

Teaching the Word  
Bruce Edwards Ministries

# Equipping the Saints

Course by Course

student workbook

**Book of Romans**

*chapter by chapter*

**First Year General Courses**



# **THE BOOK OF ROMANS EXPLAINED**

## **CHAPTER BY CHAPTER**

**Bruce R. Edwards**

**Equipping the Saints Bible School**

**[www.bruce-edwards.com](http://www.bruce-edwards.com)**

## **THE BOOK OF ROMANS**

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are the New King James Version of the Bible.

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## THE BOOK OF ROMANS *Course Syllabus*

### **EQUIPPING THE BELIEVER**

Bruce Edwards Ministries  
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Course Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Book of Hebrews

2 Credit Hours

### **Course Description:**

This course will consist of an in-depth exegetical study of the Book of Romans, in order to examine its doctrines relating to the Gospel. As such, the course will include the study of how both Jew and Gentile need to be made right with God, the gospel of righteousness, the doctrines of justification, sanctification, and glorification, as well as, the place of Israel in the Plan of God. The course will conclude, as does the book of Romans, with a study of issues regarding the practical Christian life.

### **Course Objectives**

1. To identify and briefly explain the characteristics of man's sinful condition apart from Christ as discussed in Romans.
2. To identify and briefly explain the doctrines of God's righteousness by faith as explained in the Book of Romans.
3. To understand God's righteousness in His relationship with Israel.
4. To understand how believers express God's righteousness in their daily walk.

### **Course Texts and Resources:**

#### **Required:**

1. The Book of Romans Explained, Edwards Bruce R. ISBN: 978-0-8254-3120-3

[CLICK HERE](#) – To Download Textbook

### **Course Procedures:**

**Prerequisite:** None

#### **Requirements:**

1. Completion of all required readings in the text.
2. Completion of all examinations with a satisfactory grade.

**Grading Policy:** Students must achieve a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 (based on 4.0) in order to be considered in good standing. Each student's grade will be comprised of the following:

a. Mid-term	45%
b. Final	45%
c. Reading	10%

90-100% =	3.5-4.0	=A
80- 89% =	2.5-3.49	=B
70- 79% =	1.5-2.49	=C
60- 69% =	.99-.49	=D
0- 59% =	0	= F

F	= Failure
S	= Satisfactory
U	= Unsatisfactory
I	= Incomplete
N	= Non-Credit

# The Book of Romans

## Course and Assignment Schedule

<u>Week</u>	Subject	Assignments
1	REVIEW SYLLABUS CHAPTER ONE	
2	CHAPTER TWO	
3	CHAPTER THREE	
4	CHAPTER FOUR	
5	CHAPTER FIVE	
6	CHAPTER SIX	
7	CHAPTER SEVEN	
8	<b>MID-TERM EXAM</b>	
9	CHAPTER EIGHT	
10	CHAPTER NINE & TEN	
11	CHAPTER ELEVEN	
12	CHAPTER TWELVE	
13	CHAPTER THIRTEEN	
14	CHAPTER FOURTEEN	
15	CHAPTER FIFTEEN & SIXTEEN	
16	<b>FINAL EXAM</b>	

# Equipping the Saints

## Course by Course

### BOOK OF ROMANS

#### LESSON ONE CHAPTER ONE

Romans 1 is Paul's **introduction** to his letter, presenting key themes that he'll expand on throughout Romans. He addresses the power of the gospel, the nature of humanity, and God's righteous judgment. From a Christian perspective, Romans 1 lays out a foundation for understanding God's power, the need for salvation, and the importance of living a Spirit-led life.

#### I. Introduction to the Letter (Romans 1:1-7)

- **Paul's Identity and Calling**
  - Paul identifies himself as a *servant* and *apostle* of Jesus Christ.
  - He emphasizes his calling to preach the gospel, which is God's good news, and shows his authority and purpose in writing to the Roman believers.
- **The Gospel's Foundation**
  - The gospel is not a new idea; it was promised long ago through the prophets in the Scriptures (Old Testament).
  - It centers on Jesus Christ, a descendant of David, showing His role as the anticipated Messiah.
- **Jesus' Divine Sonship and Resurrection**
  - Paul underscores that Jesus was **proven** to be the Son of God through His resurrection, which demonstrates His divine authority and power.
- **Paul's Purpose and Mission**
  - Paul received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among the nations.
  - The recipients of the letter (the Roman believers) are called "beloved of God" and "saints," affirming their identity in Christ.

#### II. Paul's Desire to Visit Rome (Romans 1:8-15)

- **Thanksgiving for the Romans' Faith**
  - Paul thanks God for the faith of the Roman believers, which has become known throughout the world.
  - He shows his gratitude and admiration, indicating the strength and reputation of their faith.
- **Paul's Prayers and Longing to Visit**
  - Paul frequently prays for the chance to visit the Romans to strengthen and encourage them in their faith.
  - He wants to share a "spiritual gift" with them, which likely refers to his teaching and encouragement to help them grow.

# Equipping the Saints

## Course by Course

### BOOK OF ROMANS

- **Mutual Encouragement**
  - Paul emphasizes that he, too, will be encouraged by their faith, showing the reciprocity of spiritual fellowship.
  - This displays Paul's humility and desire to foster a community of mutual support among believers.
- **Paul's Obligation to All People**
  - Paul expresses a sense of duty to preach the gospel to everyone—Greeks and non-Greeks, wise and foolish—highlighting the gospel's universal reach.
  - His eagerness to preach in Rome shows his passion for spreading the message of Christ.

### III. The Power of the **Gospel** (Romans 1:16-17)

- **Unashamed of the Gospel**
  - Paul boldly states that he is “not ashamed of the gospel” because it is God's power for salvation to everyone who believes.
  - This declaration reveals the life-changing power of the gospel.
- **Salvation Through **Faith****
  - Salvation is offered to everyone who believes, regardless of their background.
  - Paul presents the core theological idea of justification by faith: righteousness from God is revealed and is received by faith, beginning and ending with faith.
- **Living by Faith**
  - Paul quotes Habakkuk 2:4, “The righteous shall live by faith,” establishing that righteousness is obtained not by works but by trusting in God.

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# Equipping the Saints

## Course by Course

### BOOK OF ROMANS

#### IV. The **Wrath** of God Against Sin (Romans 1:18-23)

- **God's Wrath Against Unrighteousness**
  - God's wrath is revealed from heaven against humanity's wickedness and suppression of truth.
  - This shows that God's anger is directed toward all forms of ungodliness and injustice.
- **Knowledge of God Made Evident**
  - Paul argues that knowledge of God is evident in creation, leaving humanity "without excuse."
  - God's eternal power and divine nature are visible in the world around us, and people are held accountable for acknowledging Him.
- **Human Rejection of God**
  - Despite knowing God, people did not glorify Him as God or thank Him, and instead, they turned to futile thinking and darkened understanding.
  - Paul describes humanity's tendency to worship created things rather than the Creator, leading to idolatry.

#### V. **Consequences** of Human Rebellion (Romans 1:24-32)

- **God's Response to Rejection**
  - Because people chose to reject God, He "gave them over" to the consequences of their actions, allowing them to follow their own sinful desires.
  - This is a form of judgment where God permits people to experience the results of their choices.
- **Sexual Immorality and Dishonor**
  - Paul describes how idolatry led people to dishonor their bodies, turning to immoral relationships.
  - The misuse of God's design for relationships is presented as an outcome of turning away from Him.
- **A Depraved Mind and Sinful Behavior**
  - As people rejected God, they were further given over to a depraved mind, leading to more extensive forms of sin such as envy, murder, deceit, and malice.
  - Paul lists specific sinful behaviors that characterize human depravity, illustrating the depths to which humanity can fall without God.
- **The Final Condition of Humanity**
  - Paul concludes that people not only do these things but approve of others who do them, showing a complete acceptance of sin.
  - This final statement underscores humanity's accountability before God and the moral decay resulting from rejecting Him.
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# Equipping the Saints

## Course by Course

### BOOK OF ROMANS

#### VI. Key Theological Themes in Romans Chapter 1

- **The Universality of Sin**
  - Paul establishes that all humanity is in need of the gospel because sin is universal and separates people from God.
- **Righteousness Through Faith**
  - A major theme in Romans is introduced here: true righteousness comes by faith, not by works or heritage.
- **God's Revelation in Creation**
  - Paul argues that creation itself testifies to God's existence, meaning everyone has access to knowledge of Him.
- **Humanity's Responsibility and Accountability**
  - By suppressing the truth, humanity chooses rebellion, making people accountable for their response to God.

#### Summary

Romans chapter 1 sets a foundational understanding for Christian theology by introducing key concepts like the power of the gospel, human sinfulness, and justification by faith. Paul establishes both the hope of salvation through faith in Christ and the reality of God's judgment on sin, creating a powerful introduction to the transformative message of the gospel.

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# Equipping the Saints

## Course by Course

### BOOK OF ROMANS

#### LESSON TWO CHAPTER TWO

Romans chapter 2 explores themes of judgment, hypocrisy, and the true nature of righteousness before God. Paul addresses both Jewish and Gentile audiences, challenging their assumptions about morality, law, and God's impartial judgment. He emphasizes that mere knowledge of the law is not enough; true righteousness is demonstrated through obedience, and God will judge everyone according to their deeds.

#### I. God's Impartial **Judgment** (Romans 2:1-11)

- **Condemnation of Hypocrisy**
  - a) **Judging Others:** Paul begins by addressing those who judge others while committing the same sins, emphasizing that this hypocrisy will not go unnoticed by God.
  - b) **No Excuse:** He makes clear that no one has an excuse for judging others, as everyone falls short and is subject to the same standards of God's judgment.
- **God's **Righteous** Judgment**
  - a) **Truth and Justice:** Paul highlights that God judges according to truth, meaning His judgments are just, without bias or favoritism.
  - b) **Patience and Kindness:** God's kindness, tolerance, and patience are meant to lead people to repentance. Rather than taking advantage of God's patience, people should see it as an opportunity to turn back to Him.
- **Judgment Based on Deeds**
  - a) **Accountability for Actions:** Paul states that God "will repay each person according to what they have done," meaning both Jews and Gentiles will be held accountable for their actions, regardless of their religious background.
  - b) **Eternal Life vs. Wrath:** Those who seek to do good and follow God will be rewarded with eternal life, while those who are self-seeking and disobedient face God's wrath. This emphasizes that God's judgment is fair and based on personal choices.
- **Impartiality of God**
  - a) **No Favoritism:** Paul concludes this section by affirming that God does not show favoritism; both Jews and Gentiles are subject to the same standards. The idea here is that God's justice is impartial, treating everyone equally.

#### II. Judgment and the **Law** (Romans 2:12-16)

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- **Law for Jews and Gentiles**
  - a) **Jews and the Law:** Jews are judged by the Law (the commandments given to Moses) because they know it and are expected to follow it.
  - b) **Gentiles Without the Law:** Gentiles, who do not have the Law, are judged by their own conscience, meaning they have an inner sense of right and wrong. When Gentiles do what is right, it shows that God's moral law is "written on their hearts."
- **Conscience as Evidence**
  - a) **Witness of Conscience:** Paul explains that even Gentiles have a conscience that guides them, acting as an internal law. Their thoughts either accuse or defend them, indicating an awareness of moral truth.
  - b) **Judgment Day:** Paul emphasizes that God will judge all people by Jesus Christ on a future day, and this judgment will consider both outward actions and inner motives.

### III. The True Meaning of Being a **Jew** (Romans 2:17-24)

- **False Security in the Law**
  - a) **Self-Confidence in the Law:** Paul addresses those who take pride in being Jews and having the Law, warning against relying on their heritage or knowledge for righteousness.
  - b) **Hypocrisy of Teaching Others:** Paul calls out those who teach others but fail to practice the same principles themselves, highlighting their hypocrisy. For example, he criticizes those who teach against stealing or adultery but then commit those sins themselves.
- **Dishonor to God's Name**
  - a) **Bringing Disrepute to God:** Paul states that when Jews fail to obey the Law, they dishonor God's name among Gentiles. Their hypocrisy causes others to view God negatively, making it essential for believers to live according to the principles they profess.

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### BOOK OF ROMANS

#### IV. Circumcision of the Heart (Romans 2:25-29)

- **Outward Circumcision vs. Inner Transformation**
  - a) **Circumcision and Obedience:** Paul points out that physical circumcision, an important ritual for Jews, is meaningless if not accompanied by true obedience to God's commands.
  - b) **Obedience Over Ritual:** A Gentile who obeys God's law is considered more righteous than a Jew who is circumcised but disobedient. This emphasizes that obedience matters more than physical symbols.
- **True Identity as God's People**
  - a) **Inward Transformation:** Paul introduces the concept of a "circumcision of the heart," meaning true belonging to God is marked by an inner transformation rather than an outward sign.
  - b) **Spirit Over Letter:** The true Jew, in God's view, is one whose heart has been changed by the Spirit, not merely someone who follows rituals. This highlights the importance of inward righteousness over external compliance.

#### V. Key Theological Themes in Romans Chapter 2

- **God's Impartiality:** Paul emphasizes that God's judgment is fair and unbiased, holding both Jews and Gentiles to the same standards. There is no favoritism with God, and His justice is based on individual actions and motives.
- **Hypocrisy and Accountability:** Paul warns against judging others while committing the same sins, as hypocrisy dishonors God. He stresses that everyone, regardless of their religious knowledge or background, is accountable for their actions.
- **Inner Righteousness:** Paul challenges outward forms of religion, like circumcision, without true inner obedience. Being part of God's people requires an inward transformation marked by obedience and a changed heart.
- **Role of Conscience and Law:** Both Jews and Gentiles have an awareness of God's standards. For Jews, this comes through the Law, while Gentiles have an inner conscience. In both cases, God's moral requirements are evident, showing that all people are aware of right and wrong.

#### Summary

In Romans 2, Paul drives home the point that true **righteousness** is not about one's religious background, rituals, or knowledge, but about obedience to God and a transformed heart. God's judgment is impartial and rooted in truth, and He values genuine faith and obedience over outward displays.

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#### LESSON THREE CHAPTER THREE

Romans chapter 3 is a pivotal chapter in Paul's letter, where he builds on the themes of human sinfulness and the need for God's righteousness. Paul addresses both Jewish and Gentile audiences, concluding that everyone is guilty before God and in need of salvation. He then presents justification by faith as the foundation of God's plan to reconcile humanity to Himself through Jesus Christ.

#### I. God's Faithfulness Despite Human **Unfaithfulness** (Romans 3:1-8)

- **The Advantage of the Jews (3:1-2)**
  - a) **Special Privilege:** Paul begins by acknowledging that Jews have a significant advantage—they were entrusted with the “oracles of God” (the Scriptures). This means they have had unique access to God's law and promises.
  - b) **God's Faithfulness to His Covenant:** Despite Israel's failure to keep the law perfectly, God remains faithful to His promises and His plan for humanity.
- **Human Unfaithfulness and God's Righteousness (3:3-4)**
  - a) **God's Faithfulness Unchanged by Human Failure:** Even if some Jews did not believe or obey, God's faithfulness is unaffected. Paul quotes Psalm 51:4 to reinforce that God's truth and righteousness are constant, regardless of human failure.
  - b) **God is Just in His Judgment:** Paul emphasizes that God is just in holding people accountable, as His righteousness stands above human sinfulness.
- **The Misunderstanding of God's Grace (3:5-8)**
  - a) **Questions of Justice:** Some argue that if human sin highlights God's righteousness, it seems unfair for God to judge sinners. Paul dismisses this logic, affirming that God is righteous in judgment.
  - b) **Grace Misused:** Paul addresses the argument that if sin makes God's grace look better, it would be acceptable to sin more. He condemns this idea as false, highlighting that God's grace is not a license to sin.

#### II. Universal Sinfulness: **No One** is Righteous (Romans 3:9-20)

- **All Humanity Under Sin (3:9)**
  - a) **Jews and Gentiles Alike:** Paul concludes that both Jews and Gentiles are “under sin.” No one can claim moral superiority, as all are equally in need of salvation.
  - b) **No One is Exempt:** This levels the playing field—regardless of religious background or knowledge, everyone falls short of God's standards.

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- **Scriptural Proof of Sin's Universality (3:10-18)**
  - a) **Quotations from the Old Testament:** Paul uses several quotations (from Psalms, Isaiah, and Ecclesiastes) to illustrate humanity's sinfulness, including phrases like "none is righteous" and "no one seeks God." This list demonstrates that sin affects every part of human nature—thoughts, words, and actions.
  - b) **Sin's Impact on Relationship with God and Others:** The quoted verses highlight how sin causes separation from God and damages human relationships, showing that every part of humanity is impacted by sin.
- **The Law Cannot Justify (3:19-20)**
  - a) **Purpose of the Law:** Paul explains that the law reveals sin but cannot justify anyone. Its role is to make people aware of their sinfulness and need for God's mercy.
  - b) **All are Accountable to God:** The law brings "knowledge of sin" and shows that no one can meet God's standards by their own efforts, leaving humanity in need of a solution beyond the law.

### III. The Righteousness of God Revealed Through Faith (Romans 3:21-26)

- **Apart from the Law (3:21)**
  - a) **God's Righteousness Available to All:** Paul introduces the idea that God's righteousness has been revealed apart from the law, fulfilling the promise of the Old Testament.
  - b) **Witnessed by the Law and the Prophets:** Although separate from the law, this righteousness was foretold by the Old Testament writings, showing it as part of God's redemptive plan.

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- **Justification by Faith in Jesus Christ (3:22-24)**
  - a) **Through Faith in Christ:** This righteousness is available to all who believe in Jesus, without distinction between Jews and Gentiles.
  - b) **All Have Sinned:** Paul reiterates that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,” emphasizing universal need for salvation.
  - c) **Justified Freely by Grace:** Salvation is offered as a free gift of God’s grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ. This underscores that it cannot be earned by human effort but is granted through God’s mercy.
- **Redemption and Propitiation (3:25-26)**
  - a) **Christ as the Atoning Sacrifice:** Paul explains that God presented Jesus as a “propitiation” (an atoning sacrifice) by His blood. This means Jesus took the penalty for sin on behalf of humanity.
  - b) **God’s Righteousness and Justice:** God’s justice is maintained because Jesus’ sacrifice paid the penalty for sin, demonstrating both God’s love and justice. By this act, God is able to be “just and the justifier” of those who believe in Jesus.

#### IV. Faith, Not Works, as the Basis for Justification (Romans 3:27-31)

- **Exclusion of Boasting (3:27)**
  - a) **No Grounds for Boasting:** Since justification is by faith, no one can boast about earning it through works. It is entirely a gift from God, eliminating any pride or self-righteousness.
  - b) **Law of Faith:** Paul introduces the concept of the “law of faith,” contrasting it with the works-based approach of the law. Faith becomes the new basis of relationship with God.
- **Justification for All (3:28-30)**
  - a) **Justification by Faith Alone:** Paul asserts that people are justified by faith, independent of works. This applies to both Jews, who have the law, and Gentiles, who do not.
  - b) **God of Both Jews and Gentiles:** God is not limited to one group but is the God of all people. By emphasizing this point, Paul clarifies that salvation through faith is available to everyone.
- **Upholding the Law Through Faith (3:31)**
  - a) **Faith and the Law:** Far from nullifying the law, faith establishes it. Paul suggests that faith in Christ fulfills the true purpose of the law, which was to lead people to recognize their need for God and ultimately to salvation through faith.



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### BOOK OF ROMANS

#### V. Key Theological Themes in Romans Chapter 3

- **Universal Sinfulness and Need for Redemption:** Paul emphasizes that all people, regardless of background, have sinned and fall short of God's glory. Humanity's universal guilt underscores the need for salvation that only God can provide.
- **God's Justice and Grace in Salvation:** God remains just by punishing sin through Jesus' sacrifice while simultaneously offering grace to believers. Jesus' atoning death allows God to forgive sin without compromising His justice.
- **Justification by Faith Alone:** Paul introduces the idea of being made right with God through faith rather than through adherence to the law. This highlights that salvation is not earned but freely given to all who believe.
- **Faith as a Fulfillment, Not a Replacement, of the Law:** Faith upholds the law's purpose by revealing the righteousness God desires. Through faith, believers honor the intent of the law by seeking a relationship with God based on trust, not mere rule-following.

#### SUMMARY

In Romans 3, Paul presents a powerful argument that everyone stands in need of God's grace, and that faith in Jesus Christ is the only means to be made right with God. This chapter is central to Paul's theology, establishing that salvation is a gift of grace through faith, accessible to all people equally, and reflecting both God's justice and mercy.

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## Course by Course

### BOOK OF ROMANS

#### LESSON FOUR CHAPTER FOUR

Romans chapter 4 is a foundational text for understanding the concept of justification by faith in Paul's theology. In this chapter, Paul uses the example of Abraham to illustrate how righteousness comes through faith, not works, and explains how this truth applies to all believers. From a Christian perspective, the chapter highlights the importance of living by faith and recognizing the promises of God that come through a living, active relationship with Him.

#### I. Abraham's Faith as the Basis of Righteousness (Romans 4:1-5)

- **Abraham's Example (4:1-3)**
  - a) **Justified by Faith, Not Works:** Paul asks what Abraham, the "forefather" of the Jewish people, found regarding righteousness. He states that Abraham was not justified by works but by faith, as noted in Genesis 15:6: "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."
  - b) **Trust in God's Promise:** From a Christian perspective, this faith in God's promise is dynamic and alive. Abraham's belief in God wasn't mere mental assent but an active trust in what God had spoken. It highlights the need for a relationship that believes in God's ability to fulfill His promises supernaturally.
- **Faith Versus Works (4:4-5)**
  - a) **Righteousness as a Gift:** Paul contrasts "wages" and "gifts." If one were justified by works, righteousness would be a wage earned. But because it's by faith, righteousness is a gift given freely by God.
  - b) **Believing in God's Power to Justify:** Christians emphasize that just as Abraham trusted God's promise beyond his human limitations, believers today trust in God's supernatural power to transform and redeem, even when it seems impossible.

#### II. David's Testimony of Forgiveness Through Faith (Romans 4:6-8)

- **David's Words on Righteousness Apart from Works (4:6-8)**
  - **Blessedness of Forgiveness:** Paul references King David's words from Psalm 32, where David speaks of the blessedness of the one "whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered."
  - **Forgiveness as a Key to Relationship with God:** Christian theology often highlights the power of forgiveness as part of a dynamic, Spirit-led life. David's testimony reminds believers that through faith, they can experience complete forgiveness and reconciliation with God, leading to joy and peace in the Holy Spirit.

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#### III. The Promise to Abraham: For All Who Believe, Not Just for the Law-Keepers (Romans 4:9-12)

- **Righteousness for Both Jews and Gentiles (4:9-10)**
  - a) **Faith Preceding Circumcision:** Paul points out that Abraham was declared righteous before he was circumcised, making him the father of all who believe, not just the circumcised.
  - b) **Faith Beyond Ritual:** Christians understand this as God valuing faith over rituals, emphasizing a direct and Spirit-led relationship with God rather than reliance on outward signs or ceremonies.
- **Spiritual Father of Faith (4:11-12)**
  - a) **Faith as a Sign:** Circumcision was a sign of the covenant, but it wasn't the basis of Abraham's righteousness. In the same way, water baptism or other symbolic acts in the Christian faith reflect an inward reality rather than earning salvation.
  - b) **Invitation for All to Walk in Faith:** Abraham's faith models the Spirit-led walk for every believer, a life that trusts in God and follows His leading. This is central to the Christian understanding of a personal relationship with God through faith and the Holy Spirit.

#### IV. The Promise Comes Through Faith So It Can Be by Grace (Romans 4:13-17)

- **The Promise Given by Grace, Not by the Law (4:13-15)**
  - a) **Law Versus Faith:** Paul explains that the promise to Abraham came through faith, not through the law, which would bring wrath since no one can fulfill it perfectly. The law brings awareness of sin, but faith brings the promise.
  - b) **Faith as Access to Grace:** From a Christian perspective, this grace is what allows the believer to live in victory through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, who brings the promises of God to life in their daily walk.

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### BOOK OF ROMANS

- **God's Power to Bring Life (4:16-17)**
  - a) **Faith That Depends on Grace:** Paul notes that the promise rests on grace so that it's guaranteed to all who have faith. Abraham is "the father of many nations" because his faith made him righteous, a model for all.
  - b) **Calling Things That Are Not as Though They Were:** God "gives life to the dead and calls into being things that were not." This aligns with the Christian belief in God's miracle-working power to transform circumstances and bring life where there was none, reflecting a faith that goes beyond human limitations.

#### V. Abraham's Faith Against All Odds (Romans 4:18-22)

- **Belief in the Face of Impossibility (4:18-19)**
  - a) **Hope Against Hope:** Paul recounts that Abraham, despite his and Sarah's advanced age, "hoped against hope" and trusted God's promise to make him a father of many nations.
  - b) **Spirit-Led Expectation:** Christians see Abraham's faith as a model of Spirit-led faith that believes God for the impossible, a reliance on God's supernatural power to fulfill His promises even when circumstances seem hopeless.
- **Strengthened by Faith, Giving Glory to God (4:20-22)**
  - a) **No Unbelief, Only Strengthened Faith:** Abraham didn't waver in his faith but grew stronger, glorifying God. His faith was credited to him as righteousness.
  - b) **Faith That Glorifies God:** Christians emphasize that faith glorifies God when it recognizes and magnifies God's ability and willingness to fulfill His promises. This faith inspires boldness in prayer and action, as believers rely on the Holy Spirit to sustain them.

#### VI. The Implications of Abraham's Faith for Believers Today (Romans 4:23-25)

- **Abraham's Faith Written for Us (4:23-24)**
  - a) **Faith Applied to All Believers:** Paul notes that Abraham's experience was recorded not just for him but for everyone who believes. Just as Abraham was counted righteous, believers today are justified by faith in Jesus.
  - b) **Faith in Jesus' Resurrection Power:** Christian theology teaches that the same faith that justified Abraham empowers believers today to live victoriously, recognizing that Jesus' resurrection signifies the defeat of sin and the promise of new life.

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- **Raised for Our Justification (4:25)**
  - a) **Jesus' Death and Resurrection**: Paul closes by emphasizing that Jesus “was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.” This powerful declaration connects Jesus’ sacrifice to our redemption.
  - b) **Resurrection as the Basis for Victorious Living**: In the Christian view, Jesus’ resurrection isn’t just a historical event but a present reality that empowers believers to live righteously through the Holy Spirit. Faith in the risen Christ enables the believer to experience God’s promises and live a life of spiritual victory.

#### SUMMARY

Romans 4 teaches that faith is the foundation of righteousness, modeled by Abraham, whose trust in God made him the spiritual father of all believers. From a Christian viewpoint, this chapter inspires believers to embrace an active, Spirit-led faith that believes in God’s miraculous promises and lives in the power of Jesus’ resurrection.

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### BOOK OF ROMANS

#### LESSON FIVE CHAPTER FIVE

Romans 5 offers a powerful exploration of the **results** of justification through Jesus Christ, contrasting Adam's sin with the redemption brought by Jesus. Paul explains how believers are freed from condemnation and blessed with peace, grace, hope, and a secure future. From a Christian perspective, Romans 5 emphasizes the transformative power of Christ's sacrifice, the role of the Holy Spirit in our lives, and the hope we have in eternal life.

#### I. Peace and Assurance Through Justification (Romans 5:1-5)

- **Peace with God**
  - a) **Justification by Faith:** Paul begins by stating that we are "justified by faith," meaning we are declared righteous before God because of our faith in Jesus.
  - b) **Peace with God:** This justification brings believers into a state of peace with God. Instead of facing His wrath, we are now reconciled with Him, free from guilt and shame.
- **Access to Grace**
  - a) **Standing in Grace:** Paul explains that, through Jesus, believers have been given access to a position of grace, meaning we stand in God's favor and kindness.
  - b) **Confidence in God's Favor:** This grace allows believers to confidently rejoice, knowing they are accepted by God.
- **Joyful Hope in Suffering**
  - a) **Hope in God's Glory:** Paul speaks about having a future hope of experiencing the fullness of God's glory, something believers can anticipate with joy.
  - b) **Purpose in Suffering:** Paul introduces the idea that suffering produces endurance, which builds character, leading to a stronger hope. Suffering, therefore, becomes a path that strengthens a believer's faith and trust in God.
  - c) **God's Love Poured Out:** Believers are assured of God's love through the Holy Spirit, who confirms and reassures us of God's love.

#### II. The Depth of God's Love Demonstrated in Christ's **Sacrifice** (Romans 5:6-11)

- **Christ's Sacrifice for the Ungodly**
  - a) **God's Timing and Our Helplessness:** While humanity was powerless, ungodly, and unable to save itself, Christ died for us, displaying God's mercy and grace.
  - b) **Sacrifice Despite Our Sinfulness:** Paul highlights that it's rare for anyone to die for a good person, yet Christ's death was for sinners, showing the depth of God's love.
- **Reconciliation Through Jesus' Death**
  - a) **Saved from God's Wrath:** Because Jesus died on our behalf, believers are saved from the consequences of sin and are now reconciled to God.

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- b) **Rejoicing in Reconciliation:** With this reconciliation, Paul emphasizes the joy believers have in their restored relationship with God. Through Christ, we are welcomed into a friendship with God, no longer His enemies.

### III. Adam and Christ: The **Contrast** Between Sin and Grace (Romans 5:12-21)

- **Sin and Death Enter Through Adam**
  - a) **The Entrance of Sin:** Paul introduces the concept of *original sin* by explaining that sin entered the world through Adam. Through Adam, sin and death spread to all humanity.
  - b) **Death as a Result of Sin:** Death, both physical and spiritual, spread to everyone because everyone sinned. In this sense, Adam's sin affected all of humanity, making death and sin universal.
- **Adam as a "Type" of Christ**
  - a) **Adam as a Foreshadowing:** Paul describes Adam as a "type" or representative of humanity, a model that Christ would later fulfill in a contrasting way. Just as Adam brought sin and death, Christ would bring life and righteousness.
- **The **Abundance** of Grace in Christ**
  - a) **Christ's Gift vs. Adam's Sin:** While Adam's sin brought condemnation, Jesus' act of righteousness brings justification, meaning we are declared innocent. This gift of grace is even greater than Adam's offense.
  - b) **Overflowing Grace:** God's grace doesn't just balance out Adam's sin; it overflows, covering sin completely and restoring humanity. Through Jesus, believers receive "much more" than what was lost in Adam.
- **One Act of Obedience Brings Life**
  - a) **Contrast of Two Actions:** Adam's one disobedient act led to death for many, while Christ's obedience on the cross brings life and justification to many.
  - b) **The Gift of Righteousness:** Because of Jesus, believers receive the "gift of righteousness." This means they are accepted by God, not through their own efforts, but as a result of Christ's sacrifice.

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- **Law and Grace**
  - a) **The Purpose of the Law:** Paul explains that the Law (the commandments given to Moses) highlighted humanity's sinfulness, making people aware of their need for grace.
  - b) **Grace Abounding Over Sin:** As sin increased, God's grace increased even more. Paul assures believers that no matter how much sin abounds, God's grace is always greater, covering every failure.
- **Eternal Life Through Jesus**
  - a) **Reigning in Life:** Paul closes by affirming that those who receive God's grace and the gift of righteousness will "reign in life" through Jesus. Rather than being ruled by sin and death, believers now experience eternal life with God through Jesus.

#### IV. Key Theological Themes in Romans Chapter 5

- **Justification by Faith and Peace with God:** Romans 5 opens by affirming that believers are justified and have peace with God through Jesus, which is foundational to Christian assurance.
- **The Power of God's Love:** The chapter shows God's love demonstrated powerfully in the sacrificial death of Christ, reassuring believers of their salvation and value in God's eyes.
- **Contrast Between Adam and Christ:** Paul presents Adam and Christ as two representatives of humanity, with Adam bringing sin and death, and Christ bringing grace and life. This contrast shows that believers inherit life, not because of their works but through Jesus.
- **The Superiority of Grace:** Paul emphasizes that God's grace is abundant and greater than sin, showing that there is no sin too great for God's forgiveness. Grace empowers believers to live victoriously and assures them of their eternal life.

In summary, Romans 5 reveals the transformative work of Christ, offering peace, hope, and eternal life through His grace. For Christians, this chapter emphasizes the Spirit-filled life, marked by victory over sin, the abundance of God's grace, and the joyful hope of eternal life.

Romans 5 introduces profound truths about salvation, assurance, and God's love. Through Christ, believers move from a state of sin and death (in Adam) to a life of grace and peace with God. This chapter provides a foundation of hope, reminding us that God's love and grace are greater than sin, securing eternal life for those who trust in Jesus.



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#### LESSON SIX CHAPTER SIX

Romans chapter 6 deals with the transformative power of salvation through Christ, focusing on the believer's new life in Him and the break from sin's control. This chapter, from a Christian perspective, emphasizes the believer's victory over sin, new identity in Christ, and empowered walk through the Holy Spirit. It offers insights into practical holiness, freedom from sin, and the spiritual empowerment that enables believers to live out God's will.

#### I. Dead to Sin, **Alive** in Christ (Romans 6:1-4)

- **Grace and Sin (6:1-2)**
  - a) **Shall We Continue in Sin?:** Paul begins by addressing a potential misunderstanding—since God's grace abounds, does that mean we can continue sinning? His response is emphatic: "By no means!" Sin is no longer an option for those united with Christ.
  - b) **A Radical Change:** Christian teaching emphasizes that salvation leads to a real transformation, breaking sin's hold. By receiving God's grace, believers are set free, and the Holy Spirit empowers them to live differently.
- **Baptism as a **Symbol** of Death and Resurrection (6:3-4)**
  - a) **Baptized into His Death:** Paul explains that through baptism, believers are symbolically buried with Christ. This burial signifies the death of the old self—our sinful nature.
  - b) **Risen to New Life:** Christians see baptism not only as symbolic but as a profound act that reflects a new spiritual reality—rising to walk in "newness of life" through the power of the Holy Spirit.

#### II. United with **Christ** in His Death and Resurrection (Romans 6:5-10)

- **Sharing in Christ's Death and Resurrection (6:5-7)**
  - a) **Union with Christ:** Believers are not only united with Christ in His death but also in His resurrection, meaning they share in His victory over sin. This union means the old self, dominated by sin, is crucified.
  - b) **Freedom from Sin's Power:** Paul explains that "anyone who has died has been set free from sin." From a Christian perspective, this signifies freedom from sin's dominance, empowering believers to live in righteousness through the Spirit.
- **Christ's Victory Over **Death** (6:8-10)**
  - a) **Living with Christ:** Because Christ was raised from the dead, believers can live with Him eternally, both now and in eternity. His resurrection confirms that sin and death no longer have power over Him—and thus over believers who are in Him.

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- b) **Alive to God:** Christians emphasize that this “alive to God” status empowers believers to walk in daily communion with God, living a life directed by the Holy Spirit that continually seeks to honor God’s will.

#### III. Living as Instruments of Righteousness (Romans 6:11-14)

- **Consider Yourself Dead to Sin (6:11)**
  - **New Perspective:** Paul instructs believers to “consider” or “reckon” themselves dead to sin but alive to God. This mental and spiritual shift forms the basis of Christian living.
  - **Faith-Filled Identity:** In Christian theology, understanding this new identity empowers believers to live victoriously over sin. The Holy Spirit renews the believer’s mind, helping them to see themselves as God sees them—freed from sin and alive in Christ.
- **Yielding to Righteousness, Not Sin (6:12-13)**
  - **Reject Sin’s Authority:** Believers are encouraged not to let sin reign in their mortal bodies. Instead, they are to offer themselves to God, allowing the Spirit to guide their actions and desires.
  - **Instruments of Righteousness:** Christians emphasize a Spirit-filled life in which believers yield themselves to God, letting the Holy Spirit use them as “instruments of righteousness” for His purposes, both within the church and in their personal lives.
- **Under Grace, Not Law (6:14)**
  - **Grace as Empowerment:** Paul notes that believers are “not under law but under grace.” Christians interpret this grace not merely as forgiveness but as empowerment from the Holy Spirit to live a victorious life over sin, with grace enabling obedience out of love rather than fear.

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#### IV. Slaves to Righteousness, Not to Sin (Romans 6:15-18)

- **Freedom from Sin, Bondage to Righteousness (6:15-16)**
  - **Choosing Obedience to God:** Paul asks if grace allows believers to sin freely and clarifies that believers are slaves to what they obey. If they yield to sin, it leads to death; if they yield to God, it leads to righteousness.
  - **Empowered Choice:** Christian theology emphasizes that through the Holy Spirit, believers have the power to choose obedience, leading to spiritual growth and freedom from sin's grip.
- **Transformation Through Obedience (6:17-18)**
  - **Set Free from Sin:** Paul rejoices that believers, once "slaves to sin," have now been set free and have become "slaves to righteousness." This transformation is both immediate and ongoing.
  - **Spirit-Led Obedience:** Christians emphasize the role of the Holy Spirit in fostering a desire for holiness and righteousness. As believers submit to God's Spirit, they experience a transformation that aligns their lives more closely with Christ's character.

#### V. Fruit of Righteousness and Sanctification (Romans 6:19-23)

- **Result of Slavery to Righteousness (6:19-20)**
  - **Holiness in Practice:** Paul encourages believers to offer their bodies to righteousness, which leads to holiness, contrasting it with the shame and death that sin brought in their past.
  - **Sanctification:** Christians see sanctification as an ongoing process through which believers, empowered by the Holy Spirit, grow in holiness and are set apart for God's purposes.
- **Eternal Life as the Ultimate Reward (6:21-23)**
  - **Wages of Sin and Gift of God:** Paul contrasts the wages of sin, which is death, with the gift of God, which is eternal life through Jesus Christ. Sin earns death, but God offers life freely through grace.
  - **Life in the Spirit:** Christian theology emphasizes the Holy Spirit's role in guiding believers toward eternal life and away from sin's destructive power. The Spirit gives assurance and empowers believers to live in the reality of eternal life here and now.

#### Key Christian Themes in Romans Chapter 6

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- **Victory Over Sin:** Romans 6 highlights the believer's victory over sin through unity with Christ. Christians believe that by the Holy Spirit's power, believers are equipped to live righteously and overcome sin daily.
- **New Identity in Christ:** The chapter emphasizes a new identity, dead to sin and alive to God. Christians value this Spirit-led transformation, seeing it as evidence of the Holy Spirit's work in the believer.
- **Empowerment for Righteous Living:** Grace doesn't just forgive; it empowers. Christians understand God's grace as enabling a life of obedience and righteousness through the Holy Spirit.
- **Sanctification as Ongoing Transformation:** The call to be "instruments of righteousness" reflects the Christian belief in sanctification as a continual growth process, where believers are transformed by the Spirit to live holy lives.
- **Eternal Perspective:** Eternal life is both a present reality and a future promise. Christians view this as an active, Spirit-filled life now, with the assurance of life with God forever.

#### SUMMARY

In Romans 6, Paul calls believers to recognize their new identity in Christ and to live victoriously over sin through God's grace. For Christians, this chapter is a reminder of the Spirit's power at work within believers, transforming them into Christ's likeness, empowering them for holy living, and guiding them toward eternal life in communion with God.

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#### LESSON SEVEN CHAPTER SEVEN

Romans chapter 7 is a profound passage that delves into the struggle between the law, sin, and the human condition. Here, Paul speaks to the conflict that believers face between their desire to live for God and the ongoing challenge of sin. This chapter is foundational in understanding how the believer, though no longer bound by the law, may still experience struggle with sin—but also has victory through the Holy Spirit.

#### I. The Law's Authority Over a Person's Life (Romans 7:1-6)

- **Understanding the Law's Domain (7:1-3)**
  - a) **The Law's Power Over the Living:** Paul opens by explaining that the law only has authority over a person while they are alive. He uses the analogy of marriage to illustrate this: just as a wife is bound to her husband only while he lives, so are people bound to the law only until they are united with Christ in His death.
  - b) **Freedom Through Death:** Christian theology teaches that believers are "dead" to the law's binding authority through Christ's sacrifice, breaking the power of legalism and opening the way to a Spirit-led life of freedom.
- **Released to Serve in the New Way (7:4-6)**
  - a) **Dead to the Law, Alive in the Spirit:** Believers have "died" to the law so that they might belong to Christ and bear fruit for God. Christians emphasize that this fruit-bearing life is possible through the Holy Spirit, who empowers believers to live in ways the law could not accomplish on its own.
  - b) **Serving in the Newness of the Spirit:** Rather than serving under the "old written code," Christians understand this "new way" as life led and inspired by the Holy Spirit, freeing believers from trying to meet God's standards on their own.

#### II. The Law and Sin's Partnership (Romans 7:7-13)

- **The Law Reveals Sin (7:7-8)**
  - a) **Understanding the Law's Purpose:** Paul clarifies that the law is not sinful. Instead, it reveals sin by showing God's standards. For example, Paul says he would not have known coveting was wrong if the law had not said, "Do not covet."
  - b) **Sin's Deceptive Power:** Christian theology teaches that sin uses the law to provoke disobedience, turning the good law into an instrument of condemnation rather than life. The Spirit, by contrast, brings freedom and enables believers to recognize and resist sin.
- **The Law and Death (7:9-11)**

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- a) **The Law Brought Awareness of Sin:** Paul describes a time before understanding the law, when he “was alive.” But when he understood the law, sin “came to life,” and he realized his guilt.
- b) **Sin’s Consequence of Death:** Christians teach that the law, by itself, cannot save but instead reveals the depth of human sinfulness and need for salvation. This realization of sin’s consequence points believers to their need for Jesus and the Holy Spirit’s work.
- **The Law is Holy, Sin is Deadly (7:12-13)**
  - a) **The Law’s Holiness and Sin’s Perversion:** Paul reaffirms that the law is holy and good, even though sin uses it to bring death. For Christians, this serves as a reminder that God’s standards are righteous, but only through the Spirit can believers live according to them without condemnation.

### III. The Struggle with Sin (Romans 7:14-23)

- **The Conflict Between Flesh and Spirit (7:14-17)**
  - a) **The Law is Spiritual, But I Am Fleshly:** Paul acknowledges that the law is spiritual and good, but he describes himself as “sold as a slave to sin,” emphasizing the inner battle between his desire to follow God’s ways and his sinful nature.
  - b) **Doing What He Hates:** Christians see this as a universal experience of believers who desire to live holy lives yet struggle against the “flesh.” However, they believe that the Holy Spirit provides strength to overcome this inner battle.
- **The Reality of Inner Conflict (7:18-20)**
  - a) **Desire and Inability:** Paul expresses his frustration, noting that he wants to do good but struggles to carry it out. Although his mind desires to follow God, his flesh resists.
  - b) **Acknowledging Sin’s Presence:** Christians interpret this as a reminder that the flesh still has influence, but through Spirit-filled living, believers have the power to choose obedience over sin.
- **The War Within (7:21-23)**
  - a) **Law of the Mind vs. Law of Sin:** Paul describes an internal “war” between his mind, which desires to obey God, and his flesh, which fights against it. This battle resonates with Christian theology, which emphasizes the importance of relying on the Holy Spirit to resist the flesh and live victoriously.

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- b) **Recognizing Spiritual Warfare:** Christians understand this inner conflict as a form of spiritual warfare, highlighting the necessity of depending on the Holy Spirit daily to resist sin and pursue righteousness.

#### IV. Deliverance Through **Jesus Christ** (Romans 7:24-25)

- **The Cry for Rescue (7:24)**
  - a) **“Wretched Man that I Am”:** Paul’s despair at his inability to overcome sin on his own leads him to cry out for deliverance. Christians interpret this as the human realization that, without divine help, the fight against sin is unwinnable.
  - b) **Desperate Need for the Holy Spirit:** This outcry is the heart of Christian dependence on the Spirit. Recognizing their limitations, believers turn to the Spirit for power, wisdom, and strength to overcome their flesh.
- **Victory Through Jesus (7:25)**
  - a) **Thank God for Jesus:** Paul concludes that rescue comes through Jesus Christ. Christians view this as the ultimate declaration of hope—Jesus has broken the power of sin and made a way for believers to walk in freedom through the Spirit.
  - b) **Living in Victory:** While Paul acknowledges the tension between the mind and flesh, Christians emphasize that believers can live victorious lives through ongoing reliance on the Holy Spirit, which empowers them to overcome the desires of the flesh.

In summary, Romans chapter 7 describes the believer’s struggle with sin and the inability to overcome it through the law alone. Christians believe this passage teaches about the Spirit’s essential role in sanctification and victorious living. Through reliance on the Holy Spirit and faith in Christ, believers are empowered to resist sin and live lives that honor God. This chapter points to the reality that while believers may struggle, their victory and strength are found in the power of the Holy Spirit.

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## LESSON EIGHT

### MIDTERM EXAM



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#### LESSON NINE CHAPTER EIGHT

Romans 8 is a rich, encouraging chapter that many consider the pinnacle of Paul's theological writings. It emphasizes the victory believers have in the Holy Spirit, freedom from condemnation, and the assurance of God's love. From a Christian theological perspective, Romans 8 showcases the Spirit-filled life, emphasizing the Holy Spirit's power to enable believers to overcome sin, live righteously, and experience profound intimacy with God. This chapter is often seen as a declaration of freedom, life in the Spirit, and the unshakable security of God's love.

#### I. Life in the **Spirit** and Freedom from Condemnation (Romans 8:1-4)

- **No Condemnation in Christ (8:1)**
  - a) **Victory Over Condemnation:** Paul begins by stating that those in Christ Jesus are no longer condemned. Christians emphasize that believers are forgiven and set free from the guilt and power of sin through Jesus.
  - b) **The Holy Spirit's Role in Freedom:** This freedom from condemnation is not just a legal status but a living reality through the Holy Spirit, who empowers believers to live in freedom and righteousness.
- **The Law of the Spirit vs. the Law of Sin (8:2)**
  - a) **Law of the Spirit of Life:** Paul introduces the "law of the Spirit of life," which sets believers free from the "law of sin and death." Christian theology highlights that the Holy Spirit breaks the power of sin and enables believers to live victorious, Spirit-filled lives.
- **The Law's Fulfillment in Christ (8:3-4)**
  - a) **Jesus' Sacrifice and Victory Over Sin:** Christ accomplished what the law could not, condemning sin in the flesh. Christians see this as a reminder of Jesus' ultimate victory, providing believers the ability to live holy lives.
  - b) **Empowered to Fulfill God's Law:** Believers now fulfill God's righteous requirements not through human effort but by living according to the Spirit, who empowers them to walk in obedience.

#### II. Living According to the **Spirit** (Romans 8:5-11)

- **Mindset on the Spirit vs. Flesh (8:5-8)**
  - a) **Two Mindsets:** Paul contrasts those who live "according to the flesh" with those who live "according to the Spirit." Christians emphasize the importance of setting our minds on the Spirit, which brings life, peace, and connection with God.
  - b) **The Flesh and Spiritual Death:** Living by the flesh leads to death, but living by the Spirit brings peace and life. This passage underscores the need for Christians to pursue a Spirit-filled lifestyle that brings true life.

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- **The Spirit's Indwelling Power (8:9-11)**
  - a) **Belonging to Christ:** The Spirit indwells **all** believers, and this indwelling is the mark of belonging to Christ. Christians see this as the foundational experience of salvation, with the Holy Spirit's presence indicating God's active, powerful work within.
  - b) **Resurrection Power:** Just as the Spirit raised Jesus from the dead, the **same** Spirit lives in believers, promising them resurrection and eternal life. Christians celebrate the Holy Spirit's life-giving power, which renews both body and soul.

### III. **Children** and Heirs of God (Romans 8:12-17)

- **Living as Children of God (8:12-14)**
  - a) **Obligation to Live by the Spirit:** Paul urges believers to reject the deeds of the flesh. Christians emphasize the Spirit's role in empowering believers to put to death sinful habits and live in righteousness.
  - b) **Guided by the Spirit:** Those who are "led by the Spirit of God" are the children of God. Christians see this as a daily experience of the Holy Spirit's guidance, encouraging believers to seek and follow the Spirit's leading in all areas of life.
- **The Spirit of Adoption (8:15-17)**
  - a) **No Fear, Only Sonship:** The Spirit doesn't enslave believers to fear but confirms their status as God's children. Christians value this intimate relationship with God as "Abba, Father"—a closeness made possible through the Spirit's work.
  - b) **Heirs with Christ:** As God's children, believers are heirs to His promises and glory. Christians take encouragement in this inheritance, which includes spiritual blessings, eternal life, and a future glorified state with Christ.

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#### IV. Hope in Suffering and the Spirit's Help (Romans 8:18-27)

- **Present Suffering, Future Glory (8:18-21)**
  - a) **Future Glory Outweighs Present Trials:** Paul states that the present sufferings are insignificant compared to the future glory awaiting believers. Christians believe that this hope empowers believers to endure challenges with a perspective on God's promised future.
  - b) **Creation's Redemption:** All creation longs for redemption, and Christians see this as a call to actively anticipate and participate in God's restoration work on earth.
- **The Groaning of Creation and Believers (8:22-25)**
  - a) **Groaning for Redemption:** Just as creation groans for restoration, believers also groan inwardly for the full realization of salvation. Christians view this yearning as a powerful reminder to depend on the Spirit as they await God's promises.
- **The Spirit's Intercession (8:26-27)**
  - a) **Help in Weakness:** The Spirit intercedes for believers, especially in times of weakness when they do not know how to pray. Christians highly value the gift of praying in the Spirit, believing it allows them to connect deeply with God's will.
  - b) **Intercession According to God's Will:** The Spirit's intercession aligns with God's purposes, assuring Christians that even when they struggle, the Spirit prays effectively on their behalf.

#### V. Assurance of God's Purpose and Love (Romans 8:28-39)

- **God's Sovereign Plan (8:28-30)**
  - a) **All Things Work for Good:** Paul assures that "all things work together for good for those who love God." Christians hold that God has a sovereign, redemptive purpose for every circumstance, trusting that even trials can lead to spiritual growth.
  - b) **Predestined to Conform to Christ's Image:** God's ultimate goal is for believers to be conformed to the image of Jesus. Christians understand this transformation as a lifelong process, achieved by the Spirit's sanctifying work.

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- **The Security of God's Love (8:31-34)**
  - a) **God is For Us:** If God is for believers, no one can stand against them. Christians find confidence in God's support, knowing that the Spirit empowers them to overcome every opposition.
  - b) **Christ's Intercession:** Jesus, seated at the right hand of God, intercedes for believers. Along with the Spirit's intercession, Christians feel assured of their protection, provision, and victory in every area of life.
- **Victory Over Every Obstacle (8:35-39)**
  - a) **Nothing Can Separate Us from God's Love:** Paul emphatically declares that nothing—tribulation, persecution, or any power—can separate believers from God's love in Christ. Christians resonate with this powerful promise, trusting that no matter the struggle, God's love will sustain them.
  - b) **More Than Conquerors:** Believers are “more than conquerors” through Christ, affirming that through the Spirit, they can face life's difficulties with divine power and confidence.

In summary, Romans 8 outlines the victorious life available to believers through the Holy Spirit. Christians find in this chapter a call to live freely, empowered by the Spirit, confident in their identity as God's children, and unshaken in the security of God's love. Through every trial, they look to the Spirit for strength, guidance, and victory, trusting that God's eternal purposes and steadfast love will see them through to glory.

Romans 9 deals with deep questions about God's sovereignty, election, and His faithfulness to His promises. Paul addresses these issues in the context of Israel's history, but it has implications for all believers. From a Christian perspective, this chapter emphasizes God's sovereign choices and His desire for a relationship with all people, while also highlighting the importance of faith, God's mercy, and the inclusivity of His promises.

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#### LESSON TEN CHAPTER NINE and TEN

##### Introduction

For the next 3 chapters Paul is going to share his heart and concern about Israel. I title this section “What about Israel?”. As Paul unveils God’s plan for the Gentiles and the revelation of righteousness by faith the logical question is has God given up on Israel? Paul answers this question by looking Israel past, present and future.

#### I. Paul’s Deep Concern for **Israel** (Romans 9:1-5)

- **Paul’s Sorrow and Love for His People (9:1-3)**
  - a) **Paul’s Anguish:** Paul begins by expressing his heartache over Israel’s rejection of Christ. Christians recognize the burden for lost souls here, echoing the desire to see all come to salvation.
  - b) **Sacrificial Love:** Paul states he would willingly sacrifice himself if it could save his people. This selfless love is often seen in Christian evangelism, as believers strive to reach the lost with a heart full of compassion.
- **Israel’s Privileges and Heritage (9:4-5)**
  - a) **Chosen People and Blessings:** Paul recounts the privileges given to Israel—adoption, glory, covenants, the Law, temple worship, and promises. Christians acknowledge the significance of these blessings as God’s early revelation of His plan.
  - b) **Christ’s Lineage from Israel:** Jesus came through Israel, a reminder of God’s faithfulness to fulfill His promises. Christians often celebrate Jesus’ fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, emphasizing how He is the promise for all nations.

#### II. God’s Sovereign Choice (Romans 9:6-13)

- **Not All Israel Is True Israel (9:6-9)**
  - a) **God’s Promise vs. Natural Descent:** Paul explains that God’s promises are not based merely on physical descent but on spiritual calling. Christians view this as God’s emphasis on faith over lineage, aligning with the belief that God calls people from all backgrounds into His family.
  - b) **Example of Isaac and Ishmael:** God chose Isaac, the child of promise, over Ishmael. This highlights God’s freedom to choose as He wills, pointing to the Christian belief in the importance of divine calling and the miraculous nature of God’s promises.

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- **God's Election in Jacob and Esau (9:10-13)**

- a) **God's Choice Before Birth:** Paul emphasizes that God chose Jacob over Esau before they were born or had done good or bad. Christians recognize that God's purposes transcend human merit and rely on His sovereign will.
- b) **God's Purpose of Election:** This demonstrates that God's plans are based on His own purposes, not human effort. Christians affirm that God's choices are motivated by His greater wisdom and love, which are often beyond human understanding.

### III. God's **Mercy** and Justice (Romans 9:14-18)

- **God's Righteousness in Election (9:14-16)**

- a) **"Is There Injustice with God?":** Paul addresses the question of whether God's choices are fair. He asserts that God's mercy is based on His own will and character. Christians often affirm that God's ways are higher than ours, and His mercy extends to those He chooses.
- b) **Example of Moses:** God's declaration to Moses that He "will have mercy on whom He will have mercy" reminds believers that God's grace cannot be earned but is a gift. Christians see this as the basis of salvation by grace—an unearned gift.

- **The Example of Pharaoh (9:17-18)**

- a) **God's Purpose with Pharaoh:** Paul explains that God raised Pharaoh up to demonstrate His power and spread His name. Christians interpret this as God's sovereignty in using even those opposed to Him to accomplish His purposes.
- b) **God's Mercy and Hardening:** God's authority to show mercy or harden hearts is part of His divine will. Christians trust that God's actions, even when mysterious, are always aimed at revealing His glory and drawing people to Him.

### IV. God's Sovereignty and Human **Responsibility** (Romans 9:19-29)

- **The Potter and the Clay (9:19-21)**

- a) **Question of Fairness:** Paul addresses the objection, "Why does God still blame us?" using the image of God as a potter who shapes clay as He sees fit. Christians see this as an affirmation of God's authority to guide His creation as He wills.
- b) **God's Right Over Creation:** Just as a potter shapes clay, God has the right to shape people according to His purpose. Christians acknowledge this authority, trusting God's decisions as ultimately wise and good.
- c)

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- **Vessels of Wrath and Mercy (9:22-24)**
  - a) **God's Patience with Sin:** Paul explains that God endures "vessels of wrath" to reveal His mercy. Christians understand this as God's patience with humanity, giving people time to turn to Him.
  - b) **Calling Both Jews and Gentiles:** God's purpose includes extending mercy to both Jews and Gentiles. Christians celebrate this inclusivity, seeing it as a model for Spirit-filled outreach to all nations and backgrounds.
- **Fulfillment of Prophecies (9:25-29)**
  - a) **Hosea's Prophecy:** Paul quotes Hosea to show that those who were "not My people" will be called "sons of the living God." Christians embrace this as evidence of God's invitation to all people, not limited by ethnicity.
  - b) **Isaiah's Prophecy:** Isaiah's words about a remnant underscore God's faithfulness to His promises despite human disobedience. Christians emphasize the theme of God's preservation and restoration of those who remain faithful.

#### V. Israel's **Stumbling** Over Faith (Romans 9:30-33)

- **Righteousness by Faith, Not by Works (9:30-32)**
  - a) **Gentiles Attained Righteousness by Faith:** Paul notes that Gentiles, who were not pursuing righteousness, received it by faith. Christians understand that righteousness is a gift accessible to anyone who believes, aligning with the emphasis on grace and Spirit-empowered faith.
  - b) **Israel's Pursuit of Law-based Righteousness:** Israel's failure was trying to achieve righteousness through the law, missing the righteousness that comes by faith. Christians recognize this as a warning against legalism and self-effort.
- **Christ as the Stumbling Stone (9:33)**
  - a) **Jesus, the Rock of Offense:** Paul concludes by quoting Isaiah to show that Jesus became a "stumbling stone" for Israel because they did not believe. Christians affirm that faith in Christ is the cornerstone of salvation and that rejecting Him results in missing God's plan.
  - b) **Faith in Christ as the Foundation:** For those who believe in Jesus, there is no shame or disappointment. Christians emphasize this assurance, believing that faith in Christ anchors the believer in God's unshakable promises.

In summary, Romans 9 speaks of God's sovereignty, Israel's unique history, and the open invitation to faith. From a Christian perspective, this chapter affirms that salvation is based on God's choice, mercy, and faith in Jesus, not human effort. God's sovereign decisions are always aimed at bringing more people into His family. Believers are encouraged to rely on God's grace, knowing that He calls and equips all who come to Him by faith.



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#### CHAPTER 10

Romans 10 is a powerful chapter where Paul dives into the concepts of righteousness, faith, and salvation, breaking down what it truly means to believe and be saved. In this chapter, Paul explains that salvation is available to all, whether Jew or Gentile, and that it comes not through works, but through faith in Christ. He continues his concern for Israel and their need for righteousness and the gospel. He is dealing with Israel's present situation.

#### I. Paul's Deep Desire for Israel's **Salvation** (Romans 10:1)

- **Paul's Heartfelt Desire:** Paul starts with a personal longing for the salvation of Israel, expressing his passion and prayer for his fellow Israelites to be saved. This verse reveals his love and concern for his people, showing us the heart of an evangelist who is both prayerful and persistent.
- **Application for Today:** Many believers can relate to Paul's prayerful desire. Just as Paul prays for Israel, believers today may pray for their family, friends, or communities, longing to see them come to know Christ. Paul shows us the importance of intercession—praying earnestly for others' salvation.

#### II. Israel's Zeal Without **Knowledge** (Romans 10:2-4)

- **Sincere but Misdirected Zeal (10:2):** Paul acknowledges that Israel is zealous for God, but their zeal lacks true knowledge. They are passionate, but they're trying to establish their own righteousness instead of accepting the righteousness God provides through Jesus.
- **Righteousness Through Faith, Not Law (10:3-4):** Paul explains that Israel's attempt to follow the Law has led to a misunderstanding. Instead of understanding that the Law points to Jesus, they're focused on following the Law itself, not realizing that true righteousness comes from faith in Christ, who fulfilled the Law.
- **Relating to Modern Life:** This passage is relatable for anyone who has tried to earn approval through actions or religious routines without a real relationship with God. It's a reminder that while good works are valuable, they are not the means of salvation. It's through faith in Jesus that we find true righteousness.

#### III. The **Simplicity** of Salvation (Romans 10:5-10)

- **Moses on Righteousness by Law (10:5):** Paul refers to Moses' teachings, which say that a person who follows the Law must keep it perfectly. But Paul reveals that this perfection isn't achievable on our own.
- **Faith and Confession of Christ (10:6-8):** Here, Paul contrasts the impossibility of keeping the Law with the simplicity of faith in Jesus. Salvation doesn't require impossible efforts or ascetic achievements; rather, it's near to us—available through belief in our hearts and confession with our mouths.
- **Believing and Confessing (10:9-10):** This is one of the most quoted passages: "If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him



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from the dead, you will be saved.” Paul highlights that salvation involves both belief in Jesus’ resurrection and a declaration that He is Lord.

- **A Practical Takeaway:** This passage clarifies that salvation isn’t about doing more or being “good enough.” Instead, it’s about believing in Jesus and openly acknowledging Him. For many people today, this verse brings a sense of relief and clarity—salvation is as close as the words on their lips and the faith in their hearts.

#### IV. **Salvation** for All: Jew and Gentile (Romans 10:11-13)

- **No Shame for Believers (10:11):** Paul quotes Isaiah, saying, “Anyone who believes in Him will never be put to shame.” This speaks to the confidence and security believers have in Christ. There’s no shame or fear because Jesus offers full acceptance.
- **One Lord Over All (10:12):** Paul emphasizes that there’s no difference between Jew and Gentile. The same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses everyone who calls on Him. In Paul’s time, this was revolutionary—breaking down ethnic and cultural barriers and welcoming all people into God’s family.
- **Whoever Calls on the Name of the Lord (10:13):** Paul quotes Joel to affirm that “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” This inclusive invitation makes clear that salvation is available to everyone, regardless of background, status, or past.
- **Making It Real:** This passage reminds us that God’s love and salvation are offered to all, not limited to a specific group. This is deeply encouraging for people who might feel unworthy or “outsiders.” Paul’s words are a celebration of God’s open invitation.

#### V. The Call to Spread the Gospel (Romans 10:14-15)

- **The Necessity of **Preaching** (10:14):** Paul asks a series of rhetorical questions: How can people believe in Jesus if they’ve never heard of Him? And how will they hear without someone telling them? These questions reveal the importance of sharing the gospel.
- **Beautiful Feet of the Messenger (10:15):** Paul concludes this thought by quoting Isaiah, saying, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” In other words, those who share the message of Christ are fulfilling a beautiful mission, carrying life-changing news.
- **A Modern Application:** Paul’s words encourage believers to be active in sharing their faith. Whether through conversation, acts of kindness, or personal testimony, believers are called to “bring the good news” to others. This passage motivates Christians to be aware of opportunities to share their faith, reminding us that people need to hear the gospel to believe.

#### VI. Israel’s **Rejection** of the Message (Romans 10:16-21)

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- **Not All Accepted the Good News (10:16):** Paul acknowledges that not everyone who hears the gospel will believe. He quotes Isaiah again, “Lord, who has believed our message?” This points to the reality of unbelief, which Paul deeply grieves over.
- **Faith Comes from Hearing (10:17):** Paul explains that “faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.” Hearing the gospel is essential for faith to take root, underscoring the need for believers to keep sharing it, even if some reject it.
- **Israel Heard but Did Not Believe (10:18-19):** Paul affirms that Israel has heard the message, quoting Psalms and Deuteronomy to show that God’s message has gone out. But despite hearing it, many in Israel still rejected it. This rejection opens the way for the Gentiles to respond to the gospel.
- **God’s Patient Pursuit (10:20-21):** Paul closes the chapter by quoting Isaiah, where God says He was found by those who didn’t seek Him (the Gentiles) but Israel remained obstinate. This shows God’s patient, persistent love even in the face of rejection.
- **Relatable Insight:** This passage speaks to the reality that, even when the gospel is shared, not everyone will accept it. However, it encourages believers to continue sharing, knowing that God is always reaching out with open arms, waiting for those who will respond.

#### In Summary

Romans 10 shows us that salvation through Jesus is accessible and straightforward—it’s about faith and confession, not human efforts or works. Paul’s heart for Israel, his call to evangelism, and his teaching on the inclusiveness of salvation remind us that the gospel is for everyone. This chapter challenges us to trust in the simplicity of the gospel, to reach out to others, and to remember that God’s love is ever-persistent, always inviting people to believe and receive eternal life. He closes the chapter asking about Israel and their faith.

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#### LESSON ELEVEN CHAPTER ELEVEN

In chapter 11 Paul shares deep insights about God's plan for Israel and the Gentiles. It's a chapter filled with hope, mystery, and a call to worship God for His incredible wisdom. In this chapter, Paul tackles some tough questions: Has God rejected Israel? Are the Gentiles now God's chosen people? Through a series of logical arguments and scriptural references, Paul shows that God's plan is far more complex and merciful than we could ever imagine. He tackles God's relationship with Israel and the Gentiles. Paul assures his audience that God has not abandoned His people, Israel, despite their unbelief. He explains the concept of a "remnant," the role of Gentiles in God's plan, and a future hope for Israel's salvation.

#### I. Has God Rejected Israel? (Romans 11:1-6)

- **Paul's Answer: No! (11:1)**
  - a) **Personal Example:** Paul immediately rejects the idea that God has abandoned Israel by pointing to himself as proof. He is an Israelite, from the tribe of Benjamin, and a follower of Jesus. If God had rejected Israel, Paul wouldn't be saved. This is like saying, "If God can save me, He hasn't given up on our people."
  - b) **Application for Today:** Sometimes we may feel like God has forgotten us, but Paul's example is a reminder that God never abandons His people, no matter how far they may seem from Him.
- **The Concept of the Remnant (11:2-5)**
  - a) **Elijah's Story:** Paul references Elijah, who thought he was the only faithful one left. God reassured Elijah that He had preserved a remnant—7,000 who had not worshiped idols. This "remnant" shows that, even in times of widespread unbelief, God is preserving faithful believers.
  - b) **Relating to Modern Faith:** Today, it might seem like true faith is rare, but God is still preserving people who are faithful to Him, even when society drifts away. This remnant concept reassures believers that God always has a plan.
- **Salvation by Grace, Not Works (11:6)**
  - a) **Grace Alone:** Paul emphasizes that this remnant is chosen by grace, not by their own deeds or efforts. This grace-only principle means that salvation is God's gift, not something we earn.
  - b) **Takeaway for Us:** This reminds us that our relationship with God is based on His grace, not our perfection. We're part of God's family not because of our works but because of His love.

#### II. Israel's Stumbling is Not Permanent (Romans 11:7-12)

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- **Israel's Hardening (11:7-10)**
  - a) **Temporary Blindness:** Paul explains that Israel's "hardening" or spiritual blindness has come because they pursued righteousness through the law instead of through faith. However, this blindness isn't total—some, like Paul, have believed—and it's not forever.
  - b) **Learning from Israel's Story:** Paul's words are a reminder that we can't earn God's favor through rituals or religious practices; it's about a relationship of faith. Israel's mistake was pursuing God's law without the heart of faith.
- **Gentiles' Blessing Through Israel's Stumbling (11:11-12)**
  - a) **Purpose in Stumbling:** Paul reveals that Israel's temporary stumbling has led to blessings for Gentiles. This isn't to say Israel's downfall was God's ultimate goal, but it's resulted in Gentiles being included in God's family.
  - b) **Relatable Insight:** Sometimes our own struggles or mistakes can indirectly open doors for others. This passage encourages us to trust that God can bring good even from difficult circumstances.

### III. Gentiles Grafted into **God's** Plan (Romans 11:13-24)

- **Paul's Ministry to the Gentiles (11:13-15)**
  - a) **Magnifying His Mission:** Paul explains his special calling to the Gentiles, hoping that his ministry might even inspire some Israelites to turn back to God. He wants his work to bring both Gentiles and Jews to Christ.
  - b) **Application for Us:** Like Paul, every believer has a unique calling and ministry. His example shows us the importance of being faithful in our calling, knowing it may inspire others in unexpected ways.
- **The Olive Tree Metaphor (11:16-18)**
  - a) **Natural and Wild Branches:** Paul uses the image of an olive tree, with Israel as the natural branches and Gentiles as "wild branches" grafted in. This grafting represents Gentiles now sharing in the blessings originally promised to Israel.
  - b) **Humility and Unity:** Paul warns the Gentile believers not to feel superior to Israel. Just as they've been grafted in, God can also graft Israel back. This is a call to humility, recognizing that all believers share the same spiritual root.
- **The Kindness and Severity of God (11:19-22)**
  - a) **Balance of God's Character:** Paul emphasizes both God's kindness in welcoming the Gentiles and His severity in allowing Israel's temporary separation. This balance shows God's commitment to justice and mercy.

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- b) **Takeaway for Us:** Understanding both the kindness and seriousness of God helps us appreciate His mercy while motivating us to stay faithful.
- **Hope** for Israel's Restoration (11:23-24)
  - a) **Israel's Return:** Paul assures that if Israel turns back to God, they too can be grafted back in. God is ready to welcome them again, highlighting His grace and patience.
  - b) **Application:** This teaches us about God's willingness to forgive and restore. No matter how far someone has wandered, God's desire is always for restoration.

#### IV. Mystery of Israel's Future Salvation (Romans 11:25-32)

- **A Divine Mystery (11:25)**
  - a) **God's Timing:** Paul explains that Israel's hardening will last until "the full number of Gentiles" comes into God's family. This is a divine mystery that reveals God's wisdom and timing, showing that He's working out a larger plan.
  - b) **Living with Mystery:** Sometimes, we may not understand everything about God's plan, but we can trust that He knows what He's doing. This is a reminder to trust in His timing, even when things are unclear.
- **All Israel Will Be Saved** (11:26-27)
  - a) **Future Hope for Israel:** Paul quotes prophecies from Isaiah, affirming that a day will come when "all Israel will be saved." This means that God still has a future purpose for Israel and will fulfill His promises.
  - b) **Encouragement for Today:** God's promises never fail. Just as Israel's restoration is assured, we too can hold onto God's promises in our lives, knowing He is faithful to complete what He starts.
- **God's Unchanging Promises (11:28-29)**
  - a) **Gifts and Calling are Irrevocable:** Paul highlights that God's gifts and calling for Israel are irrevocable—they can't be taken back. This speaks to the permanence of God's promises.
  - b) **Our Assurance:** This verse reassures us that God's call in our lives is secure. He doesn't change His mind about us, and His promises stand firm even when we falter.
- **Mercy for All (11:30-32)**
  - a) **Mutual Mercy:** Paul points out that just as Gentiles once disobeyed and found mercy, so too will Israel. God's ultimate goal is to extend mercy to all, showing His deep love and desire for everyone to receive His grace.

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- b) **Real-Life Insight:** God's mercy is inclusive. Even if someone feels they've gone too far, God's mercy is always available. Paul's words encourage us to rely on God's grace and show mercy to others.

#### V. Doxology: Praise for God's Wisdom and Knowledge (Romans 11:33-36)

- **Celebrating God's Wisdom (11:33-34)**
  - **Depths of God's Riches:** Paul bursts into praise, marveling at the depth of God's wisdom and knowledge. He acknowledges that no one can fully understand God's ways, which are higher than human thoughts.
  - **Trusting God's Infinite Wisdom:** When life seems confusing or God's plans hard to understand, this passage reminds us to trust in His infinite wisdom. Like Paul, we can respond with awe and praise, knowing He is in control.
- **God as the Source of All (11:35-36)**
  - **Everything is from Him, Through Him, and For Him:** Paul concludes by affirming that God is the source, sustainer, and ultimate purpose of everything. All things exist by His power and for His glory.
  - **Finding Purpose in God:** This powerful doxology reminds us that our lives find true meaning in God. We are created by Him and for Him, and our ultimate purpose is to bring Him glory.

#### Summary of Romans 11

Romans 11 is a profound reminder of God's unfailing faithfulness to His promises and His inclusive, merciful nature. It encourages us to trust in God's plan even when we don't understand it fully, to approach our faith with humility, and to honor God's wisdom and sovereignty with reverence.

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#### LESSON TWELVE CHAPTER TWELVE

Romans 12 shifts gears from the deep theological foundations Paul has laid to practical instructions on living a life that honors God. This chapter is all about putting faith into action and being transformed in how we live, think, and treat others. Here's a detailed outline that breaks down Romans 12 in an easy-to-understand and engaging way.

#### I. Living as a **Living** Sacrifice (Romans 12:1-2)

- **Presenting Ourselves to God (12:1)**
  - a) **The Call to Be a Living Sacrifice:** Paul urges believers to offer themselves as "living sacrifices." In the Old Testament, sacrifices were animals, but here Paul calls us to offer ourselves willingly, dedicating our entire lives—our actions, thoughts, and priorities—as worship to God.
  - b) **Relatable Insight:** This means God isn't looking for ritual; He's looking for relationship and commitment. Being a living sacrifice means letting go of our agenda to follow God's purpose with an open heart.
- **Renewing Our Minds (12:2)**
  - a) **Resisting Conformity to the World:** Paul encourages us not to be shaped by the values of this world, which often pull us away from God. Instead, we're to be "transformed by the renewal of our minds" so we can know and follow God's will.
  - b) **Modern Application:** Today, we're constantly influenced by media, culture, and trends. Renewing our minds means consciously filling our thoughts with God's truth, which helps us to see life differently and make godly choices.

#### II. Humility and Right Thinking (Romans 12:3-8)

- **Think of Yourself Soberly (12:3)**
  - a) **A Healthy Self-View:** Paul warns us not to think too highly of ourselves but to have a realistic, humble view. This doesn't mean thinking poorly of ourselves but understanding our worth in light of God's grace.
  - b) **Real-Life Reflection:** Humility means acknowledging that our gifts and strengths come from God, and we're here to serve, not to compete. It's about confidence rooted in God's purpose, not in comparison to others.

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- **One Body, Many Members (12:4-5)**
  - a) **Unity with Diversity:** Paul describes the church as a body with many parts. Just as each body part has a unique function, so each believer has unique gifts and roles.
  - b) **Takeaway:** Whether we're teaching, encouraging, serving, or leading, every role matters. Our differences aren't a weakness; they're what make the body of Christ effective.
- **Using Our Gifts (12:6-8)**
  - a) **Gifts Given by Grace:** Paul lists different spiritual gifts—prophecy, service, teaching, encouragement, giving, leading, and showing mercy. Whatever gift God has given, we're to use it with dedication.
  - b) **Encouragement to Act:** This means finding ways to put our gifts into action! Instead of waiting for a perfect opportunity, we're encouraged to serve wherever we can, using our gifts to bless others and honor God.

### III. Love in **Action** (Romans 12:9-13)

- **Sincere Love (12:9)**
  - a) **Authentic Love:** Paul says, "Let love be genuine." True love isn't about appearance or self-interest but about sincerely caring for others and hating what is evil.
  - b) **Practical Application:** This kind of love means being real, supportive, and truthful. It's about showing love even when it's hard and standing against sin without compromising compassion.
- **Loving One Another (12:10)**
  - a) **Brotherly Affection:** We're called to "love one another with brotherly affection" and "outdo one another in showing honor." This means putting others first and giving respect generously.
  - b) **Relatable Insight:** It's like a competition to outdo one another in kindness and respect—imagine a community where everyone's goal is to lift others up rather than themselves!
- **Spiritual Fervor and Serving God (12:11)**
  - a) **Passionate Service:** Paul encourages us to serve with zeal, enthusiasm, and dedication. Serving God isn't just a duty; it's a joy and privilege.



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- b) **Daily Life Connection:** Whether at work, home, or church, we can bring our best effort, knowing we're ultimately serving God. Passionate service reflects a heart fully devoted to Him.
- **Joy, Patience, and Prayer (12:12)**
  - a) **Three Pillars of Christian Living:** Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer. These qualities keep us grounded and focused on God, especially in tough times.
  - b) **Practical Wisdom:** Hope helps us stay joyful, patience helps us endure, and prayer keeps us connected to God. These three things can transform how we face every challenge.
- **Generosity and Hospitality (12:13)**
  - a) **Helping Others:** Paul urges believers to share with those in need and be hospitable. This is more than a one-time act; it's a lifestyle of openness and generosity.
  - b) **Living it Out:** Today, being hospitable could mean welcoming someone who feels out of place, giving a helping hand, or opening our homes and hearts to those in need.

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#### IV. Living at **Peace** with Others (Romans 12:14-21)

- **Bless Those Who Persecute You (12:14)**
  - a) **Countercultural Kindness:** Paul teaches us to bless and not curse those who mistreat us. Instead of retaliating, we're called to respond with grace.
  - b) **Relatable Challenge:** In a world that often pushes "getting even," Paul's words remind us to take the high road, responding with love even when it's hard.
- **Empathy and Connection (12:15)**
  - a) **Rejoice and Weep with Others:** Sharing in others' joys and sorrows strengthens community and creates real bonds of empathy.
  - b) **Daily Life:** It's not just about saying, "I'm happy for you" or "I'm sorry for you." It's about truly feeling with others, showing compassion, and walking with them in every season.
- **Living in Harmony (12:16)**
  - a) **Unity over **Pride**:** Paul advises believers to "live in harmony" and not to be proud or think themselves superior. Harmony means mutual respect and humility.
  - b) **Application:** Real unity means setting aside our pride, being willing to listen, and valuing everyone's contribution, no matter their background or position.
- **Avoiding Retaliation (12:17-18)**
  - a) **Living Peacefully with All:** Paul says not to repay evil with evil but to do what's right and live at peace with everyone, as much as we can. He acknowledges that peace requires effort and compromise.
  - b) **Real-Life Relevance:** Sometimes, this means letting go of grudges, not engaging in arguments, and choosing kindness even when we're wronged. It's about valuing peace over proving ourselves right.
- **Leave Room for God's Justice (12:19)**
  - a) **Trusting God's Vengeance:** Instead of seeking revenge, we're encouraged to leave justice to God. Paul reminds us that God is just and will address wrongdoing in His time.
  - b) **Faith in Action:** This teaches us to trust that God sees everything and is the ultimate judge. It's not our job to seek revenge but to show mercy and let God handle justice.
  - c)



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#### LESSON THIRTEEN CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Romans 13 shifts focus from personal and church relationships to a broader discussion about how believers should interact with governing authorities and society. Paul presents a Christian ethic for living responsibly, respecting authority, and embodying love in all relationships. He also encourages believers to live in a way that reflects the “day” of salvation, anticipating Christ’s return with a sense of urgency and integrity.

#### I. **Submission** to Governing Authorities (Romans 13:1-7)

- **All Authority Comes from God (13:1-2):**
  - a) Paul begins by emphasizing that all governing authorities are established by God. Therefore, submission to authority isn’t merely a civic duty; it’s a part of honoring God’s ordained structure. Rebelling against lawful authority, unless it contradicts God’s law, is seen as resisting what God has set up.
  - b) *Example:* Think of a coach setting up team rules for athletes. The rules aren’t just about control—they help the team function well and stay safe. Similarly, God allows structures in society to maintain order, even if they aren’t perfect. By respecting these authorities, Christians reflect a spirit of cooperation and discipline.
- **Rulers as **Servants** of God (13:3-4):**
  - a) Paul points out that rulers are intended to be a “terror to bad conduct” and reward those who do good. In this sense, civil authorities serve as agents of God’s justice, promoting what is right and deterring wrongdoing.
  - b) *Takeaway:* Just as a judge upholds justice in a courtroom, authorities in society are expected to uphold justice and serve the common good. For believers, respecting authorities honors God’s intent for order and justice in society.
- **Responsibility to Pay Taxes and Show Respect (13:5-7):**
  - a) Paul encourages believers to submit to authorities not only to avoid punishment but as a matter of conscience. This includes practical obligations like paying taxes and showing respect and honor where it is due.
  - b) *Application:* Imagine paying for a community service you value—like road maintenance or public safety. Paying taxes is similar; it’s a way to support the common good, respecting that we live in a society that requires resources to function.

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#### II. Love as the **Fulfillment** of the Law (Romans 13:8-10)

- **Owe Nothing Except Love (13:8):**
  - a) Paul pivots to a powerful principle: believers should not be in debt to others in any way except in love, a “debt” that can never be fully repaid. This eternal obligation calls believers to love consistently and deeply.
  - b) *Example:* Think of love like an endless well—no matter how much we pour out, there’s always more. Paul calls us to love continually, seeing it as the one “debt” that enriches both us and those we care for.
- **Love Fulfills the Law (13:9-10):**
  - a) Paul explains that all commandments about relationships (e.g., don’t commit adultery, don’t murder, don’t steal) are summed up in the command to “love your neighbor as yourself.” True love never harms another, so by loving others, we inherently fulfill God’s law.
  - b) *Takeaway:* Imagine if everyone treated each other with the care they’d want for themselves—conflict, injustice, and harm would be drastically reduced. Paul is advocating for a society transformed by the radical, self-giving love of Christ.

#### III. Living in the Light of Christ’s Return (Romans 13:11-14)

- **Understanding the Present **Time** (13:11):**
  - a) Paul reminds believers that “the hour has come” to wake up from spiritual slumber because salvation (Christ’s return) is nearer than ever before. This awareness should affect how we live each day, prioritizing spiritual readiness and godly living.
  - b) *Analogy:* It’s like a runner hearing the final lap bell—they know it’s time to give their best effort. Paul wants believers to recognize the urgency of living faithfully, knowing that every day brings us closer to meeting Christ.
- **Casting Off Works of Darkness (13:12-13):**
  - a) Paul urges believers to “put aside the deeds of darkness” and “put on the armor of light.” He lists behaviors such as carousing, drunkenness, sexual immorality, and jealousy—urging believers to avoid these and live honorably.
  - b) *Application:* Imagine “deeds of darkness” as weights that slow you down, keeping you from reaching your full potential. By “throwing off” these harmful behaviors, we’re free to live joyfully and intentionally in the light of Christ’s truth and love.
- **Putting on the Lord Jesus Christ (13:14):**

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- a) Finally, Paul calls believers to “put on the Lord Jesus Christ” and to **resist** gratifying “the desires of the flesh.” This vivid language means actively embodying Christ’s character and priorities in everything we do.
- b) *Example*: Putting on Christ is like wearing a uniform that reminds us of our identity and purpose. As believers, we “wear” Christ, aiming to reflect His kindness, patience, and righteousness in our daily actions and interactions.

#### Summary

Romans 13 presents a practical yet profound roadmap for Christian living: respect authority, love others deeply, and live in a way that anticipates Christ’s return. He covers three major topics;

- 1) The Christian's duty to submit to the governing authority. Paul’s teaching isn’t about blind obedience; it’s about recognizing God’s sovereignty. All authority ultimately answers to God, and while not all authorities are righteous, believers are called to respect civil order as long as it doesn’t conflict with God’s commands.
- 2) The transformative power of love. Paul highlights the power of love to change both personal relationships and society. Genuine love—rooted in Christ’s example—is the highest standard, going beyond legal requirements and inspiring kindness, compassion, and justice.
- 3) Believers are called to faithful living. Paul challenges believers to live in a state of readiness, reflecting Christ’s light in a world that often chooses darkness. This chapter calls for a life of integrity and purpose, embracing every day as an opportunity to shine for Christ. These teachings call us to be both responsible citizens and radical witnesses for God’s love, embodying His kingdom values here and now.

#### NOTES

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# Equipping the Saints

## Course by Course

### BOOK OF ROMANS

#### LESSON FOURTEEN CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Romans 14 is a powerful chapter where Paul speaks directly to the early church's internal conflicts regarding personal convictions, aiming to foster unity amid diversity. Here, Paul tackles the sensitive topics of judgment, personal freedom, and the responsibility we bear toward one another. In this chapter, Paul helps us see that honoring differences, when guided by love, builds a stronger community of believers.

#### I. Welcoming Believers Without Judging (Romans 14:1-4)

- **A Call to Accept Differences:** Paul begins with a plea to welcome believers without arguing over personal convictions, particularly on "disputable matters"—issues not essential to salvation but connected to individual faith practices.
  - a) *Example:* Imagine a modern church where one person is comfortable with a glass of wine, while another abstains out of conviction. Rather than judging each other, they are called to respect their differing stances.
- **"Weak" vs. "Strong" in Faith:** Paul refers to some believers as “weak” in faith—not inferior, but perhaps less free in certain areas due to their conscientious decisions to abstain from specific practices.
- **God as the Ultimate Judge:** Paul emphasizes that God alone is each believer's judge. He urges both sides to remember that all believers stand before God, who is the only one qualified to evaluate the faith of His people.

#### II. Living for the Lord in Our Convictions (Romans 14:5-9)

- **Honoring the Lord Above All:** Paul teaches that different practices, like observing certain days or eating certain foods, are personal acts of worship if done in honor of the Lord.
  - a) *Example:* In some churches, Sundays are regarded as the Sabbath, while others may worship on Saturdays. Paul's message is that what matters is the heart behind the practice, not the specific day.
- **Unity in Purpose:** Paul underlines that whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. The goal isn't to achieve conformity in every aspect but to honor God in our lives.
- **Christ's Lordship:** We are reminded that Christ died and rose to be the Lord of both the living and the dead. Each believer's life should reflect Jesus as Lord in their actions, thoughts, and personal convictions.

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#### III. Avoiding Judgment and Becoming a Stumbling Block (Romans 14:10-13)

- **Avoiding Condemnation:** Paul warns believers not to look down on each other's practices since all will stand before God's judgment. He encourages each person to focus on their own walk with God.
- **The Responsibility to Avoid Causing Others to Stumble:** Rather than casting judgment, believers are called to be mindful that their actions might influence others. If someone's freedom causes another to struggle, they should consider restraint out of love.
  - a) *Example:* In a modern setting, someone who enjoys certain freedoms (like watching certain types of entertainment) might choose to refrain if it could harm the faith of a friend with different convictions.

#### IV. Understanding the Kingdom Priorities (Romans 14:14-18)

- **Recognizing Personal Freedoms:** Paul notes that in Christ, all foods are clean, yet if someone sees it as unclean, for them, it is. He encourages believers to respect each other's beliefs, even if they differ.
- **Love Over Liberty:** The focus shifts from exercising freedom to prioritizing the spiritual well-being of others. If a particular action is distressing to another believer, Paul urges restraint for the sake of love.
- **Kingdom of God's True Essence:** Paul emphasizes that the Kingdom of God isn't about food and drink but about righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. These qualities should be the central focus rather than disputes over non-essentials.

#### V. Pursuing Peace and Mutual Edification (Romans 14:19-23)

- **Building Each Other Up:** Paul encourages believers to pursue peace and make every effort to edify one another, which involves respecting differing convictions without creating conflict.
- **Avoiding Destructive Freedoms:** Though everything is clean, using freedom in ways that hurt others is unloving. Paul sees it as better to abstain from something altogether if it will harm another's faith.
- **Personal Convictions:** Paul teaches that it's important for each person to be convinced in their own mind about what they permit or avoid, emphasizing that they should act out of faith rather than doubt. Anything not from faith, he adds, is sin.



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#### Practical Takeaways for Today

1. **Respecting Others' Convictions:** In modern church communities, there will always be a diversity of practices and convictions, whether about music, media, or lifestyle choices. Paul's teaching urges us to see these differences as opportunities to demonstrate love, not as grounds for division.
2. **Putting Love First:** As Paul emphasizes, the Kingdom of God is about righteousness, peace, and joy, rather than insisting on our own way. Choosing to act in a way that honors the faith of others creates a unified, Christ-centered community.
3. **Trusting God as Judge:** Romans 14 reminds us that ultimately, God is the one who evaluates each believer. By keeping our focus on Him, we're freed from feeling the need to control or judge one another, creating space for true unity.

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# Equipping the Saints

## Course by Course

### BOOK OF ROMANS

#### LESSON 15 ROMANS 15 and 16

#### Romans 15

##### I. Living to **Please** Others (Romans 15:1-6)

- **Bear with One Another's Weaknesses** (v. 1-2)
  - a) Paul begins by encouraging believers who are “strong in faith” to bear with the weaknesses of others, particularly those who may be “weaker” in certain convictions. This doesn’t mean merely tolerating one another but actively supporting and encouraging each other in love.
  - b) **Relatable Insight:** Imagine a team where the strongest members help others reach their potential—Paul envisions the church this way, as a supportive family where people prioritize each other’s growth over their own preferences.
- **Following **Christ's** Example of Selflessness** (v. 3-4)
  - a) Jesus is the ultimate model for us, showing how to live selflessly for the sake of others. He bore rejection and criticism, not for His own benefit, but for ours.
  - b) Paul emphasizes that the Scriptures were written to give us hope, teaching, and endurance. In tough times, these stories of faith inspire us to hold on, just as Jesus did.
  - c) **Takeaway:** This section calls us to shift our focus outward—toward encouraging others, even when it’s challenging. This unselfish mindset brings unity to the church, and unity glorifies God.
- **Unity through God's Patience and Encouragement** (v. 5-6)
  - a) Paul prays that God, who is the source of endurance and encouragement, would help believers live in harmony. When we align our hearts with God’s, we can better walk in unity, regardless of our differences.
  - b) **Application:** Unity is not about being identical but about coming together with shared purpose and faith in Jesus, which is how we bring praise and glory to God.

##### II. Welcoming Gentiles as Full Members of God's Family (Romans 15:7-13)

- **Acceptance Reflects God's Glory** (v. 7)
  - a) Paul urges believers to welcome each other fully, just as Christ accepted us. This act of acceptance isn’t just friendly; it reflects God’s glory, showing the world His love and inclusivity.

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- b) **Insight:** When we truly accept each other—beyond differences in background or status—we’re putting God’s love into action. Every person is valued and included in His family.
  - **Scripture and God’s Promise to All Nations** (v. 8-12)
    - a) Paul explains how Jesus’ ministry fulfilled God’s promises to Israel while also extending those promises to the Gentiles. Citing the Old Testament, he emphasizes that God’s plan has always included all nations.
    - b) **Point to Remember:** God is a God of diversity and inclusion. The church should reflect this inclusivity by welcoming people from every background as equals in Christ.
  - **Overflowing with Joy, Peace, and Hope** (v. 13)
    - a) Paul prays that believers would be filled with joy, peace, and hope by trusting in God. This hope isn’t just optimism; it’s a deep confidence in God’s faithfulness.
    - b) **Relatable Takeaway:** In our world full of tension and division, God’s Spirit fills us with peace and hope that transcend circumstances. When we trust in Him, we experience an unshakable joy that spills over, blessing those around us.
- III. Paul’s Ministry and Missionary Heart (Romans 15:14-21)**
- **Paul’s Encouragement to the Romans** (v. 14-16)
    - a) Paul acknowledges the Roman believers’ goodness and knowledge, and he encourages them to continue teaching one another. He explains that God gave him the special role of bringing the gospel to the Gentiles as a “priestly duty.”
    - b) **Insight:** Paul sees his ministry not as a job but as an act of worship, treating his outreach to the Gentiles as a holy mission. This reminds us that sharing God’s love is an offering to Him, bringing honor and glory to His name.

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- **Boasting Only in Christ's Work** (v. 17-19)
  - a) Paul doesn't take credit for his ministry's success; he sees it as God's work through him. By relying on the Spirit's power, Paul has seen miracles that confirm God's message.
  - b) **Application:** Paul's humility is a model for us—he finds joy in knowing that God is working through him. Our accomplishments are not about us; they're evidence of God's presence and grace.
- **Desire to Share Where Christ is Unknown** (v. 20-21)
  - a) Paul expresses his passion for taking the gospel to places where people haven't yet heard of Jesus. His heart is to reach those who are unreached, fulfilling the prophecy that "those who have not heard will understand."
  - b) **Relatable Challenge:** Paul's example pushes us to look beyond our comfort zones, sharing God's love with those who might not have experienced it. It reminds us of the mission field right outside our doors.

#### IV. Paul's Plans to Visit Rome and Seek Their Support (Romans 15:22-33)

- **Paul's Travel Plans and His Heart for Unity** (v. 22-24)
  - a) Paul explains that he's been delayed in visiting Rome because he's been focused on sharing the gospel. However, he's now planning to visit on his way to Spain, showing his ongoing passion for reaching more people.
  - b) **Point of Reflection:** Even with his ambition, Paul prioritizes relationships, making time to strengthen the church in Rome. This balance of mission and community shows the value of fellowship among believers.
- **Financial Support for Jerusalem** (v. 25-27)
  - a) Paul explains his current mission: collecting an offering from Gentile churches to support the poor in Jerusalem. This gift is more than charity; it symbolizes unity between Jewish and Gentile believers.
  - b) **Takeaway:** Paul's commitment to help the Jewish believers demonstrates how the gospel moves us to meet practical needs. Generosity and unity go hand in hand, and giving is a form of worship.
- **Request for Prayer and Protection** (v. 28-33)
  - a) Paul asks the Romans to pray for his safety as he faces opposition and to pray that his ministry will be accepted by the believers in Jerusalem. He wants their support not just financially but spiritually, knowing the power of collective prayer.

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- b) **Relatable Insight:** Even the Apostle Paul, a spiritual giant, recognizes his need for prayer and community. This shows us that no one is above needing support and that prayer strengthens and unifies the church.

#### Key Takeaways from Romans 15

- **Sacrificial Love and Service**
  - Living for the benefit of others is central to following Jesus. Paul encourages believers to adopt a mindset of support, patience, and encouragement, reflecting Jesus' love in tangible ways.
- **Unity through Acceptance**
  - Genuine unity is built on mutual acceptance, not just tolerance. God's family includes all people who believe, and we glorify God when we embrace one another in love.
- **God's Power to Fill Us with Joy and Hope**
  - Trusting God brings a supernatural peace and hope that empowers us to navigate life's challenges and brings light to those around us. Paul reminds us that God's Spirit actively fills us with joy when we depend on Him.
- **A Heart for the Unreached**
  - Paul's desire to share the gospel where it hasn't been heard challenges us to think beyond ourselves and our comfort zones. The mission to reach others is essential, whether close by or far away.
- **The Power of Prayer and Generosity**
  - Paul values the partnership of the Romans, both in prayer and in resources, reminding us that the church thrives on collective support and shared vision. Prayer unites believers, empowering God's work.

#### SUMMARY

In **Romans 15**, Paul calls the church to embody Christ's love, to seek unity through acceptance, and to serve one another humbly. It's a call to action, reminding believers that their faith is lived out by supporting each other, reaching those who haven't heard the gospel, and staying united through prayer and generosity. This chapter encourages us to see our lives as an offering to God, filled with purpose, love, and a passion to reflect Jesus in all we do.

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## Course by Course

### BOOK OF ROMANS

#### Romans 16

Romans 16 serves as Paul's final chapter in his letter to the church in Rome, and it's a rich, heartfelt conclusion. Rather than ending with a standard closing, Paul takes this opportunity to recognize and honor specific individuals, highlighting the deep relationships he has cultivated with many believers. This chapter showcases the unity, diversity, and dedication within the early church, with Paul giving special appreciation to the faithful people who served alongside him in the gospel.

#### I. Personal **Greetings** and Acknowledgments (Romans 16:1-16)

- **Introduction of Phoebe (16:1-2):**
  - a) Paul begins with Phoebe, whom he commends as a servant (deacon) of the church in Cenchreae. He urges the church to welcome her and assist her as she has been a great help to many, including Paul himself.
  - b) *Takeaway:* Phoebe's role as a trusted servant and financial supporter underscores the importance of women in ministry, demonstrating how individuals can make meaningful contributions to the gospel regardless of gender or status.
- **Acknowledgment of Priscilla and Aquila (16:3-5a):**
  - a) Paul greets Priscilla and Aquila, calling them "co-workers in Christ Jesus" who risked their lives for him. They are also leaders who have established a church in their home, highlighting their dedication to the mission of Christ.
  - b) *Takeaway:* Priscilla and Aquila's courage and hospitality are inspiring reminders that true friendship and partnership in faith often require sacrifice and an open home. They model what it means to serve God through community.
- **Recognition of Other Believers (16:5b-15):**
  - a) Paul lists numerous individuals by name, each contributing to the church in their unique way. These names include Epenetus (the first convert in Asia), Andronicus and Junia (relatives who were fellow prisoners), and others whom Paul describes as beloved, hard-working, and faithful.
  - b) *Takeaway:* Paul's detailed recognition reflects his care for each member and underscores how personal ministry was for him. He knew people by name and valued their contributions, showing that every member of the body of Christ matters.

#### II. A **Warning** Against Divisive Individuals (Romans 16:17-20)

- **Avoiding Divisions (16:17-18):**

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- a) Paul advises the Roman believers to keep an eye on those who cause division and create obstacles contrary to the teachings they have learned. He describes such people as self-serving, using smooth talk to deceive others.
  - b) *Takeaway*: This warning encourages believers to be discerning about whom they trust and follow within the church community. Staying rooted in sound doctrine helps prevent being led astray by those with hidden agendas.
- **Promise of God's Victory (16:19-20):**
    - a) Paul expresses confidence in the obedience of the believers and encourages them to be wise about what is good and innocent about what is evil. He assures them that God will soon crush Satan under their feet.
    - b) *Takeaway*: Paul's reminder of God's ultimate victory provides hope and assurance to the church, reinforcing that faithfulness will result in triumph over evil. This assurance encourages us to stay grounded in faith, knowing that God's power is at work.

### III. Greetings from Paul's Co-Workers (Romans 16:21-23)

- **Recognition of Paul's Co-Laborers (16:21-23):**
  - Paul relays greetings from Timothy, his close co-worker, and other colleagues like Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, who were with him. These are individuals who worked closely with Paul and supported him in his ministry.
  - *Takeaway*: Paul's mention of his co-laborers shows the value of teamwork and collaboration in ministry. It's a reminder that impactful ministry is often the result of shared efforts and mutual support among believers.

### IV. Doxology – Praise to God for His Wisdom and Glory (Romans 16:25-27)

- **Glorifying God's Eternal Plan (16:25-27):**
  - Paul closes the letter with a doxology, a prayerful praise of God's wisdom and power. He speaks of the gospel and the mystery now revealed to all nations, pointing to God's eternal plan to bring salvation through Jesus Christ.
  - *Takeaway*: This closing doxology reflects Paul's awe at God's plan for humanity and His unwavering faithfulness. It emphasizes that the gospel is not just good news for individuals but part of a much larger, divine story meant to bring glory to God.

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#### Key Themes and Takeaways

1. **Unity** and Diversity in the Church:

- Paul's long list of names and personal greetings reflects the diversity within the early church—people from different backgrounds, genders, and social statuses who all contributed to the mission of Christ. The list shows that every member, regardless of role or recognition, is valuable in God's eyes.

2. **The Importance of Partnership in Ministry:**

- Paul's ministry wasn't a solo endeavor. He worked alongside many faithful believers who offered support, hospitality, and even risked their lives for the sake of the gospel. This highlights the importance of building strong relationships and partnerships within the body of Christ.

3. **Guarding** Against Division and False Teachings:

- Paul's caution against divisive individuals is a reminder that unity requires vigilance. Christians are called to be discerning, to avoid those who seek to harm the church, and to stay anchored in sound doctrine.

4. **Praise and Confidence in God's Sovereignty:**

- The doxology at the end of Romans 16 captures Paul's reverence for God's overarching plan and his confidence in God's sovereignty. It serves as a reminder that all our efforts in ministry are ultimately for God's glory and part of His redemptive plan for the world.

Romans 16 closes with a sense of fulfillment and joy, as Paul reflects on the collective work of the church and the individuals who made a difference. For believers today, this chapter calls us to recognize and honor each other, to guard against division, and to stand in awe of God's incredible plan that we're invited to be a part of.

#### NOTES

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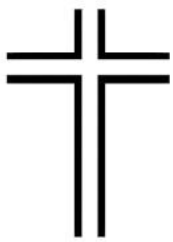
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