness" is a rich word from the Hebrew Scriptures that describes God's character. It means that God always acts in a way that is just and right and that God is faithful and just to fulfill his promises. Paul is saying that the story of Jesus shows how God has done both of these things.

In Romans 1:18-32, Paul goes into a long, creative retelling of Genesis 3-11, showing how the Gentile world, all nations, have become trapped in a spiral of sin and selfishness. The human heart and mind are broken. We've turned away from God to embrace idolatry, finding ultimate significance in created things and giving allegiance to things that are not God. This results in a distortion of our humanity and destructive behavior. What's left is a humanity that stands guilty before a just and righteous God.

To this, Paul's fellow Israelites might respond, "It's a good thing God chose our people out from among the nations. He saved us out of slavery in Egypt and gave us the laws of the Torah, like observing the Sabbath, eating kosher, or circumcision. They all show us how to live as God's holy people."

Paul responds, "Not so fast!" He recalls the story of the Torah and the rest of the Old Testament, which showed that Israel was just as sinful, idolatrous, and morally broken as the rest of humanity. In fact, Israel is actually more guilty than the Gentiles because they have the Torah and should know better.

As our representative, Jesus took into himself the just consequences of all the pain, sin, and death humans have caused in the world, and he overcame it by his resurrection from the dead. It's Jesus' new life that is now made available to others. Jesus became what we are, so that we might become what he is. All of this, Paul says, is how God justifies those who trust or have faith in Jesus.

Justification is another rich Old Testament term for Paul, and it is related to God's righteousness. It literally means "to declare righteous." Because of what Jesus did on our behalf, we are given a new status before God. Instead of being found guilty, God declares that a person is in right relationship with him and forgiven. This results in a new family, as a person who trusts Jesus is given a place among God's covenant people. Justification also results in a new future, which begins a journey of life transformation by God's grace. All of these realities about justification are God's gift to those who are in Christ because of their faith and loyalty to him.

In chapter 4, Paul explores the huge implications that all this has for those who can now be part of God's covenant family. He turns to the story of Abraham in Genesis 15. Before the laws of the Torah were ever given to Israel, Abraham was justified, or declared righteous, before God. God promised that Abraham would become the father of a large, multiethnic family that would receive his blessing. However, Abraham and Sarah were very old and had never been able to have children. Nonetheless, Abraham had radical faith and trust in God's promise, and God declared him to be righteous (Gen. 15:6). Paul's claim is that Abraham's multiethnic family is now becoming a reality through Jesus and his followers. Abraham's descendants are spreading throughout the world, made up of Jews and Gentiles who have faith in the one who fulfilled God's promises to Abraham, Jesus the Messiah.

Before we move on to chapters 5-16, let's pause to summarize Paul's main ideas in

chapters 1-4 because they're the foundation for understanding the rest of the letter. All of humanity is hopelessly trapped in sin and needs to be rescued, but that rescue will not happen by people trying to obey the laws of the Torah. God's righteous character has moved him to rescue the world through Jesus' death and resurrection, enabling the creation of a multiethnic family as his people.

Now Paul will go on to show how this new family is part of a much bigger story that is calling them to a totally new way of life.

Romans 5-8: The Gospel Creates a New Humanity

After showing how Jesus is forming a new covenant family of people from all nations, Paul goes on to claim that these people are the new humanity that fulfills God's promises to ancient Israel by obeying the Torah in the power of the Spirit.

Paul begins by exploring how Jesus' family is a new kind of humanity (Rom. 5). He looks back at the first human character in the biblical story, Adam, whose name means "humanity." Adam and all humanity have chosen sin and selfishness, and as a consequence, they face God's judgment. They've become enslaved to sin's influence, resulting in death. Paul then contrasts Adam with Jesus, the "new Adam," a human who lived in faithful obedience to God through his act of sacrificial love. Jesus offers his life as a gift to others so that they can be justified before God. And now Jesus stands as the head of a new humanity that is being transformed by the very same gift.

This leads right into chapter 6, where Paul reminds the Christians in Rome that choosing to follow Jesus means leaving their old Adam-like humanity behind and entering into the new Jesus-style humanity. And the sacred physical symbol of that transition was the immersion of their baptism. Their old humanity died with Jesus as they entered the water, but their new humanity was raised with him from the dead as they came up out of the water. When a person trusts in Jesus, their life is joined to his, and what's true of him becomes true of them. It's when people accept their identity as new Jesus-like humans that they are liberated to become wholehearted people who can love God and their neighbor.

Now, if creating this new humanity was always God's purpose, then, Paul asks in chapter 7, what was the point of God giving Israel the law, or, in Hebrew, the Torah? Paul says that the commands in the Torah were good and showed God's will for how Israel should live. However, if you read the storyline of the Torah, Israel broke all of its commands.

The more laws Israel received, the more they replayed the sin of Adam in rebellion. Even when God gave the people specific rules to obey, it didn't fix the problem of the sinful human heart. So, paradoxically, the laws of the Torah made Israel even more guilty. But Paul says that paradox was the very point. God's goal was to make it crystal clear that evil had hijacked the human heart, and the Torah, as good as it was, couldn't do a thing about it.

In chapter 8, however, Paul says that the solution has arrived through Jesus and the Spirit. The commands of the Torah had acted like a magnifying glass, focusing the problem of the human condition in one place, Israel. But now Israel's representative, Jesus the Messiah, has paid for and dealt with all that sin through his death and resurrection. He has released his Spirit into his new family to transform their hearts so that they can truly fulfill the ultimate call of all of the Torah's commands—to love God and neighbor. God's renewal of human beings is the first step in his larger mission to rescue and renew all creation, making it into a place where his love gets the final word.

While chapters 1-8 explain how God's eternal purpose was fulfilled through Jesus, we're still left with the question of the status of the Israelites who don't acknowledge Jesus as their Messiah. How does this story fulfill God's ancient promises to them?

Romans 9-11: The Gospel Fulfills God's Promise to Israel

Paul begins chapter 9 with his own anguish over fellow Israelites who don't think Jesus is their Messiah. Then he reflects on the Israel of the past and the Old Testament. He reminds us that simply being an ethnic Israelite, a physical descendant of Abraham, has never automatically made a person a faithful member of his covenant family. Paul shows us how God has always selected a subset from Abraham's family line to carry on the line of promise. His point is that the line of promise is carried on by those who follow Jesus. He reminds us that for a long time, people inside and outside Abraham's family have rejected God's will. Paul recalls the story of Israel and the golden calf as well as Pharaoh's rebellion, showing how God was able to orchestrate events so that the people's rejection actually accomplished his own redemptive purposes.

In chapter 10, Paul turns his focus to the Israel of the present. The reason so many Israelites reject Jesus is that they're basing their covenant relationship with God on their performance of the commands of the Torah. Sadly, they don't recognize what God has done through Jesus to create the new covenant family.

In chapter 11, Paul asks about Israel in the future. Will God write his own people off? Paul says no. There are many Jewish people, including himself, who have recognized Jesus as the Messiah, but there are also a lot who haven't. Once again, God has used this rejection for his own purposes, as it has caused the Gospel to spread farther into the Gentile world, making the family of Abraham even larger and more multiethnic. Paul describes God's covenant family as a big olive tree. The rejectors of Jesus are branches that have been broken off, while these Gentiles are like wild branches that have been grafted on. However, Paul does say that one day Jesus will be acknowledged by his own people. He doesn't offer any details about how but simply trusts in God's character and promises that he will not give up on his covenant people.

Romans 12-16: The Gospel Unifies the Church

These ideas transition into the final section of the book of Romans, chapters 12-16. Because of their faith in Jesus, both Jews and Gentiles are a part of Abraham's family. This new humanity is being transformed by God's Spirit and is fulfilling God's ancient promises. The only reasonable response to this is for these Jewish and non-Jewish Christians to become a unified church community.

In chapters 12-13, Paul shows us that this unity comes from a commitment to love and forgiveness. Love will look like everyone using their diverse gifts and talents to serve one another. Unity also means having humility and forgiveness. When these different ethnic groups and cultures come together in Jesus, conflict is inevitable and can only be overcome through the hard work of forgiveness. All of this is how these believers show the greatest Christian virtue, love, which fulfills the Torah's greatest commands to love God and neighbor.

Chapters 14-15 focus on the issues creating ethnic divisions in the church, specifically disputes about Jewish food laws and observing the Sabbath. Paul says that these practices don't define who is in or out of Jesus' family. If the people differ over these culturally important but nonessential issues, they need to respect each other's differences. In this way, love is what heals and unifies Jesus' family.

Paul closes his letter by first commending Phoebe, a key leader of the church in Cenchreae. She had the honor of carrying and likely reading this letter aloud to the Roman churches. Paul further concludes by greeting all the people that he hasn't seen for a while.

All the pieces of this letter fit together into a profound masterpiece of Paul's writing. It explained and served to spread the message of Jesus' new covenant family in the 1st century, and it continues to do the same in our world today.



Big Idea

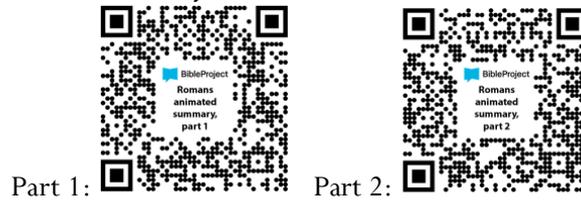
Faith in Jesus creates new humans who are liberated to become a people characterized by love for God and their neighbors. This new humanity is being transformed by God's Spirit and is the fulfillment of God's ancient promises.

Day 1

Romans 1:1 – 2:16

Background

Bible Project's Romans Animated Summary, Part 1 and Part 2



Review

In this review of the past 24 hours, reflect gently without judgment or criticism.
Where did I feel God's presence most strongly?
In what moment did I feel furthest from God?

Prayer

Take a few minutes reflecting on these visual prompts, then let each symbol guide a different aspect of your verbal or written prayer.



Preparing to Read

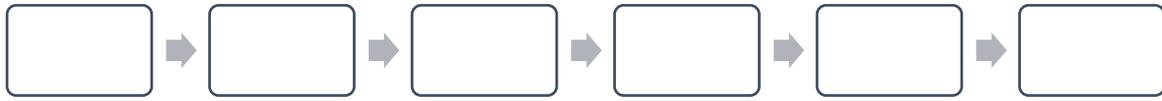
Sit quietly for a moment. Pray for clarity and a receptive spirit to understand the depths of God's message through Romans.

The Word

Read today's passage once through, then the second time read aloud while using hand gestures, as if you are acting it out or giving a speech. This physical engagement should help you slow down and view the text in a new light.

Additional Reflection on the Word

To process this passage, we will summarize the flow. On a blank page, draw a process flow somewhat like this.



In the first big box, write a summary of the main idea of the first paragraph or main point. Then in the second big box, do the same for the next paragraph or main point. In the smaller arrow, write the connecting word between them, i.e. “therefore,” “but,” “because,” etc. Do the same for each big box until you have the passage flow summarized. Try to be brief in each box. Underneath the whole diagram, write down 1-3 one-word big themes of the passage.

Response to the Word

- Paul has a clear sense of mission here. Do you have a clear sense of mission in your own life?
- Romans 1:21 speaks about not honoring God or giving thanks, leading to a darkened understanding. Reflect on the ways in which you currently express gratitude in your life. •How might deepening this gratitude transform your daily life? What practical steps could you take to ensure you honor God more fully?
- There are multiple sinful behaviors and attitudes listed in this passage. Highlight each one in a certain color. Consider these descriptions and examine your own life. Are there any areas where you see similar patterns or attitudes? What steps could you take to address them?

Gratitude

List five blessings in your life that you often take for granted.

Benediction

May the wisdom I've gained guide my steps and light my path.

Day 1

Romans 1:1 – 2:16

1 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^[2] was a descendant of David, ⁴ and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power^[3] 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^[4] 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.

Paul’s Longing to Visit Rome

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,^[5] 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,^[6] just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”^[7]

God’s Wrath Against Sinful Humanity

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—

² 1:3 Or *who according to the flesh*

³ 1:4 Or *was declared with power to be the Son of God*

⁴ 1:5 Or *that is*

⁵ 1:13 The Greek word for *brothers and sisters* (*adelphoi*) refers here to believers, both men and women, as part of God’s family; also in 7:1, 4; 8:12, 29; 10:1; 11:25; 12:1; 15:14, 30; 16:14, 17.

⁶ 1:17 Or *is from faith to faith*

⁷ 1:17 Habakkuk 2:4

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. ²² Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools ²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.

²⁴ Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. ²⁵ They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

²⁶ Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. ²⁷ In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error.

²⁸ Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done. ²⁹ They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, ³⁰ slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; ³¹ they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy. ³² Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

God's Righteous Judgment

2 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."⁸ 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

⁸ 2:6 Psalm 62:12; Proverbs 24:12

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.

Day 2

Romans 2:17 – 3:20

Background

The Bible Effect's Historical Background to Romans



Review

In this review of the past 24 hours, reflect gently without judgment or criticism. How did I respond to a challenging situation? What would a more Christlike response have been?

Prayer

Slowly read through Psalm 34, line by line, chewing on each word and phrase. Use it for your own personal prayer to God.

I will extol the Lord at all times;
his praise will always be on my lips.

I will glory in the Lord;
let the afflicted hear and rejoice.

Glorify the Lord with me;
let us exalt his name together.

I sought the Lord, and he answered me;
he delivered me from all my fears.
Those who look to him are radiant;
their faces are never covered with shame.

This poor man called, and the Lord heard him;
he saved him out of all his troubles.
The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him,
and he delivers them.

Taste and see that the Lord is good;
blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.
Fear the Lord, you his holy people,
for those who fear him lack nothing.
The lions may grow weak and hungry,
but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.

Come, my children, listen to me;
I will teach you the fear of the Lord.
Whoever of you loves life

and desires to see many good days,
keep your tongue from evil
and your lips from telling lies.
Turn from evil and do good;
seek peace and pursue it.

The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,
and his ears are attentive to their cry;
but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil,
to blot out their name from the earth.

The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them;
he delivers them from all their troubles.
The Lord is close to the brokenhearted
and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

The righteous person may have many troubles,
but the Lord delivers him from them all;
he protects all his bones,
not one of them will be broken.

Evil will slay the wicked;
the foes of the righteous will be condemned.
The Lord will rescue his servants;
no one who takes refuge in him will be condemned.

Preparing to Read

Say this prayer to prepare your heart to read:

Creator of all, I surrender my anxieties and concerns to You. Prepare my heart to receive
Your Word with humility and openness. Let Your truth transform me from within.

The Word

Take your time with today's passage. Read and re-read it at a deliberate pace.

Additional Reflection on the Word

Paraphrase the passage in your own words. You can do this verbally or by writing it down. This should help you distill the main ideas of the passage and show you which parts you still have trouble understanding.

Response to the Word

- Which sections were still harder for you to understand? Take a few minutes reflecting and praying into these sections. If another scripture came to mind, feel free to look it up and reflect on how it may shed light on this passage.
- What is the main point Paul is making about the law and its relation to our righteousness?
- What does the passage teach us about God's righteousness and human responsibility?
- What are areas you may be relying on practices or habits instead of focusing on inner transformation?
- What specific change can you make in your life to align more closely with the righteousness described here, based on a genuine relationship with God?
- Based on your reflections, compose a personal confession or prayer that expresses how the passage has revealed areas of your life needing change or gratitude.

Gratitude

Express gratitude for a difficult situation that has helped you grow closer to God.

Benediction

May God's peace fill my heart and sustain me through the week ahead.

Day 2

Romans 2:17 – 3:20

The Jews and the Law

¹⁷Now you, if you call yourself a Jew; if you rely on the law and boast in God; ¹⁸if you know his will and approve of what is superior because you are instructed by the law; ¹⁹if you are convinced that you are a guide for the blind, a light for those who are in the dark, ²⁰an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of little children, because you have in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth— ²¹you, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal? ²²You who say that people should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? ²³You who boast in the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law? ²⁴As it is written: “God’s name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.”^[9]

²⁵Circumcision has value if you observe the law, but if you break the law, you have become as though you had not been circumcised. ²⁶So then, if those who are not circumcised keep the law’s requirements, will they not be regarded as though they were circumcised? ²⁷The one who is not circumcised physically and yet obeys the law will condemn you who, even though you have the^[10] written code and circumcision, are a lawbreaker.

²⁸A person is not a Jew who is one only outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical.

²⁹No, 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.

God’s Faithfulness

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

³What if some were unfaithful? Will their unfaithfulness nullify God’s faithfulness? ⁴Not 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.”^[11]

⁵But 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.) ⁶Certainly not! If that were so, how could God judge the world? ⁷Someone might argue, “If my falsehood enhances God’s truthfulness and so increases his glory, why am I still condemned as a sinner?” ⁸Why 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

⁹What 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. ¹⁰As it is written:

⁹ 2:24 Isaiah 52:5 (see Septuagint); Ezekiel 36:20,22

¹⁰ 2:27 Or *who, by means of a*

¹¹ 3:4 Psalm 51:4

“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.”^[12]

¹³ “Their throats are open graves;
their tongues practice deceit.”^[13]

“The poison of vipers is on their lips.”^[14]

¹⁴ “Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.”^[15]

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.”^[16]

¹⁸ “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”^[17]

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.

¹² 3:12 Psalms 14:1-3; 53:1-3; Eccles. 7:20

¹³ 3:13 Psalm 5:9

¹⁴ 3:13 Psalm 140:3

¹⁵ 3:14 Psalm 10:7 (see Septuagint)

¹⁶ 3:17 Isaiah 59:7,8

¹⁷ 3:18 Psalm 36:1

Day 3

Romans 3:21 – 4:25

Background

Bible Project's Law in the Bible



Review

In this review of the past 24 hours, reflect gently without judgment or criticism. Where did I miss an opportunity to show God's love to others? How did I use my time and talents to serve God and others today?

Prayer

Spend some time meditating on these symbols that represent aspects of the Christian faith. Try to view them from fresh eyes. Use them as inspiration to communicate with God.



Preparing to Read

Consider a struggle or question you have about your faith. Pray that today's reading will provide insight and direction from God's perspective.

The Word

Read today's passage. Interact with it like it's a painting. Let your thoughts, imagination, and interpretation paint a vivid picture.

Additional Reflection on the Word

- What is the main point in this passage? And what are the main objections Paul answers? For each of those, what is his main counterargument?
- What is the view of blessedness, or being blessed, as presented by this passage? In what ways is that different than you hear the culture, other believers, or maybe even yourself talk about being blessed?
- How do you see God's justice and mercy in the passage?

Response to the Word

- What are some ways you may be consciously or unconsciously relying on personal achievements or adherence to rules for your sense of worth or acceptance before God?
- Spend a moment meditating on Abraham's long faith journey. What are some ways you are inspired or challenged in your own faith journey?
- Reflect on your identity in Christ. What does that mean to have an identity in Christ? How does this identity shape your response to this passage?
- Are there any areas of your life where you struggle to accept God's forgiveness? Sit with God for a moment with these areas and the truths from this passage.
- What are some practical steps you can take to live out of the reality of being justified by faith rather than by works? What actions or attitudes would reflect a reliance on faith rather than on your works?

Gratitude

Take a few deep breaths and focus on the present moment, feeling thankful for the gift of life and the opportunity to experience it fully.

Benediction

May the truth I've learned strengthen my faith and inspire my actions.

Righteousness Through Faith

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^[18] 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,^[19] 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.

Abraham Justified by Faith

4 What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, discovered in this matter? ² If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about—but not before God. ³ What does Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”^[20]

⁴ Now to the one who works, wages are not credited as a gift but as an obligation. ⁵ However, to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness.

⁶ David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the one to whom God credits righteousness apart from works:

⁷ “Blessed are those
whose transgressions are forgiven,
whose sins are covered.

⁸ Blessed is the one
whose sin the Lord will never count against them.”^[21]

⁹ Is this blessedness only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? We have been saying that Abraham’s faith was credited to him as righteousness. ¹⁰ Under what circumstances was it credited? Was it after he was circumcised, or before? It was not after, but before! ¹¹ And he received circumcision as a sign, a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. So then, he is the father of all

¹⁸ 3:22 Or *through the faithfulness of*

¹⁹ 3:25 The Greek for *sacrifice of atonement* refers to the atonement cover on the ark of the covenant (see Lev. 16:15,16).

²⁰ 4:3 Genesis 15:6; also in verse 22

²¹ 4:8 Psalm 32:1,2

who believe but have not been circumcised, in order that righteousness might be credited to them. ¹² And he is then also the father of the circumcised who not only are circumcised but who also follow in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

¹³ It was not through the law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith. ¹⁴ For if those who depend on the law are heirs, faith means nothing and the promise is worthless, ¹⁵ because the law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression.

¹⁶ Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who have the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. ¹⁷ As it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations."^[22] He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed—the God who gives life to the dead and calls into being things that were not.

¹⁸ Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, "So shall your offspring be."^[23] ¹⁹ Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah's womb was also dead. 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.

²² 4:17 Genesis 17:5

²³ 4:18 Genesis 15:5

Day 4

Romans 5:1–21

Background

Bible Project's NT Letters Historical Context



Review

In this review of the past 24 hours, reflect gently without judgment or criticism.

What decision did I make that I need to bring before God?

What temptation did I face, and how did I respond?

Prayer

Select a station of the cross (a part of Jesus' story in the day leading up to his death and burial) and imagine Jesus at that moment of His journey. Reflect on His suffering and the love He demonstrated through His sacrifice. Offer a prayer of gratitude and reverence, asking Jesus to reveal more of His love and sacrifice to you and to strengthen your faith through His example.

Preparing to Read

Say this prayer to prepare your heart to read:

Sovereign Lord, focus my thoughts on Your holy Word and remove any barriers to hearing You clearly. Fill me with a sense of reverence as I approach the Scriptures. Guide me in understanding and applying Your teachings.

The Word

Read the passage for today. Engage with the text as if it were a puzzle. Piece together its parts to reveal a bigger picture.

Additional Reflection on the Word

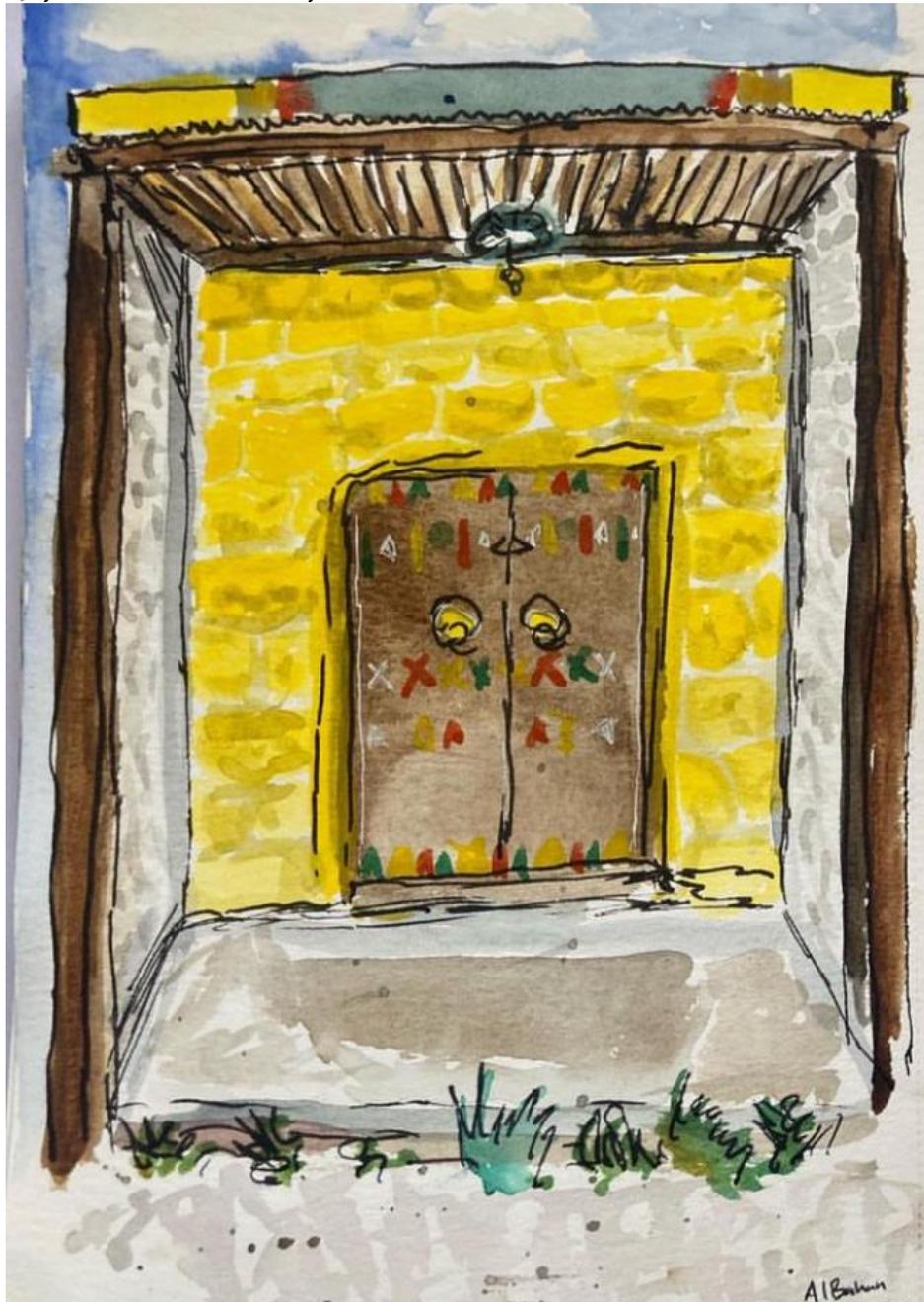
- What are the 2-3 big themes of this passage?
- Spend some time comparing Adam and Jesus from this passage. You can use a highlighter, draw a chart or diagram, or list things out.
- What does peace entail beyond just absence of conflict, as described in this text?

Response to the Word

- Think through your own walk with God. Where are times in your life you have experienced God's peace?
- Where are times in your walk with God you have seen the progression as described in Romans 5:2-5?
- What are some ways you could support others in their journey through suffering? What are some things you may be doing that are harming more than helping?
- Identify specific actions or changes you want to make in response to the passage. Write a practical plan detailing steps you will take to align your life more closely with the message of this passage.

Reflection

Reflect on the following picture. Use the image to sit with God and enjoy the art together. The subject, colors, style, or elements might speak to different things you are going through or might remind you of scripture. Enjoy this moment of beauty with God.



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Gratitude

Reflect on a mistake you've made. Consider how God's love was constant regardless of this mistake. Think on how this mistake helped teach you or grow you. Express your gratitude to God for his faithfulness.

Benediction

May the grace I've encountered today overflow into my relationships.

Day 4

Romans 5:1–21

Peace and Hope

5 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we^[24] 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^[25] boast in the hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only so, but we^[26] 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.

Death Through Adam, Life Through Christ

¹² Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned—

¹³ To be sure, sin was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not charged against anyone's account where there is no law. ¹⁴ Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who is a pattern of the one to come.

¹⁵ But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! ¹⁶ Nor can the gift of God be compared with the result of one man's sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification.

¹⁷ For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!

¹⁸ Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. ¹⁹ For just as through the disobedience of the one man the

²⁴ 5:1 Many manuscripts *let us*

²⁵ 5:2 Or *let us*

²⁶ 5:2 Or *let us*

many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

²⁰The law was brought in so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, ²¹so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Day 5

Romans 6:1 – 7:6

Background

The Beat's Romans Overview



Review

In this review of the past 24 hours, reflect gently without judgment or criticism.

In what way did I grow spiritually?

How did my actions reflect (or not reflect) the fruit of the Spirit?

Prayer

Take a prayer walk with Jesus.

As you walk, think of specific actions he took during his ministry, such as healing the sick, feeding the hungry, casting out demons, or confronting wrong.

And reflect with him on how his actions inspire you to act in your own life.

Then offer prayers of thanks for his example and ask for strength and wisdom to follow his example.

Preparing to Read

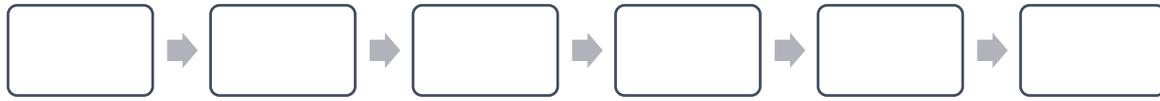
Take a moment to reflect on the beauty of God's creation around you. Pray for a heart that is attentive to the beauty and depth of His Word.

The Word

Read today's passage with intention. Imagine each sentence as a treasure chest waiting to be opened.

Additional Reflection on the Word

To process this passage, we will summarize the flow. Draw a process flow somewhat like this on a blank page.



In the first big box, write a summary of the main idea of the first paragraph or main point. Then in the second big box, do the same for the next paragraph or main point. In the smaller arrow, write the connecting word between them, i.e. “therefore,” “but,” “because,” etc. Do the same for each big box until you have the passage flow summarized. Try to be brief in each box. Underneath the whole diagram, write down 1-3 one-word big themes of the passage.

Response to the Word

For these questions, divide a blank page in half to take notes on. On one side you’ll write down the thoughts and observations about the old dead self, and on the other you’ll write down your thoughts and observations about the new alive self.

- Reflect on what it means to be physically dead, then what it means to be physically alive, writing out the contrast. After you’ve thought this through, apply it spiritually. What does it mean to be dead to sin but alive to God? Use both your reflection as well as clues from the passage.

- What are the words, pictures, and phrases used by the passage to describe our old versus our new relationship with Christ?

- Meditate on the marriage idea from Romans 7:2-3. How does this shed new light on the old vs. new self?

Now think through your own life. What are ways you need help in living out your identity as dead to sin and live to God? Pray through some ideas for practical strategies to align your life with grace and saying no to sin, such as prayer, accountability, renewing your mind, etc.

Gratitude

Make a list of things you're looking forward to in the coming days, weeks, or months, and feel thankful for the hope and anticipation they bring.

Benediction

May the Holy Spirit empower me to live out the lessons I've discovered.

Day 5

Romans 6:1 – 7:6

Dead to Sin, Alive in Christ

6 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ²By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? ³Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴We 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.

⁵For 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. ⁶For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with,^[27] that we should no longer be slaves to sin— ⁷because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

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

¹¹In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹²Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. ¹³Do 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. ¹⁴For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

Slaves to Righteousness

¹⁵What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? By no means! ¹⁶Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. ¹⁸You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

¹⁹I am using an example from everyday life because of your human limitations. Just as you used to offer yourselves as slaves to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness. ²⁰When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. ²¹What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! ²²But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. ²³For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in^[28] Christ Jesus our Lord.

Released From the Law, Bound to Christ

²⁷ 6:6 Or *be rendered powerless*

²⁸ 6:23 Or *through*

7 Do you not know, brothers and sisters—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law has authority over someone only as long as that person lives? ²For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law that binds her to him. ³So then, if she has sexual relations with another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress if she marries another man.

⁴So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God. ⁵For when we were in the realm of the flesh,^[29] the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in us, so that we bore fruit for death. ⁶But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.

²⁹ 7:5 In contexts like this, the Greek word for *flesh* (*sarx*) refers to the sinful state of human beings, often presented as a power in opposition to the Spirit.

Day 6

Romans 7:7 – 8:13

Background

Crosspaint's Romans in a Nutshell: Chapter 7



Review

In this review of the past 24 hours, reflect gently without judgment or criticism. What conversation or interaction today needs God's healing touch?

Prayer

Spend a few minutes observing a tree. If you aren't in the presence of a real tree, you can use an image. Notice its size, shape, branches, leaves, and overall presence. If you can, pluck off a branch or leaf and observe its details.

On a blank page, draw a simple outline of a tree. The drawing doesn't have to be perfect—focus on capturing the essence of the tree as you observe it.

As you are drawing, think about the tree's qualities (strength, growth, resilience, protection) and how that connects to your spiritual life.

Then write on or around the tree which of those things represent aspects of your relationship with Jesus or areas of your life where you seek those qualities.

Use your tree drawing as a focal point for prayer. Reflect on how the tree symbolizes your own spiritual journey, faith, struggles, hopes, or need for God. Let the tree imagery guide your prayer.

After your prayer, spend a few moments in silence and reflection.

Preparing to Read

Say this prayer to prepare your heart to read:

Gracious God, calm the chaos of my mind,
Attune my spirit to Your voice, refined.
May Your Word shape my heart and actions true,
As I open myself anew to You.

The Word

Read today's passage. Try to read it as if it's your first time to ever read it.

Additional Reflection on the Word

Get some different colors of pens or highlighters and mark each of these:

- Circle words or phrases portrayed in a negative way in one color, and circle positive ones in another color
- Highlight repeated words or phrases, each one in its own color
- Underline connection words like “because,” “so,” “for,” “but,” etc.

After you finish, spend a few minutes processing the passage. What new insights does it offer up?

Response to the Word

God has given you this passage. He has communicated to you today. Maybe you have learned more about him, or the world, or yourself. Spend a moment. What gift would you like to give God in response? It could be a quiet moment with him, a poem, a song, a dance, a doodle or a piece of art, etc. Be creative in what you’d like to give him. If you have time, go ahead and do it now.

Gratitude

Reflect on three good things that happened today (yesterday, if you are doing this in the morning), no matter how small or seemingly insignificant.

Benediction

May God’s love surround me and uplift me in all that I do.

Day 6

Romans 7:7 – 8:13

The Law and Sin

⁷What 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.”³⁰ ⁸But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of coveting. For apart from the law, sin was dead. ⁹Once I was alive apart from the law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died. ¹⁰I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death. ¹¹For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death. ¹²So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good.

¹³Did 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.

¹⁴We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. ¹⁵I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. ¹⁶And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. ¹⁸For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature.³¹ ¹⁹For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ²⁰Now 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.

²¹So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²²For in my inner being I delight in God’s law; ²³but 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. ²⁴What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? ²⁵Thanks 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 nature³² a slave to the law of sin.

Life Through the Spirit

8 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, ²because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you³³ free from the law of sin and death. ³For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh,³⁴ God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering.³⁵ And so he condemned

³⁰ 7:7 Exodus 20:17; Deuteronomy 5:21

³¹ 7:18 Or *my flesh*

³² 7:25 Or *in the flesh*

³³ 8:2 The Greek is singular; some manuscripts *me*

³⁴ 8:3 In contexts like this, the Greek word for *flesh* (*sarx*) refers to the sinful state of human beings, often presented as a power in opposition to the Spirit; also in verses 4-13.

³⁵ 8:3 Or *flesh*, for *sin*

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.

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.

⁹ You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life³⁶ because of righteousness. ¹¹ And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of³⁷ his Spirit who lives in you.

¹² Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation—but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it. ¹³ For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.

³⁶ 8:10 Or *you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive*

³⁷ 8:11 Some manuscripts *bodies through*

Day 7

Romans 8:14-39

Background

Crosspaint's Romans in a Nutshell: Chapter 8



Review

In this review of the past 24 hours, reflect gently without judgment or criticism.

What were the most significant moments or events of the day?

What is one thing I can do in the next 24 hours to draw closer to God?

Prayer

Find a quiet place and imagine the presence of God the Father, the Holy Spirit, and Jesus around you. Picture a warm, glowing, radiant light that represents God's unity and love surrounding you. Ask God the Father, the Creator of all things, to give you wisdom and meet your needs (James 1:5; Philippians 4:19). Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you according to His will and strengthen you (Psalm 143:10; Ephesians 3:16). Ask Jesus, who redeems and calls us to follow Him, to intercede for you (Galatians 3:13; John 8:12; Hebrews 7:25). Reflect on God's guidance and presence.

Preparing to Read

Invite the Holy Spirit to guide your study. Pray for him to teach you, guide you into truth, convict you, empower you, and sanctify you through today's time in the Word.

The Word

Read today's passage aloud. Try to inject emotion into it, as if you're giving it as a speech.

Additional Reflection on the Word

- What are three big points from this passage? What logic or information does he use to support these points?
- Circle all the verbs in the passage. How do they help you understand how the Holy Spirit works?

Response to the Word

- Spend a few minutes reflecting on the ideas of slaves, children, adoption, and heirs.
 - Then reflect on the parts of the passage that articulate those ideas.
 - Which of those phrases do you most identify with? Why?
- How does Paul connect the idea of children and heirs with suffering?
 - How does this make you feel?
 - What solution does Paul offer for this discomfort?
- What does this passage say about our weakness?
 - In what areas do you feel weak?
 - In what areas do you feel strong that maybe you should feel weaker in?
 - Ask for God's grace.
- What practical steps can you take today to hold onto the hope of future glory?
 - Are there any daily practices that might help?
- What changes could you make to your prayer habits based on new understandings of the Spirit's intercession?
- Are there areas you need to surrender control and better trust and embrace God's sovereign purpose and plan for your life in the midst of your current circumstances?

Soaking in God's love

Spend a few minutes meditating on the beautiful reassurance of God's love in Romans 8:31-39. You may want to do something physical to help you feel like you are soaking in his love, such as sitting in a patch of sunshine or in a pool, or enjoying the smell of a candle or perfume.

Gratitude

Sit quietly for 2 minutes, focusing on your breath. With each inhale, think of something you are grateful for, and with each exhale, release any negativity or stress.

Benediction

May the insights gained bring clarity and purpose to my life.

Day 7

Romans 8:14-39

¹⁴For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. ¹⁵The 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.³⁸ And by him we cry, “*Abba*,³⁹ Father.” ¹⁶The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. ¹⁷Now 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.

Present Suffering and Future Glory

¹⁸I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. ¹⁹For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. ²⁰For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹that⁴⁰ the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.

²²We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. ²³Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

²⁶In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. ²⁷And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God.

²⁸And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who⁴¹ have been called according to his purpose. ²⁹For 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. ³⁰And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

More Than Conquerors

³¹What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³²He 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? ³³Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who 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. ³⁵Who shall separate us

³⁸ 8:15 The Greek word for *adoption to sonship* is a term referring to the full legal standing of an adopted male heir in Roman culture; also in verse 23.

³⁹ 8:18 Aramaic for father

⁴⁰ 8:21 Or *subjected it in hope*. ²¹ For

⁴¹ 8:28 Or *that all things work together for good to those who love God, who; or that in all things God works together with those who love him to bring about what is good—with those who*

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.”⁴²

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,⁴³ 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.

⁴² 8:36 Psalm 44:22

⁴³ 8:38 Or *nor heavenly rulers*

Day 8

Romans 9:1-29

Background

Bible Project's Right of the Firstborn



Review

In this review of the past 24 hours, reflect gently without judgment or criticism.

What feelings or emotions did I experience today, and why?

How did I interact with Jesus during those emotional moments? How would I like to interact with him now in this moment of reflection on this?

Prayer

Today we will try something that may be uncomfortable, but I encourage you to try it, even if in the privacy of your own room.

Put on some music that resonates with you spiritually or emotionally and try some prayerful dancing. Use the movements of your body to express your prayers and feelings. Let your movements be a physical manifestation of your emotions and intentions, allowing the rhythm and flow of the dance to guide your prayers.

Preparing to Read

Say this prayer to prepare your heart to read:

God of Peace, calm my busy mind and direct my heart towards Your Word. May Your Scriptures illuminate my path today. Prepare me to receive Your insights with a receptive spirit.

The Word

Read today's passage with patience and precision, reading it multiple times if needed to really get a good grasp on it. As you read, pay attention to any word or phrase that stands out.

Additional Reflection on the Word

- Pause for a moment and reflect on what you read.
- Write down the word or phrase that stood out to you.
- Ask yourself: Why did this word or phrase stand out to me? What might God be trying to say?
- Read the passage again, this time focusing on the meaning behind the text. What does it reveal about God's character, mercy, and choices?

Response to the Word

- Look up the context of some of the verses he quotes from the Old Testament. What richness does it add to today's passage?
- Journal out your answer to the questions: What does this passage teach me about God's sovereignty? How do I respond to the truth that God shows mercy to whom He wills?
- Skim the passage again with a heart of prayer. Turn your reading into a conversation with God. Pray through any questions or emotions that arise.

•After reading, respond to God in prayer: “Lord, help me trust in Your will, even when I don’t fully understand. Shape my heart to align with Your purposes.”

Contemplation

Take several minutes in silence, resting in God’s presence. Allow what you’ve read to settle deeply into your soul.

Ponder the overarching truth of God’s mercy and election, and simply dwell on His greatness.

Action

Write down one specific way you can live differently in response to this passage.

Gratitude

Draw a map-like diagram with a central point labeled "Jesus." From this central point, create branches or lines leading to various symbols or drawings that represent things you’re grateful for related to your faith or relationship with Jesus. As you draw each branch and symbol, reflect on why each aspect is important to you.

Benediction

May the strength of God's promises fortify my spirit in times of challenge.

Day 8

Romans 9:1-29

Paul's Anguish Over Israel

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!⁴⁴ Amen.

God's Sovereign Choice

⁶ It is not as though God's word had failed. For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. ⁷ Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham's children. On the contrary, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned."⁴⁵ ⁸ In 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. ⁹ For this was how the promise was stated: "At the appointed time I will return, and Sarah will have a son."⁴⁶

¹⁰ Not only that, but Rebekah's children were conceived at the same time by our father Isaac. ¹¹ Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God's purpose in election might stand: ¹² not by works but by him who calls—she was told, "The older will serve the younger."⁴⁷

¹³ Just as it is written: "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."⁴⁸

¹⁴ What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all! ¹⁵ For he says to Moses,

"I will have mercy on whom I have mercy,
and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion."⁴⁹

¹⁶ It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God's mercy. ¹⁷ For 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."⁵⁰ ¹⁸ Therefore 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?"

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?'"⁵¹ 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

⁴⁴ 9:5 Or *Messiah, who is over all. God be forever praised! Or Messiah. God who is over all be forever praised!*

⁴⁵ 9:7 Genesis 21:12

⁴⁶ 9:9 Genesis 18:10,14

⁴⁷ 9:12 Genesis 25:23

⁴⁸ 9:13 Malachi 1:2,3

⁴⁹ 9:15 Exodus 33:19

⁵⁰ 9:17 Exodus 9:16

⁵¹ 9:20 Isaiah 29:16; 45:9

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,”⁵²

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.’”⁵³

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.”⁵⁴

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.”⁵⁵

⁵² 9:25 Hosea 2:23

⁵³ 9:26 Hosea 1:10

⁵⁴ 9:28 Isaiah 10:22,23 (see Septuagint)

⁵⁵ 9:29 Isaiah 1:9

Day 9

Romans 9:30 – 10:21

Background

Bible Project's God's Anger and Love



Review

In this review of the past 24 hours, reflect gently without judgment or criticism.
How did I respond to challenges or difficulties that arose?
What were moments of grace or beauty that I noticed or appreciated?

Prayer

Go on a prayer walk. As you wander, let the path you take inspire your prayers. For example, if you come to a choice in the path or hallway, walk over tile or stone or grass, come to a dead end, circle back towards your starting point, go up or down steps, etc., let each of those inspire a prayer related to that action.

Preparing to Read

Quiet your heart and mind, and invite God's presence into your time in the Word. Reflect on his nearness and ask Him to open your heart to the truths of today's passage.

The Word

First scan today's passage, then read it at a normal pace, then a careful and measured read.

Additional Reflection on the Word

Out loud, paraphrase the passage in your own words. One easy way to do this is to look at a few sentences or a paragraph, then look away and say what you think it's saying in your own words. Then look at the next section and do the same, until you've finished the passage.

Response to the Word

There are multiple images in this passage. Choose 1-5 of them that stand out, then one by one meditate on them. Spend a few minutes on it and imagine the scene in your mind. Then re-read that section.

How does that grow your understanding of the section?

How does this passage challenge my view of righteousness?

What insight does this passage give on the responsibility of sharing the gospel?

Spend a few minutes in quiet prayer asking God what he'd like you to take away from today.

Gratitude

Thank God for each of the following things:

- A specific attribute of Jesus Christ that you find particularly meaningful
- A way God has recently provided for your physical needs
- A biblical character whose story inspires you
- A specific fruit of the Spirit you've seen growing in your life
- A promise from Scripture that brings you hope

Benediction

May the joy of knowing God's word brighten my day and uplift my soul.

Day 9

Romans 9:30 – 10:21

Israel's Unbelief

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.”⁵⁶

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.”⁵⁷ ⁶ But the righteousness that is by faith says: “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’”⁵⁸ (that is, to bring Christ down) ⁷ “or ‘Who will descend into the deep?’”⁵⁹ (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,”⁶⁰ 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.”⁶¹ 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.”⁶²

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!”⁶³

⁵⁶ 9:33 Isaiah 8:14; 28:16

⁵⁷ 10:5 Leviticus 18:5

⁵⁸ 10:6 Deuteronomy 30:12

⁵⁹ 10:7 Deuteronomy 30:13

⁶⁰ 10:8 Deuteronomy 30:14

⁶¹ 10:11 Isaiah 28:16 (see Septuagint)

⁶² 10:13 Joel 2:32

⁶³ 10:15 Isaiah 52:7

¹⁶ But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our message?”⁶⁴ 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.”⁶⁵

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.”⁶⁶

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.”⁶⁷

²¹ But concerning Israel he says,

“All day long I have held out my hands
to a disobedient and obstinate people.”⁶⁸

⁶⁴ 10:16 Isaiah 53:1

⁶⁵ 10:18 Psalm 19:4

⁶⁶ 10:19 Deuteronomy 32:21

⁶⁷ 10:20 Isaiah 65:1

⁶⁸ 10:21 Isaiah 65:2

Day 10

Romans 11:1-32

Background

Francis Chan's Unity



Review

In this review of the past 24 hours, reflect gently without judgment or criticism. How did I treat others? Were my actions consistent with my values and beliefs? How did I spend my time, and was it in line with my priorities and goals?

Prayer

On a blank page, draw a box representing a personal treasure box. Inside the box, draw a picture of a few things that hold significance for you (i.e. a memory, a person, a piece of jewelry, a place, a particular name of God).

Use these as focal points during your prayer session. Put your finger on one and let it prompt a specific prayer or reflection related to the object's meaning or significance in your life.

Preparing to Read

Say this prayer to prepare your heart to read:

Lord, I set aside my distractions and anxieties to seek Your presence. Help me to focus solely on Your Word and let Your teachings penetrate my heart. Guide me as I reflect on Your truths.

The Word

Read today's passage as a journey. Read it with both mindfulness and imagination.

Additional Reflection on the Word

Today we will use cross-references (related passages of scripture) to get a better understanding of this passage. Look up each of the following cross references, then take notes within today's passage of what it relates to and how it deepens your understanding.

I Samuel 12:22

Jeremiah 33:23-26

I Kings 19:1-18

Galatians 2:11-22

John 15:1-17

Isaiah 5

Matthew 21:33-46

Response to the Word

How does this passage shape your understanding of the following terms?

Grace

Mercy

Transgression

Graft

Mystery

What questions do you still have after reading this passage? Sit with God for a minute with these questions. He may give answers, or he may give peace, or he may want you to look into it further in coming days.

Gratitude

Do something rhythmic like swinging on a swingset, walking, drumming on a box or table, or listening to the ticks of a clock. With every other turn (each swing, step, drum, or tick), say something you're grateful for.

Benediction

May I carry the peace and hope of today's study into every interaction.

The Remnant of Israel

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”⁶⁹? ⁴ And what was God's answer to him? “I have reserved for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal.”⁷⁰ 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.”⁷¹

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.”⁷²

Ingrafted Branches

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

⁶⁹ 11:3 1 Kings 19:10,14

⁷⁰ 11:4 1 Kings 19:18

⁷¹ 11:8 Deuteronomy 29:4; Isaiah 29:10

⁷² 11:10 Psalm 69:22,23

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!

All Israel Will Be Saved

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 way⁷³ 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 is⁷⁴ my covenant with them
when I take away their sins.”⁷⁵

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 now⁷⁶ 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.

⁷³ 11:26 Or *and so*

⁷⁴ 11:27 Or *will be*

⁷⁵ 11:27 Isaiah 59:20,21; 27:9 (see Septuagint); Jeremiah 31:33,34

⁷⁶ 11:31 Some manuscripts do not have *now*.

Day 11

Romans 11:33 – 12:8

Background

Bible Project's Love God with All Your Heart



Review

In this review of the past 24 hours, reflect gently without judgment or criticism.

In what areas of my life did I fall short or make mistakes? How can I learn from them?

What moments of prayer or reflection helped me connect with God?

Prayer

Today we will use our fingers to pray for different things. You can either spend a bit of time on each finger's topic, or you can use one finger to trace up and down the outline of the other hand's fingers, praying for each thing in turn.

- Thumb: The thumb, closest to you, represents those who are closest to you—family and friends. Pray for their needs, well-being, and spiritual growth.
- Index Finger: The index finger, which points and leads, symbolizes leaders who guide and teach, such as pastors, teachers, mentors, authors, and theologians. Pray for their guidance, wisdom, and integrity as they lead others.
- Middle Finger: The middle finger is the tallest, representing those in authority or positions of power. This includes leaders in the church, community, and country. Pray for wisdom for them and for their decisions and actions to align with God's will.
- Ring Finger: The ring finger is often the weakest finger, symbolizing those who are weak or in need. Pray for the sick, the poor, and those who are struggling.
- Little Finger: The little finger represents yourself. Pray for your own needs, growth, and relationship with God.

Preparing to Read

Spend a minute praying for today's time in the Word, using Christ's sacrifice as inspiration. What is the significance of his sacrifice? How does it change your life? Pray for insight into how Romans addresses the impact of this sacrifice.

The Word

Read today's passage with curiosity like an explorer. Let it guide you through uncharted territory.

Additional Reflection on the Word

- Read the doxology (Romans 11:33-36) slowly, paying close attention to the words of praise.
- As you read, imagine standing in awe before the infinite wisdom and knowledge of God.
- Reflect on the vastness of God's wisdom and how limited our own understanding is.
- Write down any words or phrases that resonate with you.
- Then write a paraphrase of this doxology in your own words. Try to express this praise of God's wisdom and unsearchable judgments in a way that's personal to you.

Response to the Word

- When was the last time you were in awe of God's greatness? How can you cultivate a sense of awe in your daily life?
- Ask: "How does God want me to change my thinking and my actions in light of His mercy? Where is He calling me to surrender?"
- Write down one specific area of your life that you need to "sacrifice" to God—a thought pattern, habit, or attitude that needs to be renewed by the transforming work of the Holy Spirit.
- Ask: "What does it look like for me to have my mind renewed daily by God's Word?" Write a prayer asking God to transform this area of your life.
- Reflect on how God has uniquely gifted you to serve the body of Christ. Ask: "Am I using the gifts God has given me to build up the church? If not, what is holding me back?"
- What does this passage teach you about trusting God's wisdom, even when you don't understand His ways?
- Paul emphasizes that no one can fully understand God's mind or give Him counsel. Are there areas in your life where you've been trying to control or "advise" God? What would it look like to surrender these areas to His wisdom?
- Ask God to reveal where you are bent on your own will. Pray to align your thoughts, will, and heart to God's.

Gratitude

List three ways God has used you to bless others and thank him for the opportunity to serve.

Benediction

May the lessons learned today bear fruit in my character and actions.

Day 11

Romans 11:33 – 12:8

Doxology

³³ Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and⁷⁷ 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?”⁷⁸

³⁵ “Who has ever given to God,

that God should repay them?”⁷⁹

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

To him be the glory forever! Amen.

A Living Sacrifice

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.

Humble Service in the Body of Christ

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 your⁸⁰ 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,⁸¹ do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

⁷⁷ 11:33 Or *riches and the wisdom and the*

⁷⁸ 11:34 Isaiah 40:13

⁷⁹ 11:35 Job 41:11

⁸⁰ 12:6 Or *the*

⁸¹ 12:8 Or *to provide for others*

Day 12

Romans 12:9 – 13:14

Background

Crosspaint's Romans in a Nutshell: chapter 7



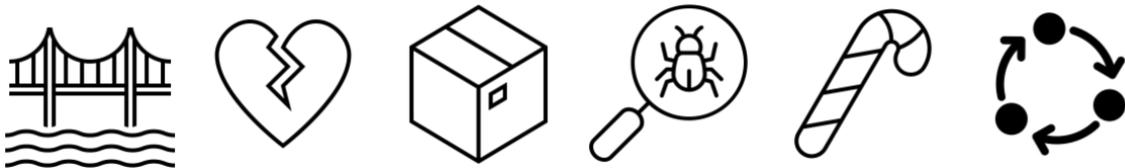
Review

In this review of the past 24 hours, reflect gently without judgment or criticism.

- How did I care for my physical and emotional needs?
- Was I able to find balance and rest?
- How did I respond to my own thoughts and feelings?
- Were my responses healthy and constructive?

Prayer

Take a few minutes reflecting on these visual prompts, then let each symbol guide a different aspect of your verbal or written prayer.



Preparing to Read

Say this prayer to prepare your heart to read:

God of Order, dispel the confusion and noise around me, calm the turmoil in my heart and mind. Center my thoughts on Your Word and open my heart to receive Your message. Let Your Spirit guide me into deeper understanding. May Your truth transform my life today. As I read these words, help me to see clearly how I can love and live more like Christ. Examine my heart, relationships, and actions.

The Word

Read today's passage with patience, slowly and thoroughly with a careful and unhurried attitude. Let each phrase sink in.

Additional Reflection on the Word

Highlight all the commands in this passage. Think back through the previous passages. How do they lead up to this “practical” section?

Response to the Word

- This passage has many exhortations. Which of them are ones you can see huge improvement in from the time you started following Christ? Praise the Holy Spirit for his work in your heart on those issues.
- Which of the exhortations are the hardest for you to carry out? Are there specific relationships you struggle to apply these commands to? Think for a few moments on how you might be able to honor, love, or serve these individuals better.
- Are there people or groups who have wronged or hurt you? How can you respond to them in a Christlike manner rather than holding onto bitterness or seeking revenge?
- What does it mean to be a peacemaker? Ponder this term for a while, and at the end consider how you might be able to be more of a peacemaker.
- Imagine for a minute the authorities and government Paul was under at this time. Taxes were exorbitantly high; a foreign power was occupying their land; the government was persecuting Christians; slaves, foreigners, women, and children had few rights; and horrifyingly painful public executions were regular. How does this frame the command to honor authorities differently for you?
- Think for a minute about how you might be able to practically put on the armor of light and clothe yourself with the Lord Jesus Christ today.

Gratitude

In this moment of your life, what do you feel most grateful for, and how is this gratitude influencing your actions and decisions?

Benediction

May God's mercy and grace transform my heart and guide my decisions.

Day 12

Romans 12:9 – 13:14

Love in Action

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. ⁸² 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," ⁸³ 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."⁸⁴

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

Submission to Governing Authorities

13 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.

Love Fulfills the Law

⁸² 12:16 Or *willing to do menial work*

⁸³ 12:19 Deuteronomy 32:35

⁸⁴ 12:20 Proverbs 25:21,22

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,”⁸⁵ and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”⁸⁶ ¹⁰ Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

The Day Is Near

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.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ 13:9 Exodus 20:13-15,17; Deuteronomy 5:17-19,21

⁸⁶ 13:9 Leviticus 19:18

⁸⁷ 13:14 In contexts like this, the Greek word for *flesh* (*sarx*) refers to the sinful state of human beings, often presented as a power in opposition to the Spirit.

Day 13

Romans 14:1 – 15:13

Background

Bible Project's How Can You Know What's Right



Review

In this review of the past 24 hours, reflect gently without judgment or criticism. Where did I notice God's presence? Was there a moment that felt particularly sacred or meaningful? How can I carry the lessons and insights of the past 24 hours into the next? What steps can I take to do so?

Prayer

Your posture can have a big effect on you. Today we will put our bodies in a certain posture for different stages of our prayer.

- Lying face down: Lie in silence before your Holy God
- Kneeling with forehead on ground: Express confession, sorrow, repentance
- Standing with arms up: Express joy in your relationship with God
- Sitting in a comfortable position: Have a friendly chat with God about whatever comes to mind
- Hands on heart: Ask God to purify your heart and desires
- Kneeling: Ask God for the desires of your heart
- Face upturned: Thank God
- Hands up: Praise God

Preparing to Read

You likely came into today's study with worries, fears, anxieties, and issues. Picture a box and mentally list out these worries, placing each one into the box. Then close and lock the box and hand God the key. Ask him to take care of them while you study today, giving you His perfect peace during this sacred time with him. This way you can focus on today's study with a peaceful and attentive heart. When you finish the study, ask him what he'd like to do with the box you handed him.

The Word

Read today's passage with care and deliberation. You can read more than once to try to fully absorb and understand it.

Additional Reflection on the Word

Illustrate the passage. You can either do this as one big drawing or visual diagram, or you can illustrate each part like a storybook. You can use a blank page or get out a new piece of paper. It's okay to use symbols, colors, stick figures, or even text to try to capture the essence and flow of the passage. After you finish, reflect on how your illustration deepened your understanding.

Response to the Word

- What are some ways you could cultivate the virtues mentioned in the text?

- How can you open yourself more fully to God's joy and peace in your daily life? Think about this in the context of community, not just individually.
 - In what ways can you promote unity among the believers in your community while still respecting diversity of opinions on non-essential matters?
 - How can you learn to accept others' differences and not be overly concerned with your own preferences?
 - What steps can you take to build up others in their faith, rather than tearing them down?
- How does this passage challenge you to grow in your relationship with God?

Gratitude

Think about your daily needs, such as food, shelter, friendship. Express gratitude for how God provides for you.

Benediction

May the beauty of Scripture inspire a deeper love and devotion in my life.

Day 13

Romans 14:1 – 15:13

The Weak and the Strong

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 sister⁸⁸? 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.’”⁸⁹

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.

⁸⁸ 14:10 The Greek word for *brother* or *sister* (*adelphos*) refers here to a believer, whether man or woman, as part of God's family; also in verses 13, 15 and 21.

⁸⁹ 14:11 Isaiah 45:23

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.⁹⁰

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.”⁹¹ 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 Jews⁹² 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.”⁹³

¹⁰ Again, it says,

“Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people.”⁹⁴

¹¹ And again,

“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles;
let all the peoples extol him.”⁹⁵

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.”⁹⁶

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.

⁹⁰ 14:23 Some manuscripts place 16:25-27 here; others after 15:33.

⁹¹ 15:3 Psalm 69:9

⁹² 15:8 Greek *circumcision*

⁹³ 15:9 2 Samuel 22:50; Psalm 18:49

⁹⁴ 15:9 Deuteronomy 32:43

⁹⁵ 15:11 Psalm 117:1

⁹⁶ 15:12 Isaiah 11:10 (see Septuagint)

Day 14

Romans 15:14 – 16:27

Background

Spoken Gospel's Romans



Review

In this review of the past 24 hours, reflect gently without judgment or criticism.

When did I feel a sense of peace, joy, or encouragement? What contributed to those moments?

When did I feel disconnected, anxious, or discouraged? What circumstances led to those feelings? Can I see God in those moments?

Prayer

You can do this activity standing on a staircase or you can just use the image of the ladder below. As you meditate on the idea of the ladder, first think about where you are now.

Then pause and pray for a few minutes about where you'd like to be. It could be a physical, spiritual, emotional, or mental place.

Start where you are now—at the base of the ladder. Spend a few minutes meditating, focusing on, and having a conversation with God about the next rung of the ladder. Slowly make your way up the ladder, doing this for each one.

When you get to the top, reflect on your initial goal. How is your perspective or plan different now? where you want to be



Preparing to Read

Say this prayer to prepare your heart to read:

Heavenly Father, I thank you that you desire relationship with me. I thank you that you choose to engage with me through your Word. I also desire relationship with you, and I come today to You through your Word. I want to commune deeply with You.

The Word

Read today's passage. Approach it with a detective's eye. Search for mysteries and subtle clues.

Additional Reflection on the Word 1

Examine the characters or entities in the passage. Next to each one, write a brief description of their role and significance in the passage. Reflect on how these characters' actions or attributes can inspire or challenge your own life.

Additional Reflection on the Word 2

Analyze the emotional tone of the passage. Write the emotional tone (e.g., joyful, sorrowful, hopeful) in the margin next to the passage. Note where it shifts.

Response to the Word

- Think the passage in relation to your own life. Who are the people in your life that have supported you in your faith journey? Take a moment to express gratitude for them, perhaps writing them a note of thanks or praying for them.
- Are there areas in your life where you may be contributing to division rather than unity? How can you seek reconciliation and peace in those situations?
- How can you rely on God's strength in your own life? Are there specific areas where you need to surrender your own efforts and trust in His power?
- Are there any desires or missions you feel that God has put on your heart? Reflect on those and pray into them.
- Paul frequently mentions prayer throughout his letter. How can you deepen your prayer life in response to the teachings of Romans?
- As you conclude your study of Romans, how has your understanding of the gospel deepened? What aspects of God's character and acts have resonated with you throughout this study?

Reflection

Reflect on the past two weeks of study. Write a summary of what you've learned, how your understanding has deepened, and how your relationship with God has been impacted. Include insights, challenges, and personal growth.

Gratitude

Express your gratitude to God for the ways you've grown closer to him over the past couple weeks.

Benediction

May the understanding I've gained draw me closer to God and His will.

Day 14

Romans 15:14 – 16:27

Paul the Minister to the Gentiles

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.”⁹⁷

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

Paul's Plan to Visit Rome

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.

Personal Greetings

⁹⁷ 15:21 Isaiah 52:15 (see Septuagint)

16 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon⁹⁸ 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 Priscilla⁹⁹ 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 among¹⁰⁰ 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.

¹⁷I 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. ¹⁸For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people. ¹⁹Everyone 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.

⁹⁸ 16:1 Or *servant*

The word *deacon* refers here to a Christian designated to serve with the overseers/elders of the church in a variety of ways; similarly in Phil. 1:1 and 1 Tim. 3:8,12.

⁹⁹ 16:3 Greek *Prisca*, a variant of *Priscilla*

¹⁰⁰ 16:7 Or *are esteemed by*

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

The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

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

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

²³Gaius, 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] ¹⁰¹

²⁵Now 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, ²⁶but 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 ¹⁰²faith— ²⁷to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen.

¹⁰¹ 16:24 Some manuscripts include here *May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of you. Amen.*

¹⁰² 16:26 Or *that is*