

**A STUDY OF
ROMANS**

HOPE FOR ALL



ONE FAITH
ONE FAMILY

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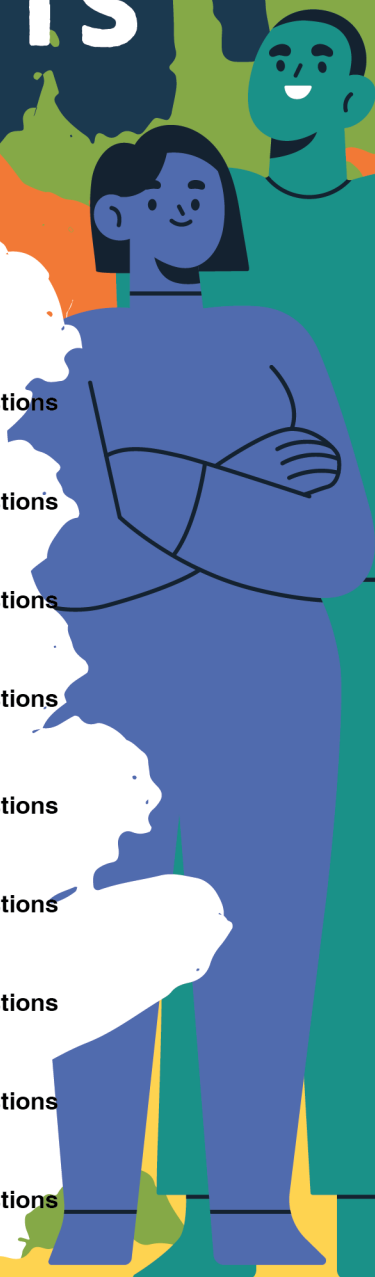
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CATCH ANY SERMON
YOU MISS. UPLOADED
WEEKLY.

southshores.org



HOPE FOR ALL

It was supposed to be just an easy-going hang-out for a few friends—celebrating the end of school and the start of summer. Just five buddies in a text group, sharing when (6 pm), where, (Doheny), and what each could bring (boards, grub, firewood). But somehow word spread. People overheard talking in the parking lot, a random post ends up on Instagram, texts start flying, and soon the entire school is invited.

At first, some of the original crew was bummed—they didn't have enough food or supplies, plus it was more crowded than desired. But something cool started to happen. BBQs ignited and coolers rolled out with an abundance of hot dogs, watermelon, and other snacks. Guys with guitars started jamming and the volleyball nets filled up with laughing classmates. People they never suspected to like the water, start playing in the waves. More than an exclusive surf posse, this was a spontaneous beach family. It wasn't what they planned, but it was becoming something far better than they imagined.

In a similar way, the people of Israel were part of an exclusive group—chosen by God with the promise of an amazing kingdom. While they were supposed to be the ones inviting the world in, they often focused on preserving their unique position. But God had other plans. Through Christ, God opened the door to the whole world—**“there is hope for all if you put your faith in Jesus!”** As the group opened up it became more beautiful, but also more complicated. So how does this new eclectic group handle the diversity showing up to the party? Will all those who embraced true hope through one faith come together as one family? In Romans 9-16, Paul tackles these questions head-on, helping us see how to navigate differences while staying rooted in Christ.

Our goal for this series is to discover the hope of Jesus for everyone and learn how it unites us as one family. The good news of Jesus is for all kinds of people. Let the party grow bigger, and better! It may get messy, but also more exciting, and we'll strive to stay united through it all. So come ready to dive into Romans, reflect on your own invitation to the party, and grow together in God's big, beautiful plan. **Hope for All—One Faith, One Family.**

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. — Romans 15:13

Grace & Peace,

Derick Zeulner

Associate Pastor
South Shores Church
dzeulner@southshores.org

A Simple Romans Outline

ROMANS

1-3:20

CONDEMNED

Sin, guilt, and condemnation.

3:21-5

SAVED

Justification by faith in Christ.

6-8

TRANSFORMED

Sanctification for those in Christ.

(Dealing with sin & suffering)

9-11

ONE FAITH

Promises for Jews and Gentiles.

12-16

ONE FAMILY

Conduct in the Church and in the World.

Introduction to Romans 9-16

By Craig. S. Keener

Israel's Role and Salvation (9:1-11:36)

These chapters pick up the issue of Israel addressed in 3:1-9. Paul has been addressing the relationship between Jew and Gentile in Christ throughout, and now must deal with the biblical evidence concerning God's purposes in history concerning Israel and the covenant.

Living the Christian Life (12:1-15:13)

As in some other letters, Paul addresses specific, practical questions in the church more directly after laying the theological groundwork that demands such behavior (thus his "therefore" in 12:1). If much of Paul's letter addresses the means of righteousness, 12:1-15:13 exemplifies what righteousness should look like in relationships. In the specific context of Israel (chs. 9-11), the issue of Jewish-Gentile relationships in Christ's body remains a central concern (especially obvious in 14:1-15:13). Teaching about serving one another (12:9-21) and the heart of the law as love for one another (13:8-10) provides the practical principles that connect Paul's emphasis on God's desire to form a people of both Jews and Gentiles (chs. 1-11, esp. 9-11) with the specific tensions the Roman congregations are facing (14:1-15:7).

Closing of Romans (15:14-16:27)

As in some other letters, Paul concludes with important closing business before turning to final greetings (Rom 16:1-16, 21-23), exhortations (16:17-20), and praise (16:25-27).

Craig S. Keener, Romans, New Covenant Commentary (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2009), 115, 142, 173.

SOMA

BIBLE STUDY METHOD

SOMA* is an easy-to-use Bible study method for jumping into a passage and mining its riches. This method can be repeated with any passage of the Bible and used for personal Bible reading, one-on-one bible study, and small group Bible study. Our hope and prayer is that our church body could learn this method over time and have confidence in reading the Bible on their own, as well as with others.

**Fun fact: 'Soma' is the Greek word for 'body,' which is really what this is all about: building up the body of Christ, the church.*

S Soak: Read the passage slowly asking the Holy Spirit to open it to you. We want to soak in it, marinate, steep in it, asking the Spirit to guide us into the scriptures and notice its surroundings.

We want to ask questions about the context of the passage in these areas:

- Genre: What kind of writing is this? Narrative? Poem? Letter?
- Circumstances: Who is writing this? To whom? Are there any clues as to why? Maybe the Israelites are worshipping idols again. Maybe Paul is in prison again. Is Jesus speaking to his disciples or the Pharisees?
- Connection to the rest of the story: Where does this passage fit in to the rest of the book? What has happened so far?

O Observe: Once we've soaked in passage, we want to make sure we are able to see all that is really there. Not interpreting, but taking note of what is present.

We want to ask observation questions of the text:

- What are the key words? Are there any words or ideas that are repeated?
- What do you learn about the main characters? How are they described by the author?
- Is time or place significant in this passage?
- Is there a conflict?
- Are there any surprises? Anything odd or unusual?
- Do you have any questions from the passage? Is there anything difficult to understand or something you'd like to ask the author?

M Meaning: Now that we've gotten familiar with the passage, knowing what is there, we want to get at its meaning. The meaning of the passage doesn't come from us, but from the author. Instead of asking questions like: "What does this passage mean to me?", we want to ask questions like: "What is the author trying to say?"

Here are some questions to help arrive at the meaning:

- What is the main point of the passage? What is the author really trying to get across?
- How could you sum up the meaning of this passage in your own words?
- What does this passage reveal about who Jesus is, and what he came into the world to do?
- What does this teach you about God?

For reading Romans, focus on:

- What hope is God offering through Jesus?
- What ought the transformed life look like?

A Apply: After trying to wrap our heads around the meaning of the passage, we want to seek to apply it to our lives. The goal of reading the Bible is transformation. We want to let the Word of God grow deep in us so that we can bear much fruit.

A helpful way to think about application is to ask questions about how it transforms our head (knowledge and beliefs), our heart (desires and attitudes), and our hands (actions and practices).

- Head: How does this passage challenge or confirm your beliefs?
- Heart: How does this passage challenge your desires and attitudes? Is there something you need to change?
- Hands: What does this passage tell us to go and do with our energy, time, and resources?
- Is there any response to this passage you feel that the Spirit is impressing upon you?

PRAYER: Finish your time in God's Word by using this passage as the subject of your prayer. Take time to thank God for what was learned and express your desire for His continued work of transformation in your life.



Week 1

Romans 9:1-29

But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, “Why have you made me like this?” — **Romans 9:20**

“The truth of Romans 9, interestingly, encouraged me to cry out to God for redemption.”

— Nick Batzig
The Gospel Coalition



Scan to read the post:
“Hope When Your Children Stray”

SERMON NOTES

WEEK 01 | April 27, 2025

BIG IDEA

NOTES

RESPONSE

HOPE FOR ALL

WEEK 01 DAILY DEVOTIONS

S Soak

Read the passage slowly **asking the Holy Spirit to open it to you.** What from its surroundings or style is important?

O Observe

Take note of what is there. What is going on? **What seems significant?** Do you have any questions you'd like to ask the author?

M Meaning

Think through **why this is in the Bible.** What is the author trying to say? What is the main point of the passage? What hope is God offering and how should we live?

A Apply

The **goal is transformation.** How will the meaning of this passage transform your head (knowledge/beliefs), heart (desires/attitudes), and hands (actions/habits)?

southshores.org/soma

Day 1

Romans 9:1-5

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Finish your time in prayer.

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Finish your time in prayer.

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Finish your time in prayer.

S**O****M****A***Finish your time in prayer.***S****O****M****A***Finish your time in prayer.*

Group Discussion

WEEK 01

INTRO DISCUSSION

What inspires you to do what you do? What is your motivation?

What's an example of someone who's family or background seemed to shape their future in a way that doesn't feel fair?

OPEN SHARING (use these questions to look back at your O, M & As of your devotions)

How did God get your attention this week in your devotional reading?

Was there any specific way you wanted to apply your reading into your life?

FINAL QUESTIONS

How does Paul feel about the people of Israel?

Why would some people think God failed His promises to Israel?

Why might some people think God unjust for showing mercy to some and not others?

What does this chapter answer for you and what does it leave as a mystery?

What is the purpose of those God has chosen?

PRAYER

Father, as You work out your plans for your own glory, we admit that we don't always get it. It's difficult for us to comprehend how You elect and choose, and yet we are still responsible for our choices. Yet we know this: You have mercy on whom You will have mercy, your purpose is to make known the riches of your glory for these vessels of mercy, and those who were once not your people, can become your people. So, help us to trust your goodness, mercy, and love, even as we wrestle with how You work in this world. Lead us in love, faith, and repentance. In Jesus, Amen.

Notes

WEEK 01

QUICK NOTES

Sovereignty of God

The biblical teaching that God possesses all power and is the ruler of all things (Ps. 135:6; Dan. 4:34–35). God rules and works according to His eternal purpose, even through events that seem to contradict or oppose His rule.

Scripture emphasizes God's rule in three areas: creation, human history, and redemption. Scripture testifies clearly to God's rule over His creation (Gen. 1; Mark 4:35–41; Rom. 8:20–21), including Christ's sustaining and governing of all things (Heb. 1:3, Col. 1:15–17). The Bible affirms also that God rules human history according to His purpose, from ordinary events in the lives of individuals (Judg. 14:1–4; Prov. 16:9, 33) to the rise, affairs, and fall of nations (Ps. 22:28; Hab. 1:6; Acts 17:26). Scripture depicts redemption as the work of God alone. God, according to His eternal purpose, takes the initiative in the provision and application of salvation and in enabling man's willing acceptance (John 17:2; Rom. 8:29–30; Eph. 1:3–14; 2 Thess. 2:13–14; 2 Tim. 1:9–10).

T. Preston Pearce, "Sovereignty of God," ed. Chad Brand et al., *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003), 1523.

Week 2

Romans 9:30-10:21

because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

— **Romans 10:9**

“If you care about people hearing the gospel, believing in Jesus, and calling upon his name then you cannot be indifferent to the twin tasks of “going and telling” and/or “supporting and sending.”

— Justin Taylor
The Gospel Coalition



Scan to read the post: "Answer: They Can't"

SERMON NOTES

WEEK 02 | May 4, 2025

BIG IDEA

NOTES

RESPONSE

HOPE FOR ALL

WEEK 02

DAILY DEVOTIONS

S Soak

Read the passage slowly **asking the Holy Spirit to open it to you.** What from its surroundings or style is important?

O Observe

Take note of what is there. What is going on? **What seems significant?** Do you have any questions you'd like to ask the author?

M Meaning

Think through **why this is in the Bible.** What is the author trying to say? What is the main point of the passage? What hope is God offering and how should we live?

A Apply

The **goal is transformation.** How will the meaning of this passage transform your head (knowledge/beliefs), heart (desires/attitudes), and hands (actions/habits)?

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Day 1

Romans 9:30-10:4

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Finish your time in prayer.

Day 2

Isaiah 8:12; 28:16-20

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Finish your time in prayer.

Day 3

Romans 10:5-13

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Finish your time in prayer.

S**O****M****A***Finish your time in prayer.***S****O****M****A***Finish your time in prayer.*

Group Discussion

WEEK 02

INTRO DISCUSSION

What's something you've worked really hard for, only to realize later there might have been an easier or better way to get it?

How do you see people trying to prove they're good enough—whether to themselves, others or even God? How have you done this?

OPEN SHARING (use these questions to look back at your O, M & As of your devotions)

How did God get your attention this week in your devotional reading?

Was there any specific way you wanted to apply your reading into your life?

FINAL QUESTIONS

If Israel cared about being righteous, why did they miss God's way to become righteous through faith in Christ?

How can Jesus be both the foundation stone and the stumbling stone?

According to Romans 10, what does it take to be saved? How does this fit with God's role in Romans 9?

How should these passages motivate us to spread the good news?

What did Israel's (the Jews) rejection of Jesus lead to?

PRAYER

Righteous God, it is humbling to contemplate the enormity of your gracious gift. What Israel sought through law-keeping, yet failed, You have given to us freely. Our hearts, freely accept that we cannot do it on our own. So instead, we confess that Jesus is Lord and we believe in our heart that You raise him from the dead. We will not be put to shame. Thank you for your salvation. Amen.

Notes

WEEK 02

QUICK NOTES

Human Will

The human will is our capacity for choice and action, which we can exercise for good or evil. The will is the human capacity to choose and to act responsibly. As such, it enables humans to respond to God's word in obedience or disobedience. For the Christian faith, the will of man is a necessary presupposition for the doctrine of sin and of man's responsibility for sin. It is only because humans have a will, because they are the author of their own actions, that they can be held responsible and can in fact sin.

While the human will is exercised in all sorts of mundane choices, it comes to the fore in Scripture as the capacity to act for or against God. In Scripture, while God is sovereign over history, the source of sin is not God but man. Man was created upright, but an act of man brought about the fall (Gen 3; Eccl 7:29). Thus, humans cannot blame fate or God for their temptation and their sin.

Christians who differ on the question of free will and its relationship to God's sovereignty nevertheless agree that humans are without excuse for sin but are fundamentally responsible. Some have argued that human freedom of will excludes the possibility of divine control or predetermination of human decisions; such predetermination would undermine human responsibility. Others have argued that God's control over events extends even to human decisions, yet without undermining human responsibility. In spite of these differences, both agree that human beings are responsible to obey God and are responsible for their sin.

Joel B. Carini, "Human Will," in *Lexham Survey of Theology*, ed. Mark Ward et al. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018).

Week 3

Romans 11:1-24

*So too at the present time there is
a remnant, chosen by grace.*

— **Romans 11:5**

“Whether we are born natural
branches (Jewish) or wild branches
(Gentile), all of us began life in need of
grafting.”

— Miriam

Life in Messiah



Scan to read the post: "Grafted Back In"



BIG IDEA

NOTES

RESPONSE

HOPE FOR ALL

WEEK 03 DAILY DEVOTIONS

S Soak

Read the passage slowly **asking the Holy Spirit to open it to you.** What from its surroundings or style is important?

O Observe

Take note of what is there. What is going on? **What seems significant?** Do you have any questions you'd like to ask the author?

M Meaning

Think through **why this is in the Bible.** What is the author trying to say? What is the main point of the passage? What hope is God offering and how should we live?

A Apply

The **goal is transformation.** How will the meaning of this passage transform your head (knowledge/beliefs), heart (desires/attitudes), and hands (actions/habits)?

southshores.org/soma

Day 1

Romans 11:1-10

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Finish your time in prayer.

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Finish your time in prayer.

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Finish your time in prayer.

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Finish your time in prayer.

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Finish your time in prayer.

Group Discussion

WEEK 03

INTRO DISCUSSION

Have you ever known someone whose future seemed hopeless, only for it to change drastically from what you expected?

What is your experience with or understanding of Judaism?

OPEN SHARING (use these questions to look back at your O, M & As of your devotions)

How did God get your attention this week in your devotional reading?

Was there any specific way you wanted to apply your reading into your life?

FINAL QUESTIONS

Why is it important for Paul to reference Elijah's encounter with God? What did Elijah need to learn?

Is God finished with national Israel (meaning descendants of Abraham by blood, not necessarily the national state today known as Israel)?

How should Christians respond to people of the Jewish faith? What should we look forward to?

In many ways the Jewish/Gentile divide of the first century was at least as big, if not bigger, than any race or ethnic divide in our world today. How has the gospel changed this divide? What kind of unity should be present in the church?

PRAYER

God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, You have always kept a remnant, a people called by your name who have remained faithful to You. Your promises always continue on, by your own grace. Thank You, that the Jewish rejection of Christ led to the preaching to the nations and riches for the world. But thank You still, that You have a plan for the descendants of Abraham to be grafted back in to your olive tree. You have a plan for Jews to come into your promises through faith in Christ. So that our peace in Jesus can also be their peace, and we can be fellow citizens and together the family of God. Amen.



Notes

WEEK 03

QUICK NOTES

The Olive Tree Analogy

Paul uses the olive tree analogy to make several important points:

- (1) The branches remain in, or are incorporated into, the tree only by faith (not because of ethnic or any other qualities).
- (2) The branches, even those grafted in, do not support the root but are entirely dependent on it; the life is in the root, branches of themselves can never constitute a tree.
- (3) The branches grafted in are brought in to share (Rom 11:17) the richness of the root—not to monopolize it or to displace all the other branches.
- (4) The in-grafted branches are not different in kind from the other branches because if they do not live in humble dependent faith they too will be broken off.
- (5) Even the broken-off branches (normally destined to wither or even to be burned), if they do not continue to disobey will be grafted in again—a truly unnatural, even miraculous activity.

The function served by the analogy here is primarily that of deflating the pompous self-image of the Gentile Christians, to insist that arrogance stands in contradiction to faith, to reaffirm the divine election of Israel and to maintain the unity of all God's people whether Jew or Gentile.

William S. Campbell, "Olive Tree," ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin, and Daniel G. Reid, *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 643.

Week 4

Romans 11:25-36

*Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!
How unsearchable are his judgments
and how inscrutable his ways!*

— **Romans 11:36**

“Some passages in Paul are difficult. But that doesn’t mean we should avoid them. On the contrary, passages that require digging are those that often yield diamonds.”

— Jared Compton
The Gospel Coalition



Scan to read the post: "What Does Paul Mean by 'All Israel Will Be Saved' in Romans 11:26?"

SERMON NOTES

WEEK 04 | May 18, 2025

BIG IDEA

NOTES

RESPONSE

HOPE FOR ALL

WEEK 04 DAILY DEVOTIONS

S Soak

Read the passage slowly **asking the Holy Spirit to open it to you.** What from its surroundings or style is important?

O Observe

Take note of what is there. What is going on? **What seems significant?** Do you have any questions you'd like to ask the author?

M Meaning

Think through **why this is in the Bible.** What is the author trying to say? What is the main point of the passage? What hope is God offering and how should we live?

A Apply

The **goal is transformation.** How will the meaning of this passage transform your head (knowledge/beliefs), heart (desires/attitudes), and hands (actions/habits)?

southshores.org/soma

Day 1

Romans 11:25-27

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Finish your time in prayer.

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Finish your time in prayer.

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Finish your time in prayer.

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Finish your time in prayer.

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Finish your time in prayer.

Group Discussion

WEEK 04

INTRO DISCUSSION

How do you react when one group of people get the benefit that another was expecting for themselves?

Who are some people or things that amaze you? Why?

OPEN SHARING (use these questions to look back at your O, M & As of your devotions)

How did God get your attention this week in your devotional reading?

Was there any specific way you wanted to apply your reading into your life?

FINAL QUESTIONS

How can Israel be "enemies" and "beloved" at the same time?

In the Ephesians passage, what is the mystery and eternal purpose of God?

Do chapters 9-11 lead you to praise or confusion? What adjustment can you make so you respond with reverence to God's wisdom, purpose, and plans?

How could a Romans 11:36 perspective radically change how you live?

Paul's quotation comes from Isaiah 55. How do you see the blending of human responsibility and God's sovereign purpose?

PRAYER

Oh, the depth and riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are your judgments and how inscrutable your ways! We do not know your mind, we are not capable of giving You advice, we cannot repay You for your gifts. Yet, You call us fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel! Now, through the church may the manifold wisdom of God be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places, according to your eternal purposes through Christ Jesus our Lord, to the glory of the Father. Amen.

Notes

WEEK 04

QUICK NOTES

God's Wisdom

God's wisdom is the perfect divine judgment and insight arising from his infinite knowing—and this wisdom is something he shares with his creatures according to their need and for their good.

The wisdom of God is deeply embedded in his works in creation and in the story of redemption. The wisdom of God is evident in all his divine purposes and decrees, and it is perfectly embodied in his Son, the divine Logos, “in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col 2:3). God is “omnisapient,” all wise. God is omniscient, omnipotent, immutable, and self-sufficient in his being and wisdom, but he is not a collection of transcendent forces. He is a person, a person whose wisdom is put on display via his providence within history.

The wisdom of God is God fully exercising his infinite knowledge, and yet it is his delight to share this wisdom with his finite creatures. Wisdom is a communicable attribute of God. Humans therefore have the capacities for reason, logic, perception, creativity, anticipation, and many more. Wisdom is right reason, right logic, right perception, etc. We are promised blessings if we will use these capacities in wisdom.

The Scripture teaches that “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Prov 9:10; cf. Job 28:28; Ps 111:10). True discernment and godly insight come only from a right affection toward the ultimate source of these qualities.

Mark Olivero, “God’s Wisdom,” in *Lexham Survey of Theology*, ed. Mark Ward et al. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018).

Week 5

Romans 12:1-21

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

— **Romans 12:2**

“The renewed mind is marked by a reliance on the Bible, the only infallible rule for faith and practice.”

— Chris Larson
TableTalk Magazine



Scan to read the article:
"A Renewed Mind, A Transformed Life"

BIG IDEA

NOTES

RESPONSE

S Soak

Read the passage slowly **asking the Holy Spirit to open it to you.** What from its surroundings or style is important?

O Observe

Take note of what is there. What is going on? **What seems significant?** Do you have any questions you'd like to ask the author?

M Meaning

Think through **why this is in the Bible.** What is the author trying to say? What is the main point of the passage? What hope is God offering and how should we live?

A Apply

The **goal is transformation.** How will the meaning of this passage transform your head (knowledge/beliefs), heart (desires/attitudes), and hands (actions/habits)?

southshores.org/soma

Day 1

Romans 12:1-2

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Finish your time in prayer.

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Finish your time in prayer.

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Finish your time in prayer.

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Finish your time in prayer.

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Finish your time in prayer.

Group Discussion

WEEK 05

INTRO DISCUSSION

If you asked a non-believing friend or coworker to describe a Christian in five words, what would they say?

If you had to use five words to describe a Christian, what would you say? How do the two lists compare?

OPEN SHARING (use these questions to look back at your O, M & As of your devotions)

How did God get your attention this week in your devotional reading?

Was there any specific way you wanted to apply your reading into your life?

FINAL QUESTIONS

Paul has spent eleven chapters explaining sin, salvation, transformation, and the promise-keeping ways of God. How should this inspire us to live?

Why does God give different gifts within the church body? What do you think your function is within this body?

What character qualities are important for keeping unity within our diversity of strengths? How is Jesus our example?

Paul gives a long list of commands about how to relate to others. Pick one that is a strength and pick one that you specifically need God's help with. Share with your group why you picked those commands.

PRAYER

Merciful God, may our lives be to You holy and acceptable, our spiritual worship. Renew our thinking, so we may discern your will—what is good and acceptable and perfect. Thank You for the grace given to me so that I may benefit the body. Help me to appreciate and think well of the others in our church body. Restrain me from selfish ambition, let my love be genuine, abhorring evil and holding fast to what is good. And in all things, may I do them in the name of Jesus and in thankfulness to You. Amen.

Notes

WEEK 05

QUICK NOTES

Body of Christ

A metaphor for the whole church—the unity of believers connected with and dependent on Christ. God’s people are thus said to be members of Christ’s “mystical body” (1 Cor. 12:27), in fellowship with Christ, and spiritually nourished by Him (Eph. 5:25, 29).

“Body of Christ,” was often used by Paul to remind a local church that it was a vital part of the larger body (Rom. 12:4–5). Paul taught the Corinthian Christians that they, individually and collectively, were part of the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27)—all baptized by one Spirit into that one body (Eph. 5:30). The Bible tells us that each member of the body of Christ has been given spiritual gifts with which to serve Christ in the body (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:11). The gifts are given “for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ” (Eph. 4:12–13, nasb). Christ sustains all of us, and we are given gifts to sustain other members of the Church. We should continue growing as we strive together to be unified in our head and Lord, Jesus Christ.

Eugene E. Carpenter and Philip W. Comfort, *Holman Treasury of Key Bible Words: 200 Greek and 200 Hebrew Words Defined and Explained* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 240.

Week 6

Romans 13:1-34

*Love does no wrong
to a neighbor; therefore love
is the fulfilling of the law.*
— **Romans 13:10**

“Paul is not suggesting that his readers be doormats. Indeed, his own life bears witness to the idea that submission and compliance are not the same thing.”

— Tim Milosch
Providence Magazine



Scan to read the article: "Our Political Theology
Shouldn't Start at Romans 13"

BIG IDEA

NOTES

RESPONSE

S Soak

Read the passage slowly **asking the Holy Spirit to open it to you.** What from its surroundings or style is important?

O Observe

Take note of what is there. What is going on? **What seems significant?** Do you have any questions you'd like to ask the author?

M Meaning

Think through **why this is in the Bible.** What is the author trying to say? What is the main point of the passage? What hope is God offering and how should we live?

A Apply

The **goal is transformation.** How will the meaning of this passage transform your head (knowledge/beliefs), heart (desires/attitudes), and hands (actions/habits)?

southshores.org/soma

Day 1

Romans 13:1-7

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Finish your time in prayer.

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Finish your time in prayer.

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Finish your time in prayer.

S**O****M****A***Finish your time in prayer.***S****O****M****A***Finish your time in prayer.*

Group Discussion

WEEK 06

INTRO DISCUSSION

What are the potential benefits and drawbacks of government?

In regards to authorities, how do you decide when to go along or when to push back?

OPEN SHARING (use these questions to look back at your O, M & As of your devotions)

How did God get your attention this week in your devotional reading?

Was there any specific way you wanted to apply your reading into your life?

FINAL QUESTIONS

Nero was the Roman emperor when Paul wrote these words. How does that affect your understanding of the passage?

Both Paul and Peter highlight the need for Christians to submit to governmental rule. When would it be appropriate to resist their authority? (See Acts 5:27-29)

How does love fulfill the law?

Since the coming of Christ, we are in the last days of salvation history. Why should this provoke us to live one way and not another?

How does your faith in Christ impact the way you live? What does it change?

PRAYER

To the Authority over all authorities, we lift up the various heads of state that You have appointed to be a terror to bad conduct, and a supporter of good. Guide the leaders in our city, state, and federal governments, turn their heart towards righteousness, and help them to pass fair laws for the flourishing of their citizens. As for us, help us to choose love, and thereby fulfill the law. Help us to cast off the darkness, and put on the light. May we walk as children of light and know and choose what is pleasing to our Lord. Amen.

Notes

WEEK 06

QUICK NOTES

Government in Paul's Time

Four emperors reigned during Paul's lifetime. He was born during the reign of Tiberius (AD 14–37), converted to Christianity during the reign of Gaius Caligula (37–41), and ministered mostly during the reigns of Claudius (41–54) and Nero (54–68). By the time of Paul the office of emperor was not simply “first among equals,” but dictator. Claudius and Nero are the emperors most significant in the consideration of Paul's ministry and letters.

Emperor Claudius. Tiberius Claudius Nero Germanicus (10 BC – AD 54) received little notice in the reigns of Augustus or Tiberius. Paul met Priscilla and Aquila as a result of Claudius's edict that expelled Jews from Rome (AD 49; Acts 18:1–2).

Emperor Nero. Nero Claudius Caesar (AD 37–68) was the emperor first known to have persecuted Christians and was reigning at the time of Paul's execution. When Nero acceded to the throne in AD 54, he was under the influence of his powerful mother, Agrippina. During his first five years, the influence of Seneca and Burrus lead to helpful legislation and competent governors were appointed. It must be noted that Paul wrote Romans 13:4 in the context of his directives on civil obedience during this period of Nero's reign. But in AD 59, Nero began to lead as he wished. In 64 Nero was suspected of starting the great fire in Rome in order to build a bigger palace. He blamed the fire on Christians and began executing them. It is probable that Paul was executed c. AD 64–65 after trial in Nero's court.

Mark Reasoner, “Political Systems,” ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin, and Daniel G. Reid, *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 722.

Week 7

Romans 14:1-23

Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.

— **Romans 14:10**

“Our unity does not come from uniformity of thought, but from having the same Savior, the same mission, and the same love for one another.”

— Rhyne Putnam
Credo Magazine



Scan to read the article: "Addressing Fraternal Disagreements in the Body of Christ"

SERMON NOTES

WEEK 07 | June 8, 2025

BIG IDEA

NOTES

RESPONSE

HOPE FOR ALL

WEEK 07 DAILY DEVOTIONS

S Soak

Read the passage slowly **asking the Holy Spirit to open it to you.** What from its surroundings or style is important?

O Observe

Take note of what is there. What is going on? **What seems significant?** Do you have any questions you'd like to ask the author?

M Meaning

Think through **why this is in the Bible.** What is the author trying to say? What is the main point of the passage? What hope is God offering and how should we live?

A Apply

The **goal is transformation.** How will the meaning of this passage transform your head (knowledge/beliefs), heart (desires/attitudes), and hands (actions/habits)?

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Day 1

Romans 14:1-4

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Finish your time in prayer.

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Finish your time in prayer.

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Finish your time in prayer.

S**O****M****A***Finish your time in prayer.***S****O****M****A***Finish your time in prayer.*

Group Discussion

WEEK 07

INTRO DISCUSSION

When have you seen people divide over an issue of personal preference?

Have you ever felt conflicted about doing something you believed was okay, but were worried about what others would think? How did you work through it?

OPEN SHARING (use these questions to look back at your O, M & As of your devotions)

How did God get your attention this week in your devotional reading?

Was there any specific way you wanted to apply your reading into your life?

FINAL QUESTIONS

Why would the person who is weak in faith eat only vegetables?

Paul sides with the 'strong' in view of eating meat, and yet, what does he warn those who are strong in faith not to do? Why not?

How do these passages help you form an understanding of the importance of personal conscience?

When should you sacrifice your own liberty for the sake of another's conscience? What are some practical examples of this?

PRAYER

God, You welcome the weak in faith, and You welcome the strong, both alike. In life and in death, we belong to You. You are the Lord and Master of us all, and to You alone will we give an account. Therefore, help us not to pass judgment on one another, nor to put forward any stumbling blocks to faith, if we can help it. Let us not grieve one another, but rather walk in love and pursue what makes for peace and the building up of the church even with our personal freedom. Amen.

Notes

WEEK 07

QUICK NOTES

Strong and Weak

In Romans 14–15 Paul addressed problems between “strong” and “weak” Christians. The strong were exercising their rights and freedom to the detriment of more scrupulous believers whom they considered had a weak faith. Against a background of anti-Semitism common in first century Rome, apparently some Gentile believers ridiculed more conservative Jewish Christians, whom they perceived as weak in faith for their dietary and calendrical scruples; the weak responded by passing judgment on the strong. They felt no compulsion to abandon their Jewish heritage, and their differences made communal meals and worship occasions of conflict. Paul did not doubt their motivation. Paul clearly agreed with the strong that food in itself is religiously indifferent. But Paul did not try to persuade the weak; his aim was mutual respect and acceptance of one another. Paul was not making the strong captive to the foibles of the weak. The strong were to refrain from eating meat not because others objected or were offended, but because the weak were in danger of compromising their integrity by succumbing to the temptation to adopt practices they fundamentally believed to be wrong. Additionally, to act in a way that lays a stumbling block before another for whom Christ died is not to walk according to the way of love which builds up both the individual and the community. Behind the call to set the neighbor’s interests above one’s own lies the example and teaching of Jesus.

Michael B. Thompson, “Strong and Weak,” ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin, and Daniel G. Reid, *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 916–917.

Week 8

Romans 15:1-33

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

— **Romans 15:13**

“Jesus led the way in serving a people and culture not his own—laying down his life for those so different from himself. Now he summons you and me to do the same. ”

— Naselli & Crowley
The Gospel Coalition



Scan to read the article: "The Greatest Missionary of All Time"



SERMON NOTES

WEEK 08 | June 15, 2025

BIG IDEA

NOTES

RESPONSE

HOPE FOR ALL

WEEK 08

DAILY DEVOTIONS

S Soak

Read the passage slowly **asking the Holy Spirit to open it to you.** What from its surroundings or style is important?

O Observe

Take note of what is there. What is going on? **What seems significant?** Do you have any questions you'd like to ask the author?

M Meaning

Think through **why this is in the Bible.** What is the author trying to say? What is the main point of the passage? What hope is God offering and how should we live?

A Apply

The **goal is transformation.** How will the meaning of this passage transform your head (knowledge/beliefs), heart (desires/attitudes), and hands (actions/habits)?

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Day 1

Romans 15:1-7

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Finish your time in prayer.

S**O****M****A***Finish your time in prayer.***S****O****M****A***Finish your time in prayer.*

Group Discussion

WEEK 08

INTRO DISCUSSION

Tell about a time you put someone else's needs or quirks ahead of your own comfort. What was the result?

How do you see yourself part of the global mission of Christ?

OPEN SHARING (use these questions to look back at your O, M & As of your devotions)

How did God get your attention this week in your devotional reading?

Was there any specific way you wanted to apply your reading into your life?

FINAL QUESTIONS

How does Christ's example fight against our own inclination to please ourselves?

How is this related to harmony within the church?

How did Christ's mindset lead to 'hope for all'?

What imagery from the Isaiah passage captures your attention?

How would you describe Paul's mission and calling? What of this is unique to Paul and what is for all believers?

Paul's desires is to visit Jerusalem, and then Rome on the way to Spain. How will his plans change? What does this say about his mission, prayer, and God's plan?

PRAYER

To the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit we may abound in hope. In hope, help us to bear with the failings of the weak, and not please ourselves. Let us imitate Christ who took on our criticism, so we may live to please and build up others. Strengthen our eyes so that we may endure, confident in the new world that Christ is establishing. And may we find confidence in our calling to share the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit with those God places in our path. Amen.

Notes

WEEK 08

QUICK NOTES

Root of Jesse

Figure of speech used by (Isaiah 11:10) to express the hope of a messianic king from the line of David. The “root” of a family is its progenitor. Jesse, David’s father, is listed as an ancestor of the Messiah. Isaiah pictures God’s judgment upon Assyria as the cutting down of a forest (Is 10:33, 34); Judah likewise will be felled and the proud tree of David’s sovereignty hewn down, but a remnant will remain, described by Isaiah as a shoot from a stump (Is 6:13). The messianic shoot will come forth from the stump of Jesse as a branch from his roots. The Spirit of the Lord will rest upon this one who stands as an ensign to the peoples, so that the nations will seek him in the glory of his dwelling place.

The apostle Paul, quoting Isaiah’s prophecy, identified Jesus as “the root of Jesse” in whom the Gentiles hope (Rom 15:12). Christ is not only “a shoot from the stump of Jesse” (Is 11:1), but is himself the “root of Jesse” because the family of Jesse would have perished had it not borne within itself the vitality of the Messiah who was to come from it.

The expression “the root of Jesse” suggests Christ’s humanity, because of his earthly ancestry; his humiliation, because of the degree to which the royal house of David was humbled; and the hope offered to Israel and the gentile nations, because of his coming to establish righteousness and peace and to fill the earth with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, “Jesse, Root Of,” *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 1140–1141..

Week 9

Romans 16:1-27

*The God of peace will soon crush
Satan under your feet. The grace of
our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.*

— **Romans 16:20**

*“Greet one another as a family, because
in Christ you are family.”*

— Kristine Nethers
The Gospel Coalition



Scan to read the post:
"How (and Why) to Greet Like Paul"

BIG IDEA

NOTES

RESPONSE

S Soak

Read the passage slowly **asking the Holy Spirit to open it to you.** What from its surroundings or style is important?

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M Meaning

Think through **why this is in the Bible.** What is the author trying to say? What is the main point of the passage? What hope is God offering and how should we live?

A Apply

The **goal is transformation.** How will the meaning of this passage transform your head (knowledge/beliefs), heart (desires/attitudes), and hands (actions/habits)?

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Day 1

Romans 16:1-16

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Finish your time in prayer.

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Finish your time in prayer.

Group Discussion

WEEK 09

INTRO DISCUSSION

Who are some people that have helped make you who you are today? What would you like to say to them?

When have you seen a group get thrown off track by someone stirring up trouble?

OPEN SHARING (use these questions to look back at your O, M & As of your devotions)

How did God get your attention this week in your devotional reading?

Was there any specific way you wanted to apply your reading into your life?

FINAL QUESTIONS

Why do you think Paul uses so much space to greet specific people?

Why do you think Paul's final instructions are regarding divisive people?

Churches today work very hard to be welcoming. How can we balance an open door with the wisdom Paul commends?

Jesus was also focused on the unity of believers. How can you make this part of your prayer life?

Where should the church find its strength? How can we be steadfast in that?

PRAYER

Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

Notes

WEEK 09

QUICK NOTES

Church Unity

Church unity is the spiritual union of the redeemed through the indwelling of the Spirit, which manifests in the visible gathering of the faithful.

The followers of Christ have always confessed the existence of only one universal church. In the New Testament, the church is often described as a unified body, joined together through the person and work of Jesus Christ. Just as there is only one Lord, there is also only one faith, one baptism, and one Spirit unifying the faithful (Eph 4:4–6). In the Gospel of John, the Lord describes the church as “one flock” and prays to the Father that the church “may be one even as we are one” (John 10:16; 17:22–23). Likewise, the apostle Paul often uses the image of the unity of the human body to characterize the cohesive nature of the church (1 Cor 12:12–31), and he urges them to maintain “the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph 4:3). He also lifts up the quality of “love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony” (Col 3:14). The book of Acts illustrates this loving unity with a stirring picture of the early church united in worship, in service, and even in holding goods in common (Acts 4:32).

In the New Testament all local and visible gatherings of the church are considered expressions of the one invisible and universal church. The church, therefore, is necessarily diverse sociologically, ethnically, and historically, because it comprises all those who confess the same Lord and are unified through the indwelling of the same Spirit.

Stephen Presley, “The Church’s Unity,” in *Lexham Survey of Theology*, ed. Mark Ward et al. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018).

ROMANS 15:13



**May the God of hope
fill you with
all joy and peace
in believing,
so that by the power
of the Holy Spirit
you may abound
in hope.**

**HOPE
FOR
ALL**

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