

The Book of Romans

Study Guide | Romans 5 - 8



GOSFORD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Study 1

Romans 5:1-11

Recap

In chapters 1-4 of Romans, Paul has laid a charge against all humankind – the self-righteous Jews are just as guilty as the unrighteous Gentiles of turning away from God. The good news though, is that God reconciles both Jews and Gentiles to himself through faith in Jesus. Faith particularly in Jesus' death as the penalty paid for sin. In doing this, God not only saves all who believe but keeps his ancient promise to Abraham to make him the father of MANY nations... a multinational family, righteous before God by faith in Jesus. And it's because of this, that all who believe can now live in hope.

Read Romans 5:1-11

1. Fill in the boxes below looking for Paul's perspectives on the...

	PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE
vs 1	justified through faith	peace with God	
vs 2			
vs 3			
vs 4			
vs 5			
vs 6			
vs 7			
vs 8			
vs 9			saved from God's wrath
vs 10			
vs 11			

2. In the light of what God has done for us, what attitude should we have to the future judgment?

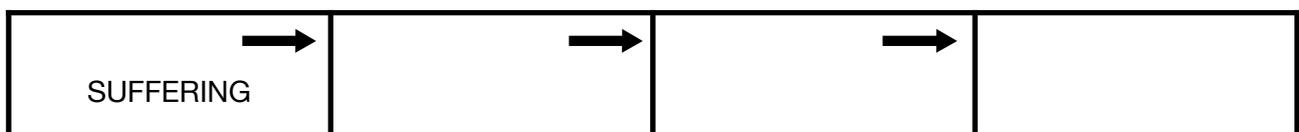
Do you have this attitude? Y/N

Why can we be confident about our verdict on that day?

3. In the light of what Jesus has done for us and will do for us, what attitude should we have to hard times in the present?

Do you have this attitude, and what makes it hard to take v3 to heart?

4. Trace out the chain of Paul's logic in verses 3 to 5...



5. What evidence does Paul give in verse 5 that our hope is well founded?

6. How do we know that God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit?

7. Many people still seem to think that you have to “earn your way” into the Kingdom of God. But according to vv6-8, who did Christ die for?

8. What does it mean in verse 9 to be justified by Jesus’ blood?

9. What are the implications of Jesus’ death accomplishing reconciliation as well as justification in verses 10-11?

10. What does it mean that we will be saved through Jesus' life in verse 10?

11. What are we to do now having been justified and reconciled through Jesus?

12. What will this look like when times are hard?

13. Paul compares God's love in Jesus to the best human love in verses 6-8. What is the effect of this? What might this teach us about how to rejoice in our sufferings?

Study 2

Romans 5:12-21

Recap

Paul has noted that Jesus' sacrificial death and high priestly life bring reconciliation with God. On account of this, Paul goes on to unpack why it is that everyone, Jew and Gentile, is in need of that reconciliation and how it's all about identifying with two particular men.

Read Romans 5:12-21

1. Who is the 'man' of verse 12? What did he bring to the world? Why can't we blame him alone for this?

It would seem we are simultaneously victims and perpetrators of sin.

2. How does this make you feel?

3. How might you reconcile being both the victim and perpetrator of sin?

4. How might this help us think about and talk about death?

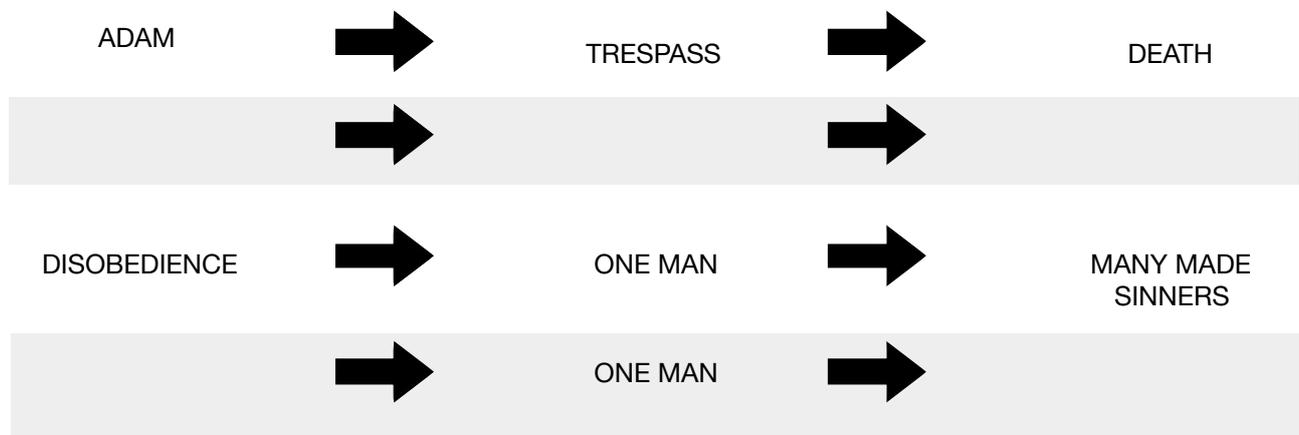
5. What do you think is Paul's point in verse 13 and 14?

6. How is Adam a pattern of Jesus?

7. How is Jesus not a pattern of Adam?

8. Trace out the logic of what Paul says in verses 15 and 16...

9. Now trace out the the logic of what Paul says in verse 19...



10. Given Paul talks of sin and death as partners, what does he say is their opposite pair?

11. What is the pathway to righteousness and life?

12. What part does the Jewish law play in all this?

Think it through

13. How might Romans 5:12-21 help answer the person who asks, "What happens to those who have never heard the gospel?"

14. What do these verses tell us of the 'righteousness of God'?

15. How do you use the word *grace* in everyday life? Why is grace hard to accept?

16. Have you recently confessed your identity with Adam? With Christ?

Study 3

Romans 6:1-14

To start off...

What are some ways that you've heard of or tried to stop sinning? Did they work? Why or why not?

Recap

Up to this point in his letter, Paul has bruised the sensibilities of his fellow Jews speaking of being right with God as not attainable by the works of the law, but instead by receiving the free gift from God of Jesus. This leads Paul to then anticipate what a typical affronted Jew might then go on and say...

Read Romans 6:1-7

1. Why are we not to go on sinning? (vs 2)

2. What do you think Paul means to be baptised into Christ Jesus? (vs 3)

3. Why were we baptised into his death? (vss 4 and 6)

4. How were we baptised in his death and resurrection? (vs 5)

5. How is sin described in these verses?

Read Romans 6:8-14

6. According to Paul, what does Christ's resurrection tell us about him? (vs 9)

7. What is the basis for not letting sin reign in our mortal bodies? (vs 10-11)

Think it through

8. How does God's grace help us live for God instead of to sin?

9. In what ways can we offer ourselves to God?

10. In what ways can you offer yourself to God?

Study 4

Romans 6:15-23

To get you thinking...

1. What are some reasons that people give to justify sinning?

Recap

So far, Paul has stressed that being united to Jesus, means counting his death to sin as our own death to sin, and his resurrection to life as our own resurrection to eternal life with God. That by the grace of God, we have been brought under the lordship of Jesus to be alive to God and to live for him. But Paul anticipates a potential concern from this, that because we are under God's grace now and not his law, then it shouldn't matter if we sin or not...

Read Romans 6:15-18

2. How do we know to whom we are slaves? What are the consequences for each?

3. How were Paul's readers set free from slavery to sin?

4. How do we understand freedom as being a slave to righteousness?

Read Romans 6:19-23

5. Why does Paul use the language of slavery to sin and to righteousness? (vs 19) What does this mean?

6. What are the benefits of being slaves to God?

Think it over

7. Can a genuine Christian be easy-going about sin? Why/why not?

Study 5

Romans 7:1-13

To start off...

Bookstores are full of volumes on self-improvement - How to dress better, eat better, bring up your kids better, sell better, communicate better, make money better - you name it, there's a book designed to make you do it better.

Ancient Israel had exactly such a book. It was called "The Torah", or "Law." There was a rule for everything. And as we've seen in the earlier chapters of Romans, the Jews thought it made them experts on everything. But there's a problem! They've got the law. But they can't (or don't, or won't) live it out.

Here in Romans 7, Paul puts himself in the place of a Jew caught in exactly that struggle. He says, there's a way of self improvement that doesn't work, and a way that does.

Read Romans 7:1-13

If you're trying to improve yourself by what Paul calls "observing the law", you're doomed for frustration. It's a frustration that Paul draws out at length through ch 7.

On our way through Romans, we've brushed past many references to the Old Testament law, and it's effects. It's time we looked more closely at what Paul's saying about the law.

1. Track down the references below from Romans so far, and make a note of what they say about “US JEWS” and the LAW.

3:20

3:28

3:31

4:14-15

5:13

5:20

6:14

7:1

7:5

7:7

7:8

2. Is the law BAD or GOOD?

3. Is human nature BAD or GOOD?

4. What happens when you feed GOOD COMMANDS into a BAD NATURE?

5. According to verses 1 to 4, what status do these “brothers” of Paul (fellow Jews) now have in relation to the law?

6. Previously, what did the law do to them?

7. What new situation do they “serve under” now?

Think back to Deuteronomy 30:1-6.

8. What promise did God make long ago?

9. Where are they on God’s time line now? (Compare with Rom 2:29)

10. Why would we non-Jews read the Old Testament law as Christians now?

Read Deuteronomy 5:7-21 and then 1 John 1:8-2:2 and confess your sins together (perhaps in pairs)

Study 6

Romans 7:13-25

Recap

Putting himself in the place of a Jew struggling to keep the Old Testament law perfectly, Paul arrives at a proper perspective on what the law can and cannot do. No-one can be saved by observing the law, for the law only exposes how much of a sinner one is. Indeed, the law not only exposes sin but arouses further sinful desires and then rightly condemns sin in that aroused sinner, all so that there may be know doubt as to the sinfulness and slavery of sin and the rightness of God's judgement.

But sin, thrown into sharp relief by God's law, is not only seen to despoil and litigate relations with God, but to enslave the sinner...

Read Romans 7:13-25

1. How is the law good? (vs 13)

2. How does Paul describe slavery to sin?

vs15

vs16

vs17

vs18-19

vs20

vs21

vs22-24

In antiquity there was an outlandishly atrocious form of punishment that involved a living man or woman being tied to a rotting corpse, face to face, mouth mouth, limb to limb. Shackled to their rotting double, the man or woman was left to decay and die - the living dead. Some think Paul is alluding to this atrocious practice in verse 24.

3. How might the horror of understanding our predicament of slavery to sin as being shackled like this help us appreciate verse 25?

4. What might be the reason we are not moved to thank God for Jesus like Paul was?

Study 7

Romans 8:1-17

Recap

Having unpacked the torment of being shackled to the sinful flesh under the condemnation of God's law in chapter 7, Paul goes on to unpack the wonder and relief of God's rescue through the Lord Jesus into life with the Spirit.

Read Romans 8:1-4

1. What is the 'now' referring to in verse 1?

2. What does it mean to be 'in' Christ Jesus?

Read Romans 8:5-11

3. Are these verses describing people or urging them to do something?

4. How do you know you have the Spirit?

Read Romans 8:12-17

5. What comfort is there in verses 12-14?

6. What is the contrast between in verse 15?

7. How do you think the Spirit testifies with our spirit that we are God's children? (vs 16)

Think it through

8. Is there something in the past that you feel particularly guilty for? Are you condemned by God for that? Why/why not?

9. Someone at church is struggling to get their head around why other Christians seem to have it so easy compared to them. How would you use the things Paul has spoken of here in this passage to encourage them?

Study 8

Romans 8:18-27

Recap

From the very beginning of chapter 8, Paul has wonderfully affirmed that there is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus. He then continues to unpack this great truth as confirmed in the life lived by the Spirit, with the resources of great intimacy with God made available to the believer in their struggles until glory. It's to these struggles that Paul now turns his attention.

Read Romans 8:18-21

1. Who is responsible for our present sufferings? (see Gen 3:17-19 with Rom. 5:12-14 and Isaiah 24:4-6)

2. When will this suffering end?

3. What does this tell us about the scope of God's salvation?

Read Romans 8:22-27

4. Exactly what are we groaning about in verse 23? What does this tell us about our hope?

5. What is the weakness Paul is talking about here?

6. Why does the Spirit groan?

7. What is the Spirit's intercession about?

Think it through

8. How aware are you about the ministry of the Holy Spirit in your life?

9. Have you ever been so weak in spirit that you do not know what to pray? What does this passage tell you of what the Holy Spirit is doing on your behalf during those times?

10. What are you looking forward to the most in glory?

Pray: Thank God for the Holy Spirit and the hope we have in Christ because of him.

Study 9

Romans 8:28-39

Recap

Paul has been unpacking the wonderful help of the Holy Spirit at work in and for the believer who is groaning under the weight of life here and now cursed by sin.

Read Romans 8:28-30

1. How do we know that God works the good in all things for those who love him?

2. Fill in the gaps in the chain produced by combining verse 29 and 30...

Foreknew → P_____ → C_____ → J_____ → G_____

What is the point this chain is making?

3. Why do you think Paul places 'glorification' - a future experience - in the past tense in verse 30?

Think on this...

Christians often struggle with the idea of God's "predestination." The word simply means that God has decided the destination before the journey begins. Note that often when Paul talks about "God's elect" (as in verse 33), he's talking about the people of Israel. They were God's chosen ones from the very beginning. The fact that God has not abandoned the Jews has been a major theme in Paul's thinking through Romans... and it may be in his mind here as well.

Read Romans 8:31-39

4. According to verse 31 to 35, what is the 'value now' of God's predestination or election?

5. The big question the idea of "predestination" raises is this -"Did I become a Christian by MY CHOICE or by GOD'S CHOICE?" Think back on your own experience. What's your answer?

6. Go back to verse 24. What do the words "WE WERE SAVED" hint at?

7. Look at verse 28. Who is doing the calling, and whose idea is it?

Finishing off...

The fact is, God's choice of us and his provision of Jesus for our salvation is the guarantee of the security of our future glory. In the light of what God has done for us already, he's not going to let go of us now!

8. Close by reading verses 35 to 39. Will anything separate you from the love of God? Y/N

9. Can you identify hard times that God has used for your good?

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