# RWM Journal Romans 8

## **RWM Journal**

Reading, Writing and Meditating on God's Word: Romans 8

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# To the faithful members of Church At The Square Your constant striving after the word with me for the last ten years means more to me than you will ever know. -Pastor Bryan

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#### What is RWM?

For the last 10 years our church has celebrated Reformation Day (October31st). We don't set aside the last Sunday in October, however. We take the whole month and saturate ourselves with the Word of God. Afterall, the point of the Reformation for protestants today is that we have access to God's Word. We can read the Scriptures in various translations or listen to it on our phones. You can purchase a bible in any size, color, or binding you desire. We have unprecedented access to God's Word, but how many people neglect their Bibles?

To counter our temptation to neglect the Word, we set aside the full month of October, 31 days, and dive into reading the Scriptures. The goal is to read as much of the Bible as possible. We have had many church members read all 66 books during our Reformation Month Challenge. We add up our individual chapters as a church to reach a reading goal. The first year we worked hard to read 4,000 chapters collectively as a church. Last year (2021) we easily passed our 20,000-chapter goal. To reach our reading goals, some people read 10 chapters a day. Some read more than 30 chapters a day. Many download an audio Bible and redeem their commutes. For everyone, the reading quantity and frequency increases dramatically during that month.

Every year someone asks me if reading the Bible quickly is actually a good way to read the Bible. Wouldn't it make more sense to take it slowly and study the context as you go? Reading the Bible slowly is an effective way to learn the Scriptures. I wouldn't deny that to anyone. But I believe that it is extremely helpful to read the Scriptures in a fast-paced way as well. When you read the Bible quickly, you see the stories in a powerful way. Consider how you watch a movie or a TV show. Our culture has coined a phrase to describe how we watch stories unfold:

binge-watching. I've been known to sit down with the kids on a lazy Saturday after a busy week and watch all three Lord of the Rings Extended Editions in one sitting. I know you can't pass judgment because you do the same thing, though maybe with a different movie or show. Consider the reverse. Would you sit down and watch those movies in 10-minute increments? It would take you a year. And when you finally finished the story, you wouldn't remember how everything was connected.

I'm not saying that we should always read the Bible in high volume, however. Your regular diet on the Word of God should be smaller meals. For Christians through the centuries a daily quiet time was the preferred method for reading the Bible. Some people read several chapters each day. Some people read a paragraph. Some only read a verse. It's not that there is a right and wrong speed or quantity for your Bible reading. These are just different tools that serve different ends. Reading large volumes helps you see the big picture and connect the dots. Reading slowly aids your understanding of specific teachings. Fast and slow, large and small are not the only two comparisons. There is another way to read the Word that also produces fruit.

This brings us to RWM. For the last several years I've felt like our Reformation Celebration needed a resurrection counterpart. Afterall, the resurrection of Christ is far more important than the reformation. Our church gets excited to celebrate the Word of God and its power for transformation. I wanted to stir up the same kind of excitement for the resurrection. It was during a conversation about our 2022 Resurrection Sunday plans that Yogi sparked an idea that led to this year's Resurrection Celebration. Instead of spending a month reading as much of the word as we can, what if we spent that month focusing on one text, the opposite of Reformation Month? RWM was born.

The three letters stand for read, write, and meditate. Reading the word of God is fundamental for every Christian as we develop our understanding of the faith and the mission God has placed on our faith family. The Scriptures command us to read the scriptures, both publicly as a church, and individually. The Apostle Paul said, "until I come, devote yourself to the **public reading of Scripture**, to exhortation, to teaching" (1 Timothy 4:13 emphasis added). John, exiled on Patmos, declared, "blessed is the one who **reads aloud** the words of this prophecy" (Rev. 1:3 emphasis added). Did you catch that? "Reads aloud." Reading out loud works differently from reading in your head. This year we are going to read Romans chapter 8 every day, out loud.

In addition to reading the Word we will write the Word. When God spoke to Moses in the wildness, before the people entered the promised land, he gave him

specific instructions for when Israel had a king. Moses said that when the King was installed on his throne, he would be responsible to "write for himself in a book a copy of this law" (Deut. 17:18). His personal copy of the law would help him, "learn to fear the Lord his God" so that, "his heart may not be lifted up against his brothers" (verses 19 and 20). God required the king of Israel to write his own copy of law so that his heart would be guarded against sin. Romans 8 has 39 verses. That's one for every day of our journey, plus one. Every day after reading chapter 8 out loud, you will write out the verse of the day, verbatim, punctuation and all.

After reading and writing the Word, we will spend the rest of our devotional time meditating on the word of God. Meditation has always been part of the Christian tradition. The Old Testament psalms are filled with both exhortations to meditate and examples of meditation. The writer of Psalm 119 says that God's Word "is my meditation all the day" (verse 97). In Hebrew poetry, rather than rhyming the ends of phrases, the poets used parallelism, where a statement would be restated with different words. Psalm 51 has a good example of this. David says, "create in me a clean heart" and parallels that with "renew a steadfast spirit within me" (verse 10). Cleaning his heart and renewing his spirit are saying the same thing—it's two ways of talking about purification after his sin. In the same way the psalmist of Psalm 119 uses meditation in parallel with delight. The psalmist says, "I meditate on your precepts" and in the next line, "I will delight in your statutes" (verses 15 and 16).

Meditation and delight aren't usually synonymous in our culture. We think about meditation as emptying the mind. Biblical meditation is better understood as filling the mind. It is like when we enjoy a good book or new movie and spend the next hour thinking it over. When I finish a good book, I like to rehash the story in my mind. I like to think about the characters and why they did what they did. It's the same thing when we meditate on God's word. Rehash the story. Think about not only what the truth is, but how it works. Meditation is also the primary way we make meaningful application to our lives. After reading and writing the word, we will conclude each devotional time with a time of mediation.

The specific tool for meditation that we recommend is journaling. Writing down your thoughts forces you to solidify your thinking. Our minds can be very complicated, and our thoughts can be complex. Writing our thoughts on paper force our minds to clean up our thinking and pinpoint our ideas. In the guide that follows we have written a short paragraph to get your meditation started. After thinking for a few moments, we encourage you to write your thoughts down.

The following pages are a tool. I hope you will take advantage. I know that God's Word produces transformation. I look forward to this journey, and I hope you do too!

#### Instructions

For the next 40 days you will be spending time with the 8<sup>th</sup> chapter of Romans. Read through the following instructions to get an idea of when you need to do each day of this journey. Each day you will practice three disciplines:

**Read the Word**. Each day of this journey you will read Romans chapter 8, all 39 verses. We strongly encourage you to read the passage out loud, clearly, and slowly. The point is not to get finished quickly. Take the time to read it accurately. Once you have finished, check the box to mark it completed.

Write the Word. The scripture reference is given for each day. Open your Bible and copy word for word, letter for letter, punctuation, and all, to the provided section of your page. After copying the verse, spend time thinking through the content.

**Meditate on the Word**. We recommend this process. First, **Reflect** on what was said. Write it in your own words. Then, **React** to the word. Write out what comes to mind after reading this passage. Finally, **Respond** to the word. Write down what you need to do today to respond to what God is saying in the word.

You don't have to be rigid with your structure. Use this as a tool to grow in the word. Do your best to stick to a daily practice. Don't beat yourself up if you fall short and miss a day or two. Instead, dive back into the process. The goal is transformation, not perfection.

Write Romans	8:1
Thoughts for N	Meditation
condemnation be you meditate on longer binding or	omans 8:1 has been felt throughout the centuries. We have no fore God. Our sin and guilt are gone. We are free in Christ. As the Word today, think about the joy of knowing your sin is no n you. God has completely forgiven us in Christ. Consider why as "now" and "therefore." What is condemnation?
Journal	

Write Romans 8:2
Thoughts for Meditation  The reason condemnation is removed from the believer is that Christ has set of free by the work of the Holy Spirit. Note how Paul compares the law of the Spiriand the law of sin and death. One law brings death. One law brings life. One law imprisons. One law sets us free. Which law are you following?  Journal

Write Romans 8:3
Thoughts for Meditation  God accomplished redemption through Christ by condemning sin. This is when Christ came in the flesh—to be sin for us, to die for us. He took our sin that we may be set free from the power and dominion of sin. The law could never free to from sin. The law could only reveal our sin. Take time to confess your sin and praise God for taking it away from you.
Journal

Write Roma	.ns 8:4
The righte Spirit of God resurrection, t declaration the that we live w	or Meditation ous requirement of the law is Christlikeness. Now, because of the linside us, and because of Christ's work on the cross and in the chat requirement is met in us. We can talk about justification, or the at we are already righteous. But this verse is about the righteousness then we walk according to the Spirit. It is now possible for us to be ow do we walk according to the Spirit?

Write Romans 8:5
Thoughts for Meditation  There is a direct correlation between your external actions and your internation. If you follow the spirit, your life will be marked by His fruit (Gal. 5:22 If you follow the flesh, your life will be marked by ungodliness (Gal. 5:19). Since the determining factor is not on the outside the area of focus should be our internation. How do we set our minds on the things of the Spirit?
Journal

Write Romans 8:6	
Thoughts for Meditation  When we set our mind on the flesh, we cannot set our mind on the spirit. The are mutually exclusive. The death that comes from the flesh is not instant, b gradual. When the mind is set on the flesh, we walk towards our own corruption step by step. With each move we become less aware of our coarse and numb to o destruction. The solution is simple: set your mind on the Spirit. Seek his will favour life. Saturate your mind with Christ and his work. The deadness of sin will destroyed, and our spirits will receive new life as we walk in communion with His	out on ur or be

Write Romans 8:7
Thoughts for Meditation  Paul explains three states of the mind set on the flesh. First, it is hostile towards. We may excuse ourselves to that accusation, but we are more hostile than give credit. We are often hostile to God's plan, callus towards God's mission, a neglectful of God's commands. Secondly, when the mind is set on the flesh, we not submit to God. But third, Paul says we cannot submit to God. As we walk the flesh we walk further away from obedience.  Journal

Write Romans 8:8
Thoughts for Meditation
The author of Hebrews says, "without faith it is impossible to please God" (Heb.
11:6). Paul states the corresponding truth in this verse. The opposite of faith is the
flesh. When our minds are set on the flesh, we are refusing to believe any of the
promises of God. We reject his faithfulness and attempt to walk our own path. This does not please God.
5545 P
Journal

Write Romans 8	:9
Spirit dwells in us, spirit dwells in us h	adoption in Christ is the presence of the Holy Spirit. If the Holy we cannot continue to walk according to the flesh. When the ne is claiming ownership over our lives. The seal declares God's eone doesn't have the seal of the Holy Spirit, that person is not
Journal	

Write Romans 8:10
Thoughts for Meditation  The righteousness of God is one of the primary themes of Romans. Paul declared that in the Gospel, the righteousness of God is revealed that comes from faith. This righteousness ca be understood on two levels. First, it is the declaration based on the completed work of Christ, that we are righteous in God's eyes Secondly, it is the medicine that the Spirit administers to us that transforms us into the image of Christ. It is the double cure that saves from God's wrath and makes us pure.
Journal

Write Roma	ns 8:11		
The analyte Co	n Moditation		
This verse the spirit, and power that rai gospel to bring grants us new us new glorifie	our future transform sed Jesus from the dea ng life transformation.	nation into our rad is at work in use. It conquers the will eventually ra	our present transformation is resurrected bodies. The same is to apply to the power of the deadness of our hearts and dise us from the dead and give lory.
Jou <del>r</del> nal			

Write Romans 8:12
Thoughts for Meditation
We are debtors. We owe Christ our lives. We live by his grace and for his glor The flesh has no power or ownership of our lives. While we still hear the cry of the flesh, it no longer is binding upon us. We hear the cry of the spirit. We are obligated and free to live our lives for Christ's glory. Do you feel indebted to Christ for salvation? Our recognition of his redemption, saving us from the power of sin, what drives our hearts to see Christ this way.
Journal

Write Roman	s 8:13
What are the dededs we perfort isn't from the sp	Meditation put the deeds of the body to death by the power of the Holy Spirit eeds of the body? Paul isn't talking about the literal body and the m with our physical form. He is talking about everything we do that birit, every thought and action that comes from our minds being see her than on Christ. Strive to walk in the Spirit, the source of all life.
Journal	

Write Romans 8:14
Thoughts for Meditation
The designation, "son of God," is paramount. God's children are loved. God's
children are welcomed into the throne room of heaven. God provides for his children. It is a wonder than any human could ever be called the child of God. But
this is precisely the beauty of the Gospel. John says, "behold what manner of love
that Father has given us, that we should be called the children of God" (1 John 3:1).
Journal
Journal

Write Romans 8:15	
Thoughts for Meditation  By the adopting power of the Spirit, we get to cry "Abba." God is our father. As the baby cries leaving the womb and entering the work so our spirit cries out to God as we enter his family. This is the believer's joy. Spensome time meditating today on God's fatherly love. How does this government of interaction with God?  Journal	ld, nd

Write Romans	8:16			
We can envision and affirms us as that surpasses ur	rit claims us as his this in two ways. s children of God nderstanding. Seco	First, that the . We experience and, the Holy Sp	s witness that we belo Holy Spirit speaks to this as assurance and pirit bears witness by tears fruit in our lives.	our spirits d the peace working on
Journal				

Write Romans 8:17	
Thoughts for Meditation Since we are the children of God we are also the heirs of God. Note that we heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ. Christ is also the son of God. Jesus to human flesh and became like his brothers, suffering and dying, so that we have new life in him. The expectation for followers of Christ is that we will su for Christ, taking up our cross daily, as we journey towards to the future resurrect glory that awaits us in the final age.	ool cai iffe
Journal	

Write Ron	nans 8:18
Life can I more than c why God pr from God's	for Meditation be hard. Many things bring us nearly to the point of defeat, but we conquerors. Our victory doesn't always get felt in the present. This romises us that when all is said and done and we get to see the steperspective, we will view all the suffering of life, even the worst ignificant compared to the joy and wonder of the conclusion—the glo

Write Romans 8:19
Thoughts for Meditation  Creation is eagerly waiting the day that you are fully redeemed in Christ. One day the sons of God will rule the earth, subduing it in the way God commanded Adam in the garden of Eden. Creation longs for the day when its rightful rulers are redeemed and fully and truly display the image of God to the universe. Why do you think creation is eager for our redemption?
Journal

Write Romans 8:20
Thoughts for Meditation  When Adam sinned in the garden, God cursed creation. Death and suffering entered the human experience. Corruption entered creation itself. God's plan for redemption included suffering. Suffering is the result of sin having dominion creation. But one day that will end. Christ will reign and creation will be redeemed along with us.
Journal

Write Romans 8:21
Thoughts for Meditation Our redemption is tied to the redemption of all creation. Just as we sin and are corrupt, creation itself is broken—death works in all life, not just in humans. From the plants to the animals, no life is free from death and corruption. But the day will come in Christ when not death and no corruption exists in any part of creation.
Journal

Thoughts for Meditation  Creation groans for redemption. The first time creation groaned in scripture was when Cain killed Abel. The ground absorbed the blood of Abel and cried out for redemption. We read several more stories in the Bible about the ground crying out for redemption for the bloodguilt of the land. We may not hear it with our ears, but creation calls out against the pollution our sins bring upon the world.
Journal

Thoughts for Meditation  Our hearts groan for redemption. From the poets of old to the modern songwriters of pop culture, the human heart longs for restoration. Something i wrong with the world. We all know it. For Christians, the longing for restoration is
focused on the future redemption provided in Christ. Every time we suffer, we have the opportunity to orient our hearts towards God's future plan of redemption.
Journal

Write Romans 8:24	
Thoughts for Meditation  The hope of restoration is the context for Biblical salvation. We are save the future wrath of God and from the present corruption of the flesh. Salvathope are interconnected. While we have experience the hope of salvation ways, the true glory of salvation is in a hope that has not yet be revearesurrection of our bodies and the returning glory of Christ.	tion and in some
Journal	

Write Romans 8:25

Thoughts for Meditation
We have hope, so we wait. Waiting is hard, especially when waiting is painful But the promise of God is the waiting will be more than worth it when we behold the true glory of Christ. What the hard part about waiting for you? What is the hope of eternity that keeps you faithful? How does the joy of looking forward to the return of Christ give nurture to your spirit?
Journal

Write Romans 8:26
Thoughts for Meditation
Just as hope brings an element of strength in our perseverance, so the Spirit her us in our weakness. He helps us have confidence as we pray, even intercedes on obehalf. Even when our words don't make sense or can't be found, the Spirit give aid to make our prayers and groanings heard and understood to before our fath (See Heb.7:24-26)
Journal

Write Romans 8:27
Thoughts for Meditation
The Father searches our hearts. He also knows the mind of the Spirit as they have perfect harmony. The Spirit, who resides in our hearts, graciously intervened on our behalf. The Spirit comes to our aid, comforts us when we are hurting, and directs our hearts according to the will of God. (See Heb. 4:14-16)
Journal

Write Romans 8:28
Thoughts for Meditation
The Spirit cares for us through intercession and the Father's providence comforts those who love Him. He works all things together for good. He is not disconnected deist but actively involved in our daily lives. During life's most difficult times He reminds us that He has purpose for us and there is no cause for fear.
Journal

Write Romans 8:29
Thoughts for Meditation
Foreknowledge doesn't refer to God's knowledge of actions or events, but H "knowing" people intimately. God knew us before the world began and predestine us for redemption. He doesn't make mistakes or leave anything to chance. He knows His elect and loves them dearly. In fact, He loves them enough not to leave them as they are currently, but to conform them into the likeness of His Son. How are you being conformed to his likeness of Christ?
Journal

Write Romans 8:30
Thoughts for Meditation
God foreknew us, predestined us, called us, justified us, and one day will be glorified. This is what some theologians have coined "The Golden Chain." He has shown us His perfect plan of redemption. A plan that replaces fear and despair with hope and courage. How does this verse give you hope in your life? What are areas in your life that you can replace fear with hope?
Journal

Write Romans 8:31
Thoughts for Meditation
Seeing this marvelous plan of redemption, we are now challenged to see out Champion as unmatched. God's redemption is our security! Who or what could stand against Him? No one! Today we focus on this as fuel for our courage. What is God calling you to conquer in your life? How does this truth help you stand securin Christ?
Journal

Write Romans 8:32
Thoughts for Meditation
God gave us Christ. He came to earth as a baby. He lived a perfect life, filled with suffering, betrayal, and discouragement, and ended with his death on a Roman cross. If God was willing to give us his be3loved son to save us from our sin and his wrath, what possible thing would he be unwilling to share with us, especially i we needed it to pursue his calling on our lives. The answer is clear: nothing. Wha are the "all things" that you need from him?
Journal

Write Romans 8:33
Thoughts for Meditation
God justifies his people by faith, not by works. Christ died for our sins for our justification. By the blood of Christ on the cross, and by the declaration of the Father there is absolutely no condemnation for God's people. When Paul asks the rhetorical question, "Who shall bring a charge?" the answer is resoundingly clear: no one. Not you. Not Satan. Not your past, present, or future. You have been declared just.
Journal

Write Ron	nans 8:34
Not only raised, and human form and declares	for Meditation  was Christ crucified so that we could be declared righteous, he was also not just raised to life, but ascended back to heaven, where he sits in, at the right hand of God. The exalted Christ interceded on your behas your freedom from sin and from Satan boldly before his Father. When gould speak against such a savior?
Journal	

Write Romans 8:35
Thoughts for Meditation
As the Apostle Paul asks all these rhetorical questions, remind yourself that the answer is always negative. Nothing can separate us from God. Nothing in this list, and nothing in a list you might make on your own. Since Christ is for you, you cannot be separated from his love. His love is boundless. It's larger than the universe, overwhelms the very concept of infinity, and personally wraps your soul with peace.
Journal

Write Romans 8:36
Thoughts for Meditation
The last few verses have been very positive. But Paul reminds us in this vers that live is not always grand. He already alluded to this when he compared ou present suffering (v.18) to the eternal glory that will one day be revealed. He also included suffering in the "all things work together for good" of verse 29. The New Testament never overlooks the reality that we can and will suffer while carrying the name of Christ.
Journal

Write Romans 8:37
Thoughts for Meditation
No? What does Paul mean but "no?" He certainly isn't objecting to the reality of pain and suffering that he just referenced in verse 36. Instead, he is reorienting our understanding of those painful experiences. They do happen. They will happen. But they never have the final word. In every one of those scenarios, we are more than conquerors. We don't just come out victorious in the end; we will find out that even the difficult times where part of God's good plan all along.
Journal

Write Romans 8:38	
Thoughts for Meditation	
The last sentence of Romans 8 is beautiful. As we reflect on the first half of today, consider the joy from which the Apostle is writing. He is about to head Jerusalem, where he will be arrested, transported to Rome, and ultimately execut un the Emperor's direction. Can his death separate him from Christ? Can Emper Nero? Can the spiritual realm thwart God's plan? He is safe and secure in the loof God not matter what circumstance comes his way.	to ed
Journal	

Write Romans 8:39
write Romans 6.37
Thoughts for Meditation
Nothing in all of creation can separate us from the love of God. Spend time meditating on that fact today. Your circumstances cannot separate you from God's
love. You sin cannot separate you from God's love. Your enemies, your Take a minute and write out the things that you may be tempted to think can separate you
from the love of God. Then preach the Gospel to yourself from the this scripture
and declare that nothing, especially those things, can separate you from the love of God.
Toward.
Journal

## Thoughts for Meditation

You made it to the end. You have read the 8th chapter of Romans out loud 40 times. I want to challenge you now. Read Romans 8 one more time. But try to do it without looking. Go on, do it right now.

How far did you get? I imagine that you were able to quote at least several verses, probably form the first few paragraphs. You probably have the first section memorized. You have hidden God's word in your heart. You have experienced a
small level of transformation. As you spend some time meditating today, think about the resurrection of Christ. He was dead. But God raised from the grave and
gave new life to his body. The same spirit is now at work in us to raise our spirits
from the dead and give us new life in Christ.

## **FAQs**

## What does RWM stand for?

Read, Write, Meditate

## Why are we reading the Bible out loud instead of just in our heads?

Reading out loud engages the brain in a different way than just reading silently. This aids your retention and understanding. Our hope is that reading out loud for 40 days will foster your memory. By the end of the journey, you will have memorized large portions of the chapter.