



Gospel of Hope

ROMANS

BY DR. JOHN D. MORRISON
DR. TYLER SMILEY, SENIOR PASTOR

 **Lakewood**
PRESS

Gospel of Hope

ROMANS

BY DR. JOHN D. MORRISON
DR. TYLER SMILEY, SENIOR PASTOR

 Lakewood
PRESS

Gospel of Hope: Romans
Copyright © 2021 John D. Morrison
Published by Lakewood Press
Lakewood Baptist Church
2235 Thompson Bridge Road Gainesville, Georgia 30501

Scripture quotations are from The ESV® Bible
(The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a
publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Designed by Joy Willis

Letter from the Pastor

Martin Luther began his commentary on Romans by describing, “This epistle is really the chief part of the New Testament, and is truly the purest gospel. It is worthy not only that every Christian should know it word for word, by heart, but also that he should occupy himself with it every day, as the daily bread of the soul.” While Romans is Paul’s longest and most theologically rich letter in all of his New Testament writings, Christians throughout each era of church history have recognized what Luther saw: for every Christian this letter provides spiritual food for gospel nourishment.

I am excited for us to be reading together as a church this letter. In this reading guide, you will be shown the treasures of God’s word that are there to be found in Romans. We’ll be reminded that we should not be ashamed of the gospel “because it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes” (Rom 1:16). Even more, we can have confidence in the truth of this message, and that is what gives us hope that no matter what happens in this life, no matter the circumstances that we are called to endure, no matter the riches that we may accumulate, the hope of everlasting life that we have in Jesus Christ is the only true and lasting hope. As Paul writes in Romans 5:5, “hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.”

We do not have to be ashamed of our faith in the message of Jesus Christ because the hope that it affords us will never put us to shame. The hope that the Christian has stands on the certainty that Jesus gave his life on the cross as an atoning sacrifice for sinners, and he was raised from the dead to secure life eternal for all who will “confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead” (Rom 10:9).

We all are in need of hope; our world is in need of hope. The hope that is held out in the gospel of Jesus Christ is no fleeting dream or a wishful desire. The hope that is found in Jesus Christ is the promise and certainty offered from God himself that for all who call on his name there is life. This is what secures the Christian through the gift of the Holy Spirit, and this is what we as Christians now joyfully hold out to the world. Our prayer is that over the course of this study you will come to treasure more the hope we have by faith in Christ, and that you will desire to join the Lord even more in his mission to take this hope to the ends of the earth, “for the sake of his name among all the nations” (Rom 1:5).

Grace and Peace in Jesus Christ,



Dr. Tyler Smiley
Senior Pastor, Lakewood Baptist Church

Contents

WEEK 1: HOPE OF SALVATION	6
WEEK 2: HOPE BY FAITH	13
WEEK 3: HOPE IN LIFE	20
WEEK 4: HOPE FOR ALL CREATION	27
WEEK 5: HOPE THAT TRANSFORMS	34
WEEK 6: HOPE FOR ALL NATIONS	41

WEEK 1

Hope of Salvation

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

ROMANS 1:16-17

Week One Overview

In Romans, Paul expounds the gospel he proclaims. He explains that the gospel of Jesus Christ brings hope to all people because the gospel is “the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes” (1:16). Paul’s purpose in writing goes beyond conveying the truth of his message. He desires the congregations in Rome to unify around the gospel in order to advance Paul’s mission of taking the gospel around the world for the glory of God.

As in many first century churches, Jewish and Gentile believers were divided in the churches in Rome. It is no wonder they were divided: they were ethnically, culturally, and nationally distinct peoples. Their only commonality was faith in Christ. Paul insists throughout the letter that their shared faith is enough to unite them. The hope of the gospel unifies the church across all differences.

Unity in the church honors God, and it also serves to advance God’s mission around the world. The hope of the gospel is for all people in a particular area and around the world. Paul aims to unite the congregations in Rome through the gospel with the hope that they will join together to support his mission to take the gospel to Spain (15:22-24). The hope of the gospel inspires the taking of the gospel to those who have not heard.

Unity and mission both serve a far greater goal: the glory of God. Paul has been called as an apostle and gives his life to this work for the glory of God: “for the sake of his name among the nations” (1:5). God is glorified in Christ through the Spirit as people come to believe the hope of the gospel. As Paul nears the end of this letter, he again emphasizes the glory of God. His prayer is that their unity would honor God (15:5-6), and he longs for God to be praised by all peoples (15:8-13). The hope of the gospel brings glory to God.

The gospel of hope unites God’s people and propels God’s mission so that the Father will be honored as Christ is exalted in the power of the Holy Spirit. The church today continues to need to heed the message of Romans. There are four particular ways Romans speaks to us today. First, we need to continue to grow in our understanding of the hope of the gospel. Paul’s letter will help us better know the gospel and will deepen our love for our God who saves through the gospel. Second, we, too, need to grow in unity in the gospel. Where ethnic, cultural, and national divisions threaten to undermine the church, we need to be challenged by the gospel to unite in Christ and by the power of the Spirit across all differences. Third, the church united in the gospel must continue to make the gospel of hope known to our neighbors and the nations. Fourth and finally, all of this serves the glory of God in Christ. Our reason for being as the redeemed and adopted people of God is the glory of God. All that we do should be for the sake of his name.

WEEK 1 | DAY 1

READ | Romans 1:16-17

REFLECT | Read Romans 1:16-17 again and circle anytime you see the word believe or faith (both of these words share the same root in Koine Greek, which is the language in which Paul wrote this letter).

- How many times does Paul use faith/believe in these two verses? Why does Paul so emphasize faith in his discussion of the gospel?
- What is faith? Consider Hebrews 11.
- What does it mean to believe the gospel? Would you describe yourself as someone who believes the gospel? Why or why not?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Psalm 115:1-3. *Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness! Why should the nations say, "Where is their God?" Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases.* Ask God to glorify his name through the study of his Word and pray that his will would be done in your life through this letter to the Romans.

WEEK 1 | DAY 2

READ | Romans 1:1-2:29

REFLECT | These two chapters provide the surrounding context to help us better understand our main verses for this week, Romans 1:16-17.

- How does Paul describe the gospel in 1:1-6? What key elements does he include?
- 1:16 describes the gospel as “the power of God for salvation.” Based upon chapters 1 and 2, why do people need salvation? What is this salvation?
- When did you realize that apart from Christ you were included in 1:18? How did you come to that realization?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Thank God for the salvation he freely offers us in Jesus Christ. Praise him that he is good and that his steadfast love endures forever.

WEEK 1 | DAY 3

READ | Romans 1:16-17

REFLECT | Paul states that salvation is for all who believe, but within that, there is a particular distinction: “to the Jew first and also to the Greek” (1:16). Paul uses “Greek” here to describe any non-Jewish person. His point is that in the history of salvation God has worked first through a particular people to bring his blessing to all peoples. The Lord began with the Jewish people with the ultimate goal of blessing all who would believe.

- Read Genesis 12:1-3. Who does God choose in these verses? According to verse 3, what is God’s plan in choosing this one particular person?
- In John 4:22, Jesus says, “Salvation is from the Jews.” How does Jesus himself embody this truth?
- Abraham was blessed to be a blessing, and the fulfillment of God’s promise to him in Genesis 12 came in Jesus Christ (Gal 3:14). If you have been blessed with salvation in Jesus, then you too have been blessed to be a blessing. Consider writing down a person’s name who does not know the blessing of the gospel and commit to pray for that person for the next six weeks of this study.

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | *Gracious Father, I know that you are the God who saves and that salvation can be found in no other name than the name of Jesus. I pray that you will work by your Holy Spirit to bring _____ to saving faith in Jesus. Amen.*

WEEK 1 | DAY 4

READ | Romans 1:16-17

REFLECT | As you read Romans 1:16-17, notice the “for” at the start of verse 17. Here, Paul indicates the connection between the two verses: the gospel is the saving power of God because it reveals the righteousness of God. This righteousness is the saving righteousness of God. It is the gift from God by which he declares as righteous all those who trust in Jesus. By this gift, the Father counts those who believe to be as righteous as Jesus. Our status before God is secured by this gift of righteousness.

- Read Romans 4:1-5. Why is it such good news that we are counted as righteous rather than having to earn our righteousness?
- Read Romans 5:17. Consider the phrase “free gift of righteousness.” How does the idea of a gift of righteousness help you better grasp that you can only receive, not earn, salvation from God?
- Read Philippians 3:8-11. Where does this righteousness of God come from? How do we receive it?
- If you are counted as righteous by God, how does he view you now? Is it possible for him to love you any more or any less? Why or why not?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Thank God for his gift of righteousness that he freely bestows on all who trust in Jesus. Thank him that you do not have to become righteous to earn his favor but that out of his great love for us he declares us righteous and makes us his own.

WEEK 1 | DAY 5

READ | Habakkuk 2:2-5

REFLECT | New Testament Christianity is rooted in the faith of the Hebrew Scriptures. The God who spoke through the Old Testament prophets is the same God who spoke through the New Testament apostles. At the end of Romans, Paul explains, “For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope” (15:4). On the fifth day of each week of this study, we will look for the encouragement of Scripture from the Old Testament in order to grow in this hope.

Paul understands Jesus to be the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets, and so when he explains that salvation comes by faith, he finds examples of this in the Old Testament. Specifically, in this week’s reading, he cites Habakkuk 2:4.

- In Habakkuk 2:2-5, with what does the prophet contrast faith? How does that help us understand the nature of true faith?
- Paul also quotes Habakkuk 2:4 in Galatians 3:11. Read Galatians 3:10-14. What contrast does Paul draw between faith and the law here? How does that help shape our definition of faith?
- The author of Hebrews also quotes Habakkuk 2:4 in Hebrews 10:38. Read Hebrews 10:36-39. How does this passage help you better understand faith?
- Based on these passages, how would you define faith?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Pray Ephesians 2:8-10. *Father, thank you that you have saved me by grace through faith. Thank you that neither this grace nor this faith is my own doing—they are both gracious gifts from you. I could not earn them, but you gave them freely as a gift. Part of your grace to me is that you have prepared good works for me. Please help me to walk in them for your glory. Amen.*

WEEK 2

Hope by Faith

²¹ But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— ²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. ²⁶ It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

²⁷ Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸ For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law. ²⁹ Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, ³⁰ since God is one—who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. ³¹ Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.

ROMANS 3:21-31

Week Two Overview

The hope of the gospel is salvation from God (1:16). In the focal passage this week, Paul describes the depth and the extent of the problem from which we need to be saved. Then, he explains what this salvation entails and how it is accomplished.

People need salvation because “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (3:23). By our rejection of God and rebellion against him we have earned the penalty of everlasting death (6:23). In many ways, this first phrase of 3:23 summarizes the major theme of the book to this point: all people—both Jew and Gentile—have rejected God and need to be made right with him. “None is righteous, no, not one” (3:10). As Paul makes plain in the first chapter, we all deserve God’s wrath to be poured out on us because we have rejected him (1:18-23). We need to be reconciled to God; we need to be made right with him.

We can be reconciled to God through the work of Jesus Christ. All can be “justified by his grace as a gift” (3:24), which means that we can be declared righteous before God based upon his gracious work, not our own efforts. Such hope comes through what Christ has accomplished. He has redeemed us (3:24), purchasing us with his own blood (Acts 20:28; 1 Cor 6:19-20). He reconciled us to God by shedding his blood upon the cross, for he was our atoning sacrifice. Paul speaks of Jesus in 3:25 as a propitiation, which is a sacrifice that turns away the holy and righteous wrath of God against sin. We can be justified by God’s grace because in his grace Christ Jesus came to offer himself as a sacrifice for us and for our salvation.

This gracious justification is received by faith. “We hold,” Paul declares, “that one is justified by faith apart from the works of the law” (3:28). God’s gift of justification cannot be earned. One cannot be a good enough person to merit his blessing. Once you have received it, there is no performance review to determine whether or not you can keep it. You receive justification like a free gift. Faith is resting in God’s work. Faith is trusting him to keep his word.



WEEK 2 | DAY 1

READ | Romans 3:21-31

REFLECT | Review Romans 3:21-31, circle every time you see the word “faith” or “believe,” and underline every time you see the phrase “righteousness.” Look back to last week’s study and consider how you would define the following words:

- Faith

- Righteousness of God

Verse 24 describes justification as happening by God’s grace as a gift.

- How are you prone to think that your relationship with God depends upon your performance?

- What comfort do you find in knowing that your standing before God depends upon his gift and not upon your work?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Thank God that he justifies people freely who trust in Jesus. Thank Jesus for his coming to earth, living a perfect life, and dying an atoning death to redeem all who would trust in him.

WEEK 2 | DAY 2

READ | Romans 3:1-4:25

REFLECT | The third chapter of Romans begins with Paul reminding us of our desperate need for God to save us graciously, for not even those under the law will be justified through the law (3:1-20). Justification is God's free gift that Christ won for his people on the cross (3:21-31). Not even Abraham was justified by his works; rather, God declared him righteous because Abraham trusted in God (4:1-25).

- Review chapters 3-4 and mark every time Paul uses "faith" or "believe." What do you notice about faith?
- How does 3:1-20 demonstrate the necessity of faith?
- What example does Abraham provide for us in 4:1-25?
- How would you evaluate your own faith? In what areas of life do you trust God? Where do you struggle to trust him?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Ask God to help you see where you are prone to trust in your own efforts to be right with him rather than trusting in him. Pray for his forgiveness and ask for his grace to grow to trust him more.

WEEK 2 | DAY 3

READ | Romans 3:21-31

REFLECT | “For we hold,” Paul explains, “that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law” (3:28). Yet, faith itself does not save. It is the object of faith, Jesus Christ, who saves. We receive the free gift of salvation by trusting in him.

- Meditate on 3:26 by reading this verse aloud several times or by writing it down several times. What do you observe in this verse?
- Who is the one who justifies according to 3:26? Why must it be faith in Jesus?
- Consider 4:24-25. How can Paul say that we must have faith in God the Father when earlier he calls upon us to place our faith in Jesus? Is he contradicting himself? Why or why not?
- Faith is more than a one-time decision; it is the way of life for God’s people. What habits do you practice to help you grow your faith?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Thank God for the gift of faith and ask him to grow your faith in him.

WEEK 2 | DAY 4

READ | Romans 3:21-31

REFLECT | Paul describes the gospel as “the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes” (1:16). As we have already seen this week, Paul clearly connects the emphasis on belief and faith into 3:21-31. Equally important is the connection between salvation and justification. Believers will ultimately be saved from God’s final judgment because God justifies those who trust in Jesus. God’s declaring believers righteous saves them from his judgment. The basis of this justification is Christ’s redeeming work.

- Notice in Rom 3:24 that believers “are justified. . . through the redemption that in in Christ Jesus.” What is redemption? Consider Galatians 4:4-7, Ephesians 1:7, 1 Corinthians 6:20, 7:23.

- Redemption in Christ comes through his work “as a propitiation by his blood” (Rom 3:25). A propitiation is a sacrifice that atones for sin and turns away God’s wrath. Based upon the verses you just read, what is the connection between redemption and Christ’s shedding his blood? Consider Romans 6:23.

- The Exodus from Egypt is God’s great work of redemption in the Old Testament. For this work, he is praised as “the Most High God their redeemer” (Ps 78:35). Another key story of redemption is the book of Ruth. Take time to read this short book. What does Boaz’s love and redemption of Ruth show us about God’s love and redemption of believers?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Thank Jesus for his giving of himself on the cross for our sins so that we might be justified before God and enjoy everlasting life with him.

WEEK 2 | DAY 5

READ | Genesis 12:1-3, 15:1-21

REFLECT | In Romans 4, Paul puts Abraham forward as an example of faith. Abraham was counted as righteous, not by what he did, but by his trust in the Lord. As you read the passages in Genesis, consider how Abraham shows his faith.

- What does God promise to Abraham? How does Abraham demonstrate his faith?

- How is this promise to Abraham connected with the work of Jesus? See Galatians 3:10-14, 29.

- In Genesis 12:3, who does God promise to bless through Abraham? How is this message of blessing for all nations connected with the message of Romans?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Thank God that he has a plan to bless all who trust in him by faith.

WEEK 3



Hope in Life

¹ Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ² Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴ and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵ and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. ⁶ For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

ROMANS 5:1-6

Week Three Overview

The promises of justification and salvation (Rom 1-4) fuel the future hope of believers. When Christ Jesus returns to judge the earth, God's declaration of us as righteous will lead us into the blessing of unending life with him. As Romans 5 begins, Paul makes clear that our future hope fills our present lives with hope. Salvation in Christ finds its ultimate fulfillment in the future, but even now, we experience the blessing of life with him.

Justification by faith in Christ leads us now to peace, access to God, and hope (5:1-2). The hope Paul identifies here allows believers to face even the most painful circumstances with confidence in God, knowing that he can work even through suffering for our good (5:3-4). Such confidence is not rooted in ourselves but in the fact that God has loved us, sent his Son to die for us, and filled us with his Holy Spirit (5:5-6). Justification by faith brings peace with God, access into his grace, and the hope of his glory into our daily lives. Far from being merely a plan for after death, the promise of salvation shapes our present lives.

The pressure of our present lives can lead us to forget the future hope promised to us in Christ. Yet, Paul makes clear that it is exactly this hope that enables us to live through even the most painful moments of life. Faith in Christ must not, and indeed cannot, be relegated to something for the life to come. Faith in Jesus and justification by his work bring hope to our every day lives.

WEEK 3 | DAY 1

READ | Romans 5:1-6

REFLECT | In these verses Paul makes clear that justification and the benefits that flow from it are a work of our Triune God. Once we have been reconciled to God through faith in Christ, then we experience peace, access, and hope.

- Underline any reference to the Father in the color purple, to the Son in red, and to the Holy Spirit in yellow. Circle any use of the word “hope.”
- Consider the three benefits Paul identifies in 5:1-2 that flow from justification:
 1. “Peace with God.” Read Romans 5:10. Why do we not have peace with God apart from Jesus?
 2. “Access by faith into this grace.” Read Ephesians 2:18, 3:11-12. How do we have access into God’s grace now? How do we experience this today?
 3. “We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.” Read Titus 2:13-14. How can we experience joy and hope now through what God is going to do in the future?
- How well do you experience peace, access into God’s grace, and the hope of his glory? Why is that?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Thank God that in Christ he will bless you with peace, access, and hope. Ask that by his grace you would experience these blessings even more today.

WEEK 3 | DAY 2

READ | Romans 5:1-7:25

REFLECT | Much in these three chapters address how our future hope in Christ should shape our present lives. The fulfillment of our gospel hope is in the future, but even now God works through the gospel to transform his people by his grace.

- In chapter 6, how does Paul respond to those who think that God's grace and our future hope means that how we live today is unimportant?
- How are you prone to presume upon God's grace? In other words, how do you act as if your lack of obedience does not matter because God has forgiven and justified you?
- In chapter 7, Paul demonstrates that the Law has no power either to reconcile people to God or to empower personal transformation. How are you tempted to live as if you can improve your life by your own strength of will? What would Paul say about that?
- Look ahead to Romans 8:13. How do we actually put sin to death and grow in Christlikeness? What steps do you need to take to put sin to death by the Spirit this week?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Pray Romans 6:4, thanking God for what he has done for you in Christ.

WEEK 3 | DAY 3

READ | Romans 5:1-6

REFLECT | God's work in Christ brings us hope in what God is going to do, but it also gives us hope even in the midst of suffering. Paul tells believers that we can boast in our sufferings since we know that God is even at work in them.

- What process does Paul outline in Romans 5:3-4? How can suffering produce hope? What is the hope Paul has in mind?

- Have you seen this chain of events Paul describes play out in your own life?

- What current struggle or suffering are you facing? Pray for the Lord to help you trust in him and have hope even in the midst of these circumstances.

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Read and pray through Philippians 4:4-7.

WEEK 3 | DAY 4

READ | Romans 5:1-6

REFLECT | Even in the midst of suffering, we can be confident in the hope of God because we have experienced the love of God. Romans 5:5-6 explain that the hope that comes from suffering will lead to an everlasting hope. Our confidence in this hope comes from the fact that God has already poured his love into our lives by the Holy Spirit through the work of Christ on our behalf.

- When Paul says, “Hope does not put us to shame,” he seems to have in mind the final judgment. How does knowing God’s final judgment of us is secure in Christ give us hope for today?
- We experience God’s love through the Holy Spirit. Who is the Holy Spirit? How do you receive the Holy Spirit? See John 14:16-17, 26-27 and Ephesians 1:13.
- How do you reassure yourself of God’s love when you doubt it? Reflect on Romans 5:6-10.

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Thank God that while you were his enemy, he sent Jesus Christ to die for you and to redeem you by his blood. Ask him to help you rest in his love for you.

WEEK 3 | DAY 5

READ | Psalm 62

REFLECT | Hope is a theme that pervades all of Scripture. All of Scripture points to the hope that can only be found in Jesus Christ. In Psalm 62, David reminds us that our hope is in God alone. All other hopes will fail us. As David demonstrates in this psalm, hoping often looks like waiting.

- In Psalm 62:5, where does David place his hope? According to 62:10, what has he discovered to be vain objects of hope?
- Do you find yourself putting your hope in God or in the gifts of God? How can you tell a difference?
- Review Psalm 62 and mark every use of the word “wait.” What is the connection between waiting and hope? Do you have trouble waiting for God? What does that reveal about your view of God?
- How does David’s psalm of hope shed more light on the hope Paul describes in Romans 5?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Ask God to help you wait for him and to put your hope in him alone.

WEEK 4

Hope for all Creation

¹⁸ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. ¹⁹ For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. ²³ And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

ROMANS 8:18-25

Week Four Overview

The hope of the gospel extends beyond individuals to include all of creation. God in Christ and by the Spirit is redeeming creation and making all things new. Paul uses this biblical truth to comfort his readers. While the current corruption of this world leads to much suffering, Paul encourages that such suffering fades when compared to the coming glory for those who hope in Christ. This coming glory will include the redemption of not only our souls, but our bodies and even all of creation.

God's care for creation should not surprise us. He is, after all, the creator of everyone and everything. It is by our sin as humans that we have plunged the rest of creation into the ill effects of the Fall. Yet, we continue to see God's care for the whole world in the reality that Christ Jesus came and took on a complete human nature. He took on a body and a soul in order to redeem, not just our souls, but our bodies. In addition to the incarnation, the resurrection of Jesus points to God's care for his whole creation. One day when Christ returns, believers, who are the firstfruits of the new creation, will receive our resurrection bodies and all things will be made new.

In the present time, we suffer, but our suffering can be filled with hope. Such hope is built on God's plan to redeem creation and our bodies. Now, however, the call is to wait in hope. True faith in God—the kind of faith that confidently hopes in his promises—will wait. Faith waits expectantly and patiently for the revealing of this glory.



WEEK 4 | DAY 1

READ | Romans 8:18-25

REFLECT | Creation and its corruption play a major role in this week's passage. Read through Romans 8:18-25 and mark anytime Paul mentions "creation." Yet, Paul's goal in this section is to provide comfort and hope to suffering Christians by pointing to the hope of a redeemed and renewed creation.

- What language images does Paul use to convey the sense of longing within creation?

- In verse 23, what connection does Paul draw between the new creation and the redemption of our bodies?

- Paul aims to offer hope in this passage. What hope and comfort do you find in his words here? Do these words address a present challenge you are facing? How so?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Thank God that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the future glory. Ask him to help you believe this truth and to wait with expectant hope.

WEEK 4 | DAY 2

READ | Romans 8:1-11:36

REFLECT | In Romans 8:18-25, it is clear that God's plan for this world includes his creation. Chapters 8-11 provide more details of God's plan, and in doing so, these passages demonstrate the certainty, the scope, and the grace of God's plan to bring hope to this world through the work of Jesus Christ.

- According to Romans 8:28-30, how certain is God's plan? What is the ultimate goal of his plan? Who guarantees its fulfillment?
- Based upon Romans 8:31-39, what key attribute of God forms the foundation of his plan of redemption? How secure is that foundation?
- In chapters 9-11, Paul makes clear that the scope of God's plan includes both Jewish and Gentile believers. His plan of redemption is for all who trust in him. According to Romans 9:15 and 11:5-6, why does God choose to redeem sinners like us?
- Read Romans 10:11-13. Who will God save through Christ?
- The certainty, scope, and grace of God's plan lead Paul to praise the Lord in Romans 11:33-36. Take time to pray and to meditate upon these verses.

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Pray Romans 11:33-36.

WEEK 4 | DAY 3

READ | Romans 8:18-25

REFLECT | Sin has infected the whole world. Adam and Eve were commissioned by God to rule and to subdue the earth, but when they fell into sin, the world was cursed along with them (Gen 3:17-19). Suffering and death entered into the whole world, not just human lives, through sin. We experience suffering because of sin. Suffering comes at times when our own sin leads to it. Other times, we suffer because someone else sins against us. Then, at other times, we experience suffering because we live in a broken world that is marred by sin. At times, these three causes even merge together. Yet, Paul provides a message of hope in these verses.

- According to Paul in 8:18, how do our present sufferings compare with the glory that is coming?
- Read 2 Corinthians 4:17-18. How does Paul describe pain and suffering there? Read 2 Corinthians 11:16-33. How familiar was Paul with suffering? How then could he speak of pain as if it were nothing?
- Do you believe Paul in Romans 8:18 and 2 Corinthians 4:17-18? How can you live out of that belief today?
- We following a suffering Savior who knows what it to endure pain, abuse, and loss (Heb 4:12-13). Consider Hebrews 12:1-2. What does this passage teach about Jesus's heart for you? How does Jesus's suffering give you hope for the future glory he will reveal?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Thank God that he is preparing an eternal weight of glory that will cause the pain and suffering of this world to seem as if it were nothing. Pray for the faith to believe him and to cling to his promise.

WEEK 4 | DAY 4

READ | Romans 8:18-25

REFLECT | “The glory that is to be revealed” (8:18) includes the redemption of our bodies and the new creation. All things will be made new. Yet, we presently live in a world corrupted by sin and will face sufferings and hardships. For this reason, Paul calls upon us to hope (8:24-25). We hope expectantly, and we hope patiently.

- How does Paul describe the nature of hope in 8:24?
- How is patience connected with hope in 8:25?
- Is your life marked by patience and hope? What does a lack of patience reveal about your view of God? What does your lack of hope reveal about your view of God?
- What truths about God and his gospel can you remind yourself of in order to grow in your patience and hope? How will you remind yourself of these truths this week?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Ask God to give you the faith to wait with confidence in his promises and to wait patiently upon his promises.

WEEK 4 | DAY 5

READ | Isaiah 65:17-25, 66:22-23

REFLECT | God's promise of the new creation did not just start 2,000 years ago after the resurrection of Jesus. Over 700 years before Jesus, Isaiah prophesied about this coming hope. Ephesians 1 teaches us that even before the foundation of the world, God has had "a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him [Christ], things in heaven and things on earth" (Eph 1:10). God's good plan is for a new creation united in Christ.

- What characteristics of the new creation stand out to you from Isaiah's prophecy? How do these traits serve to fuel the hope that Paul spoke of in Romans 8?
- According to Isaiah 66:22-23, what will we be doing in the new creation? Who will be joining in that adoration of God?
- How does the vision of Isaiah 66:22-23 compare with Revelation 5:9-10 and 7:9-10?
- Based upon what you read this week in Romans 10:8-17, how will the visions in the above passages become a reality? How can you join this week in taking the word of Christ locally and globally?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Thank God for the promise of a new creation when all will be made right. Pray for opportunities to share the word of Christ with others so that they might join in worshipping our God forever. Ask God to make it clear to you how he would have you join his mission around the world.

WEEK 5

Hope that Transforms



¹ I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.² 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 12:1-2

Week Five Overview

The hope of the gospel transforms those who believe. When we encounter the grace and love of God in the good news of Jesus Christ, we will be changed. Paul declares at the start of this letter that the gospel is “the power of God for salvation” (1:16), and now in this section of the letter, he makes clear that God continues to work by his grace and through the gospel to transform our lives.

God’s grace radically reorients the focus of believers’ lives. No longer do we live for our own glory, but we live to worship and to glorify God. We give our lives wholly to him. We live completely for him. This worship is more than when the church gathers; rather, it is the pattern of our daily lives. In all that we do, we aim to glorify God.

Worship that encompasses our whole lives both depends on transformation and leads to transformation. We are not worshipping God with our whole lives if we are conformed to the pattern of this world. Our minds need to be renewed and our lives transformed, so that we will worship God. Then, as we worship God, our lives continue to be renewed and changed. Scripture teaches that we become what we worship (Ps 135:18), and so when we worship the one, true, and living God, the Father works by his Spirit to conform us to the image of his Son (Rom 8:29).

These two verses set the stage for the next three chapters where Paul calls on Christians to live out the gospel for the glory of God. What becomes clear over the rest of chapter 12 and into chapters 13 and 14 is that God intends for this worship and transformation to happen in community. When Christ saves you, he joins you to his body. He unites you to the community of faith. God gives us his church as a grace to us in order to help us wholly devote our lives to him and to be transformed by the renewing of our minds.

WEEK 5 | DAY 1

READ | Romans 12:1-2

REFLECT | As you read these verses, keep in mind that they come in the context of a whole letter. The commands in 12:1-2 come on the heels of all that Paul has taught in the first 11 chapters.

- Look back over 12:1-2 and circle the word “therefore.” How are these two verses connected to what Paul has taught before?
- Look back over 12:1-2 and underline the phrase “by the mercies of God.” Considering all that Paul has taught about the grace and mercy of God, why is it so important to see that these commands are built on what God has already done in our lives?
- What does Paul urge believers to do in these verses? How do you see your own need for God’s grace to live out these commands?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Pray Romans 12:1-2 for yourself, asking God to enable you to devote your life wholly to him and to transform you by renewing your mind by his Word.

WEEK 5 | DAY 2

READ | Romans 12:1-14:23

REFLECT | As Paul continues on from the first two verses of chapter 12, he unpacks what giving yourself wholly to God looks like. Believers are to devote themselves to the church and to the service of our brothers and sisters in Christ (12:3-8). Transformed lives will lead to Christians loving one another and loving our enemies (12:9-21). Followers of Jesus worship God by submitting to governing authorities and loving our neighbors (13:1-14). Christians honor God when they live in unity and peace with one another in the church (14:1-23).

- The church plays a central role in Paul's vision for the life that honors God. Do you see the church as central to your life of following Jesus? Why or why not?

- How do you think Paul would respond?

- What next steps will you take to grow in your commitment and service to your church?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Reflect on Romans 12:9-13 and ask God for his grace to enable you to live out these verses.

WEEK 5 | DAY 3

READ | Romans 12:1-2

REFLECT | The worship Paul calls us to in these verses is giving our lives completely and utterly to God's glory.

- Considering all that you have read in Romans so far, how does one become "holy and acceptable to God" (12:1)? What does that reveal about the need to experience God's grace and mercy before you can live out this command?

- Review Romans 1:18-32. What is the fundamental problem Paul identifies for those who reject God? How does 12:1 compare?

- What area of your life is not yet wholly given over to God? What will do you this week to present this area of your life as a living, holy, and acceptable sacrifice to God?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Ask for God's grace to help you present your whole life in worship to him.

WEEK 5 | DAY 4

READ | Romans 12:1-2

REFLECT | If we are to give ourselves wholly to God and his glory, we cannot live in conformity to this world. We must be transformed in order to present our lives as acceptable sacrifices to God.

- What areas of your life remain conformed to the ways of the unbelieving world?
- How does Paul say you are transformed?
- Our minds are renewed by God's Word. What practices do you have in place to hear, read, memorize, meditate on, and sing God's Word? What is one specific and realistic step you can take to grow in one of those areas this week?
- What does Paul identify as the result of a renewed mind and transformed heart? Where are you currently seeking to discern God's will?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Pray that God will work through his Word and by his Spirit to renew your mind and transform your life.

WEEK 5 | DAY 5

READ | Isaiah 1:1-20; Psalm 51

REFLECT | In Romans 12:1-2, Paul picks up on a consistent theme throughout Scripture. God does not desire mere outward obedience. His aim, rather, is for the our whole lives to be devoted to him. It is not enough to go through the religious motions; true faith manifests itself in a changed life. Worship is a way of life that flows from a heart transformed by the gospel of Jesus Christ.

- In Isaiah 1:11-17, why does the Lord find fault with the his people’s worship? What does he call them to do instead?
- According to David in Psalm 51:15-17, what does God desire from his people?
- In Matthew 15:8-9, Jesus draws upon Isaiah and warns, “This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.” Consider your own life: are you just paying lip service to God? Or, is your whole life devoted to following Jesus and honoring God?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Pray Psalm 51:1-12, asking for God’s forgiveness for where you have been merely going through the motions of faith without wholly devoting your life to him.

WEEK 6

Hope for all Nations

¹ We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. ² Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. ³ For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me." ⁴ For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. ⁵ May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, ⁶ that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁷ Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

⁸ For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, ⁹ and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy.

As it is written,

"Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles, and sing to your name."

¹⁰ And again it is said, "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people."

¹¹ And again, "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples extol him."

¹² And again Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse will come, even he who arises to rule the Gentiles; in him will the Gentiles hope."

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.

ROMANS 15:1-13

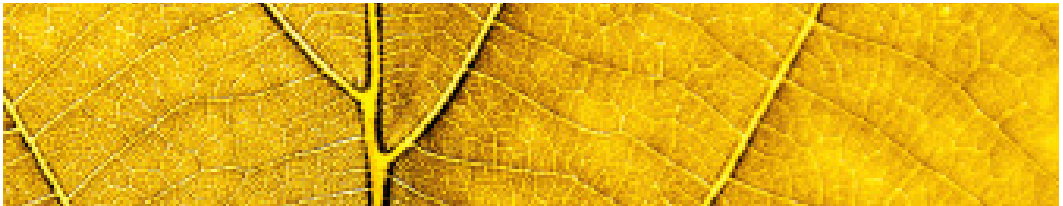
Week Six Overview

The gospel of Jesus Christ brings hope to all who trust in him so that God would be praised among all the peoples of the earth. Paul begins and ends this letter with an emphasis on the gospel being for all people. He starts the letter stating that he was made an apostle in order “to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations” (1:5). He concludes by stating that the gospel has now “been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith” (16:26). In chapter 15, as he draws near to this conclusion, Paul demonstrates that the gospel going forth to all nations was promised by God long beforehand.

Paul also sets forth two key implications of this hope: the gospel unites the church and propels it forward to join in God’s mission. In 15:1-7, Paul calls the church to unity even when differences threaten to divide. To this church that is made up of Jewish and Gentile believers who come from wide ranging backgrounds and even have different foods they would eat, Paul exhorts them to bear with one another. They are to humble themselves and to show patience with one another. They are to welcome one another. The example of Christ calls them to such love for one another, and when they live in this way, they will glorify God.

The hope of the gospel also leads the church to join God on his mission. In 15:8-13, Paul puts forward a litany of Old Testament passages to demonstrate that God’s purpose in Christ is to redeem the Gentiles so that they would join his people in worshipping him. This hope that the gospel brings to all should lead believers to join in God’s mission just as Paul did so eagerly (15:18-29).

The gospel is for all. The good news of Jesus Christ is hope for all nations. This hope of the gospel draws the church together in unity and sends the church out on mission for the glory of God.



WEEK 6 | DAY 1

READ | Romans 15:1-13

REFLECT | As Paul outlines the fact that the gospel is for all people, he continues to emphasize two key themes: God's glory and the hope the gospel brings.

- Underline any word that denotes praising, glorifying, or worshipping God. Consider how Paul emphasizes this idea of honoring God: what role does God's glory play in his work to redeem people?

- Circle any use of the word "hope." How do we receive this hope? How can we continue to live in it?

- Is your life marked by hope? Why do you think that is?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Pray Romans 15:13 for someone.

WEEK 6 | DAY 2

READ | Romans 15:1-16:27

REFLECT | These final two chapters of Romans help us see two implications of the fact that the gospel is for all nations. First, the fact that the gospel is hope for all propels Paul to spend his life to take this gospel around the world (15:18-29). Second, the gospel being for all means that real people are blessed by the hope of the gospel and specific people take the gospel to the nations (16:1-16).

- According to 15:20, what was Paul's goal? How was he planning to live that out according to 15:29?

- What is your gospel ambition? Who has God place on your heart to reach with the gospel? If you do not have an answer, consider praying to ask God to put particular people on your heart.

- 16:1-16 lists a variety of people: single men and women, married couples, old and young. The gospel has brought hope to this variety of people, and this group, with all their different backgrounds, makeups, and callings have worked in their own ways to advance the gospel. To catch a glimpse of the impact of some of these people, look at the work of Priscilla and Aquila in Acts 18:1-28, 1 Corinthians 16:19, and 2 Timothy 4:19.

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Thank God for bringing the hope of the gospel to you life, and pray that he would lead you to share this hope with others.

WEEK 6 | DAY 3

READ | Romans 15:1-7

REFLECT | The gospel that is for all nations will be reflected in the diversity of the gospel community, the church. If, as it is, the gospel is truly for all kinds of people, then each local church will be filled with a variety of people. Differences, of course, can make life together challenging for a church, and so Paul calls upon the church to emulate Christ in order to live together well. This unity in diversity glorifies God.

- In 15:1-2, how does Paul call upon the church to treat one another? How are you doing in this area?

- According to 15:7, how are we to treat one another in the church? Who is one person in your church that you will work to welcome this week? How will you welcome him or her?

- According to 15:5-7, what is the goal of this unity?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Pray that your church would be “eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph 4:3).

WEEK 6 | DAY 4

READ | Romans 15:8-13

REFLECT | Paul quotes four passages from across the Hebrew Scriptures to demonstrate that God's plan has always been for the hope of the gospel to go to all nations.

- Look back at what you underlined on the first day of this week. What comes about from God bestowing the hope of the gospel on all nations?

- Review Romans 1:5 and 16:25-27. Why is God bringing about the “obedience of faith among the nations”?

- Based on God's motivation described above, what should propel us to take the gospel to the nations.

- Pray about what role God would have you play in joining him locally, nationally, and globally in advancing the hope of the gospel.

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | Read Romans 15:30. What missionary or church planter can you commit to strive together with in prayer? Take time to pray for that person or family now.

WEEK 6 | DAY 5

READ | Psalm 67

REFLECT | God's plan has always been to bring the gospel hope of Jesus Christ to all nations. Here in this Old Testament Psalm, the psalmist prays for God to make his ways known in all the earth so that all the peoples of the earth would praise and glorify the Lord.

- Mark every mention of nations or peoples. What do you notice in this psalm about God's heart for all people?
- In verses 1 and 2, why does the psalmist pray for the Lord's blessing? How does the attitude compare with God's plan to bless Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3?
- How are you using the blessings of God in your life to make his way known in all the earth?
- According to verses 3-5, what is the goal of people knowing the Lord's way and his saving power? How should this goal fuel our joining God on his mission?
- According to this psalm, how is God's glory connected to our gladness and joy?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | 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.

PRAY | *Father, Son, and Spirit, may the peoples praise you and may the nations be glad in you, for you alone are the hope for all people. Salvation belongs to you. May you continue to work to make your name known in all the earth and may you make it clear how I can join you in your mission. Amen.*

Gospel of Hope

ROMANS

The gospel of Jesus Christ brings hope to all people because the gospel is “the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes” (1:17). Paul unpacks this gospel of hope in the book of Romans as he writes to encourage unity in through their shared hope and he writes to invite the church to join in his mission of taking the gospel around the world for the glory of God. As he explains the hope of the gospel, Paul helps us see that Jesus Christ gives us hope, not only for the world to come, but also for life in this world.



Dr. Tyler Smiley, Senior Pastor • LakewoodLife.org
2235 Thompson Bridge Road, Gainesville, GA 30501 • (770) 532-6307