

# NOT ASHAMED

**LIVING  
AND  
TELLING  
THE  
GOSPEL**

**FOR I AM NOT ASHAMED  
OF THE GOSPEL, BECAUSE  
IT IS THE POWER OF GOD  
THAT BRINGS SALVATION TO  
EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES**

**ROMANS 1:16**

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## **THE LINK**

### *CONNECTING THE JIGSAW*

This helps you to see how this passage fits into the immediate verses and the whole book.



## **THE TRUTH**

### *THE SEAT BELT TEST*

Imagine one of the young people getting into their parent's car, and as they put their seat belt on their parent asks, "what was it all about today?!" The young person's answer should reflect the main point of the session. This will be reflected in the leading, songs, small groups and especially the message.



## **THE MESSAGE**

### *THE MEAT OF THE PASSAGE*

This takes you through the central truth of the passage. It will highlight the main points of application and give both the person giving the talk and the small group leaders what they need to teach the passage.



## **SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS**

### *THE TIME TO APPLY*

A time to find out how much of the talk the young people have understood.

A time to correct any misunderstandings.

A time to apply the main points in creative ways.

An opportunity to build your relationship with the young people.

# INTRODUCTION

**In the opening verses of Romans, what we have is the seedbed and foundation of all that will follow. One helpful way of looking at the Bible is to view it as a medicine cabinet with sixty-six different medicines. All will be needed at some point in the Christian's life, but some medicines are required far more regularly than others. The book of Romans is one of those medicines that need to be taken at regular intervals.**

Every important Bible doctrine is found in Romans, so it's essential our young people understand its message. If they understand the major themes of Romans, then we can be sure they will be able to clearly proclaim God's gospel, not ashamed (*1:16*).

**STUDY 1**

# **GOD'S GOSPEL ABOUT GOD'S KING**

**ROMANS 1:1-7**



## THE TRUTH

### THE SEAT BELT TEST

Paul outlines the four central truths of the gospel.

1. God's the author of the gospel (1:1)
2. The message is centred on JESUS, his death, resurrection and righteousness (1:2-4, 17)
3. The death and resurrection declare Jesus to be the victorious Lord of all (1:4)
4. The true power of God is found in declaring this message (1:16)



## THE MESSAGE

### THE MEAT OF THE PASSAGE

#### YOUR IDENTITY

The letter begins with Paul stating that he's the author of the book (1:1). Yet a closer look reveals Paul refusing the spotlight, for he's only a servant, a slave (1:4, 7b).

*"'Slave' is a title of great humility; it expresses Paul's sense of personal insignificance, without rights of his own, having been purchased to belong to Christ" J.Stott.*

As we journey through Romans, the theme of slavery will prove crucial, as it explains our true standing before God.

In our culture, the big question people want to ask is "Who am I?" Yet the first question God wants us to consider is, "Who do I belong to?" Right at the start of the letter, Paul declares that Christians belong exclusively to the Messiah (1:1, 6-7).

#### YOUR ENEMY

##### Nero & His Friends

The first-century Christians found themselves in a context where Nero was declaring himself to be the divine Lord. If the Christians refused to bow the knee to Nero and proclaim him Lord, they faced punishment or death. The city of Rome was the centre of the world, where all the nations lived, and mighty army's marched. The church in Rome consisted of a few hundred believers at most. As they experienced Rome's power and regularly saw their friends murdered, 'powerful' would have seemed a very strange word to use to describe them. Yet Paul wants them to see that there is a power greater than Rome.

The Christian church over the last two thousand years has witnessed many different Nero's. Last century there was the evil trio of Hitler, Stalin, and Mao. Each of them, in similar ways, declared themselves Lord and sought to exterminate God's people. The challenge we face as youth leaders is to identify who the Nero's are in the lives of our young people. Who is it that seeks to own them, their passions, minds and hearts? Who is it that our young people are tempted to bow to?

### Today's Nero

In secular Britain, there are specific individuals who purposely and aggressively oppose Christianity. The media is the primary gatekeeper of our society, which control how our young people think and therefore act. The drip, drip of secularism declares God an irrelevance and the public square no place for his message. Our young people are free to sing their little tunes to Jesus on a Sunday and pretend he exists as they study the Bible. Yet to take that belief into school on a Monday morning is at best foolish and worst applying fairy stories to real life. This is the air our young people breathe as they go to school, mix with their peers, and listen to the media. Therefore, just as it seemed impossible for the early Christians to declare 'I am not ashamed,' so for our young people. In **Romans 1**, Paul outlines four truth's that will give us gospel confidence.

## 1. THE AUTHOR (1:1)

The first-century disciples had the joy of being the first to declare God's good news. As they begin, Paul wants to remind them that it's not their idea. The founder of the gospel is not the Apostles or the early Christians but God himself.

When Nero begins to oppose God's message and murder his people, it's God the creator that he's opposing. When the Christians in Rome, or our young people at school, feel fearful of proclaiming the gospel, they must remember that it's God's gospel.

***"This is still the first and most basic conviction which underlines all authentic evangelism. What we have to share with others is neither a miscellany of human speculation, not one more religion to add to the rest, not really a religion at all. It is rather the gospel of God, God's own good news for a lost world. Without this conviction, evangelism is evacuated of its content, purpose and drive". J.Stott.***

It's God's gospel that has gripped Paul's mind, heart and affections. It's the conviction that it's God's gospel that drives Paul on to take it to a lost and broken world, whatever opposition he may face (1:14-15).

If our young people understand the gospel as God's message and not merely one opinion among many, then they will follow in Paul's footsteps. It's this gospel that wins their hearts and this gospel that owns them.



## 2. THE MESSAGE OF THE GOSPEL (1:2-4,17)

From declaring God as the author of the gospel, Paul now wants us to focus on the content of the message. The message we proclaim is not a theory or a nice set of orderly packaged doctrines. It's not a way of behaviour or the best way of reading and understanding the world we live in. The message we proclaim is centred upon the person of Jesus, and throughout Romans, Paul wants to convince us of this fact. In just a few verses, Paul reveals the four key truths about Jesus.

### He's Promised (1:2)

As far as God is concerned, the whole of history centres around the person of Jesus. Every promise, doctrine and major theme of the prophet's message in the Old Testament pointed forward to the historical life, teaching, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

### He's Royal (1:3)

Pumping around the veins of Jesus is royal messianic blood. Nero may be the King of Rome, but Jesus is God's King. It's this King that's won Paul's heart and this gospel that owns him.

### He's the Son (1:4)

The first two truths may not raise the eyebrow of a first-century Roman or a 21st century Brit, but the next two truths will. From a human title, Son of David, Paul now moves to a divine title, Son of God. Here Paul is thinking of passages like *Psalm 2*, where God's Son is declared to be the ruler and judge of all (*Ps 2:8*). When Caesar celebrated his birthday, it was declared to the whole nation as 'good news.' Confidently he claimed to rule the world, as the Son of God. Here Paul challenges that blasphemous claim by showing us who the real Son of God is, and why. It's the Son of God that's won his heart and this gospel that owns him.

### He's the Saviour & Judge (1:4)

The evidence Paul gives to prove that Jesus is the all-conquering Son of *Psalm 2*, is the historical resurrection. The eternal Son of God first came in weakness as a baby and crucified saviour. The cross and resurrection

prove that Jesus is both the world's saviour and judge. Therefore, when the first century Christians looked at Nero's power and influence, they were to compare it to the power of Jesus, God's Son. However powerful Nero was, one day, he would die. The Son of God had risen to prove that he owned history. It's the Son of God that's won their hearts and this gospel that owns them.

### He's our righteousness (1:17)

In the first three chapters, Paul wants to bring every individual into God's courtroom. Whether they be a Jew or Gentile, he aims to reveal their rebellion and future judgment (*1:18; 2:8, 3:9-18, 23*). Having shown God's wrath, he then reveals God's saving righteousness (*1:17*). It's this saviour that's won his heart and this gospel that owns him.

## 3. THE REASON (1:5-6, 8, 14)

The author is God, the message is Jesus, and the next question Paul wants to focus on is the reason for the message. The reason and purpose of the message is obedience to God (*1:5*). What does that actually look like? Well, Paul gives us two answers.

### Obedience to the historical Jesus (1:5, 8)

The gospel of God is about 'obedience' that comes through 'faith.' For many, the word faith belongs within a religious context, consisting of beliefs built on unproven facts. We have already seen that the gospel is built upon the historical life of Jesus Christ, his death and resurrection. Our faith (trust) is based upon a message that's historically true.

### Obedience to declare

The gospel outworking of obedient faith is first to realise that we're indebted to all mankind. Our debt is to take the message of God's good news to all (*1:14*).

*“When Paul uses the word ‘bound’ or ‘indebted’ what does he mean? There are, in fact, two possible ways of getting into debt. The first is to borrow money from someone; the second is to be given money for someone by a third party. For example, if I were to borrow £1,000 from you, I would be in your debt until I paid it back. Equally, if a friend of yours were to hand me £1,000 to give to you, I would be in your debt until I handed it over. In the former case I would have got myself into debt by borrowing; in the latter it is your friend who has put me in your debt by entrusting me with £1,000 for you.” J. Stott.*

If we are Christians, then God has entrusted us with his good news (1:18) and to keep it to one's self is to remain in debt to both God and the people that we are called to speak to. It's this saviour who has won their hearts and therefore desire to obey.

#### 4. THE POWER (1:16)

The last piece of the jigsaw concerns how we live. When the Christians in Rome were being torn to shreds, and the church seemed small and insignificant, the power of God must have seemed a million miles away. Yet all around the world, the gospel was bearing fruit (1:8). When we teach God's message accurately, we are unleashing God's power. When a weak and stuttering young person stands up for Christ in their classroom and tells their friends about Jesus, God's power is at work. It's a power that has won our hearts and owns our whole being.



## **SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS**

- 1. Who is the author of the gospel? Why is that important?**

Look up 1:1. How does it relate to Psalm 2?

How should that give you confidence?

- 2. What important truth's about Jesus does Paul start his book with? Look up 1:2-4, 7.**

How should that give you confidence?

What is the debt a follower of Jesus owes to their friends, family and whoever they meet? Look up 1:5,8, 14.

Think of one person you are in debt to. Pray that you would have the opportunity to pay the debt this term.

- 3. What was happening in all of the world then and now. Look up 1:8.**

What was the reason for that? Look up 1:16.

How should that give you confidence?

**STUDY 2**

# **THE GREAT EXCHANGE: MR & MRS HEDONIST**

**ROMANS 1:18-32**



## THE LINK

### CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

Having started with the person of Jesus, Paul now shows us the kind of people he's come to save.



## THE TRUTH

### THE SEAT BELT TEST

1. Our knowledge of God is great.
2. Our rejection of God is deep.
3. We stand condemned before God.
4. Our only hope is Christ's righteousness.



## THE MESSAGE

### THE MEAT OF THE PASSAGE

#### 1. WHAT WE KNOW

The greatest theme in Romans is that salvation's only to be found in the grace of God and the righteousness he provides (**1:16-17**). As Paul lays out **Romans chapters 1-3**, his aim is to show that we are fully responsible for rebellion and the judgement it deserves.

When we come to **Romans 1**, Paul first introduces us to some startling truths about what people know about God. As we teach **Romans 1**, we must be convinced that whether the young person comes from a church or unchurched home, deep down, they know that God is their creator, judge, and saviour. If we search the Bible, nowhere does it ever seek to prove the existence of God; instead, it assumes that we know there is a God. This should throw a whole new light upon evangelism. Instead of trying to convince people of things that they don't believe, we are actually convincing them of things they already know to be true.

- ◆ God's truth is plain to all people (**1:19**)
- ◆ We know that God is eternal (**1:20**)
- ◆ We know that God is divine (**1:20**)
- ◆ We know that God should be glorified (**1:21-22**)
- ◆ We know that God is our judge (**1:32**)

### 3 REACTIONS WHEN YOU TEACH THESE TRUTHS

1. Firstly, many, if not all, will revert to self-defence and self-justification mode. When God's light exposes our hearts, we hate it and flee back to the darkness we have always loved (*John 3:19*).
2. Secondly, some of the young people will struggle with what Paul says about sin, especially homosexuality. Don't be surprised by their reaction. Just make sure you let the truth of *Romans 1* answer their questions and objections, and not your own wisdom.
3. Thirdly some of our young people may have been damaged by sin and its devastating effects. If that is the case, they may well want to know what the answer is to a messed-up world. The Spirit of God maybe using their sad circumstances to help them see the reality of God as loving creator and their deep need of him as their saviour.

## 2. WHAT WE DO

### We Lie (1:18-20)

When Paul writes *Romans 1*, he's probably got *Genesis 1-3* and *Psalms 14:1* in mind. The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt; their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good. Here Paul seeks to explain and apply the truth of *Genesis 1-3* and *Psalms 24:1*, in the light of Jesus death and resurrection.

To think and act as if mankind's thinking is king is to have a foolish, futile, and darkened mind. Therefore when someone declares themselves an atheist, they are lying and going against what they know to be true (*Psalms 14:1 & 1:18-21*).

*"Man is so made that he cannot but infer from his environment the eternal power and goodness of God. His mind (indeed his whole psychology) is tuned in to the revelation which surrounds him. He is neither blind nor insensitive. The message actually gets through to him."* Donald Macleod.

The theology of how mankind's heart works should be hugely helpful to our young people. The spiritual open-heart surgery Paul does, helps us understand how sin works.

### We Suppress (1:18-20)

The second mark of a foolish, futile and darkened mind is to suppress God's truth (*1:18*). Even though we're wired to know the truth about God, we still seek to strangle that truth. We believe these truths stifle our independence and spoil our lives. Mankind is a mixed up and confused being. They know God is almighty and their judge, yet live as if they are free and unaccountable to him.

*"When the creation points to the goodness of God it is directing us to One mysterious, unmanageable and infinitely threatening, upon whom we are totally dependent and to whom we are unconditionally accountable"* Donald Macleod.

### We Exchange (1:21-23, 25)

The next outworking of our rebellion is to exchange the truth about God for a lie. We see this first in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve chose to believe in a created being rather than the creator. We see this in the desert when Israel chose to worship a golden calf instead of the God who saved them. It's a little like taking one of Rembrandt's greatest works, photocopying it, and then treating the photocopy as if it is the original.

Our role as youth leaders is to help our young people see how these truths apply to their daily lives. The great reformer John Calvin said, *"From this we may gather that man's nature, so to speak, is a perpetual factory of idols?"* Whether it's sport, education, relationships, art etc., our default reaction is to take a good thing and make it a god thing. We hate the idea of God being our creator, judge or saviour, so we exchange that truth for a lie so that we can run our lives our way (*1:21-23*). Therefore whatever our hearts and passions are drawn to; is what we glory in and worship.

## GOD'S TRUTH

1:21	We know God
1:21	We choose <b>not</b> to glorify him
1:21	Our thinking becomes futile
1:21	Our hearts become foolish and darkened
1:22	We become fools. We know God is our judge

## MANKIND'S LIE

1:22	Claim to be wise
	We exchange the glory of the creator for created things
1:23	We exchange God's truth for a lie
1:25	We worship created things instead of the created

### Paul's logic:

- ◆ We are made in the image of God.
- ◆ What we create reflects in some way our own image.
- ◆ To honour any image above God is to honour the image of an image of an image.
- ◆ To live, worship, and glory in what we have made, offends our creator.

## HOW REBELLION WORKS

### GOD'S RESPONSE

1:24	God gives people what their sinful hearts desire
1:26	God gives people what their lusts desire
1:28	God gives people over to a depraved mind
1:18,32	God responds with anger towards people's rebellion.

### OUR REBELLION

1:24	We decide what is right or wrong in the sexual arena
1:26-27	God's design for people's sexuality is totally recreated by mankind
1:28-32	Mankind lives by their passions and not what they know to be true

## HOW OUR THINKING AND BEHAVIOUR IS DESCRIBED

OUR THINKING		OUR LIVING	
1:21	Futile	1:18	Wicked
1:22	Fools	1:24	Sexually impure
1:21	Foolish & darkened hearts	1:24	Degrade one another
1:28	Depraved mind	1:26	Shameful lusts
1:29	Filled with every kind of wickedness	1:26-27	Unnatural relations
1:31	No understanding	1:28	Do what ought not to be done
1:32	Approve of what God says is wrong	1:29-32	People make the rules

### The result of our rebellion

- ◆ Mankind is now the rule maker and king
  - In place of the creator
- ◆ Mankind makes the rules and designs morality
  - In place of God
- ◆ The only hope for mankind is himself
  - He is the answer to all the problems sin throws up.

### WE EXCHANGED GOD

- 1:22 We exchange God's glory for an image.
- 1:23 We exchange God's truth for a lie and worship created instead of creator.

### WE EXCHANGED EACH OTHER

- 1:26 Women exchange natural for unnatural.
- 1:27 Men exchange natural for unnatural.

### We Stand Condemned

The picture Paul has painted is a devastating one. He refuses to hold back and reveals exactly how God views our rebellion. The final verdict is that we stand before

God condemned, without any excuse facing his anger (1:18, 20). This anger we face is so different to the anger that we often display.

*"Human anger, although there is such a thing as righteous indignation, is mostly very unrighteous. It is an irrational and uncontrollable emotion, containing much vanity, animosity, malice and the desire for revenge. It should go without saying that God's anger is absolutely free of all such poisonous ingredients."*

*"The wrath of God, then is almost totally different from human anger. It does not mean that God loses his temper, flies into a rage, or is malicious, spiteful or vindictive. The alternative to 'wrath' is not 'love' but 'neutrality' in the moral conflict. And God is not neutral. On the contrary, his wrath is holy hostility to evil, his refusal to condone it or come to terms with it, his just judgement upon it." J.Stott.*

### God's Righteousness

With this verdict, it would be right to wonder if there is any hope at all for mankind. Thankfully God's wrath is not the end of the story. We may face His anger because of our sin, but we also have his righteousness as the only and sufficient answer to it (1:16-17).





## **SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS**

- 1. What truths about God do we know by nature? Look up 1:18-22, 32.  
In what way do you see this in the life of your friends or displayed in the media?**

- 2. What do we do with what we know? Look 1:18-25.  
In what way do you see this in the life of your friends or displayed in the media?**

- 3. In what way does this quote describe what Paul is trying to say in Romans 1?**

*"When the creation points to the goodness of God it is directing us to One - mysterious, unmanageable and infinitely threatening, upon whom we are totally dependent and to whom we are unconditionally accountable." Donald Macleod.*

- 4. What are the effects of exchanging the truth of God for a lie? Look up 1:24-32.  
In what way do you see this in the life of your friends or displayed in the media?**

- 5. In the light of what we know and how we respond, what is our standing before God?  
Look up 1:18, 20.**

- 6. How should this affect how you view your debt? Look up 1:14.**

- 7. What is Mr & Mrs Hedonist's only hope? Look up 1:16-17.**

**STUDY 3**

# **JUDGING WITHOUT A MIRROR: MR & MRS PRIVILEGE**

**ROMANS 2:1-16**



## THE LINK

### CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

Last week Paul outlined to us the character of Mr & Mrs Hedonist, showing us why they were condemned before God. This week he reveals the character of Mr & Mrs Privilege and why they are also condemned before God.



## THE TRUTH

### THE SEAT BELT TEST

1. Israel's spiritual privilege should lead to humility not pride, but instead it lead to pride.
2. Whether we are a Gentile or Jew, we stand before God guilty and condemned.



## THE MESSAGE

### THE MEAT OF THE PASSAGE

In the previous chapter, Paul sort to expose the heart of someone who had no time or thought for God. Today his focus is slightly different, as he seeks to reveal the heart of the self-righteous. In Paul's day, this was the religious Jew; today we may see this in the life of a young person from a Christian home or the spirit that pervades the Sun or Daily Mail newspapers.

## MR & MRS HEDONIST V'S MR & MRS PRIVILEGE (2:1-2, 12-15)

### What Mr & Mrs Hedonist Knows

- ◆ They know that God is God (1:19).
- ◆ They know that God is eternal (1:20).
- ◆ They know that God is divine (1:20).
- ◆ They know that God should be glorified (1:21-22).

### What Mr & Mrs Privilege Knows

The same truth's about God are cemented into people's hearts and consciences (1:19-22). The major difference is that Gentiles privilege is from creation alone, whereas the Jews had both creation and God's Law. This theme of privilege we will see again next week and regularly as we journey through Romans.

### THE PRIVILEGED JEWS

- 9:4
- Adopted as God's people
  - A history littered with God's glory
  - God's promises made to them
  - Ten Commandments given to them at Sinai
  - God's presence displayed to them through the temple
- 
- 9:5
- The history of the patriarchs' was theirs
  - God's Messiah came through their nation

If the youth group had a Bible quiz on a Friday night, you could be sure that everyone would have wanted Mr & Mrs Self Privilege in their team. They would have known all the commandments inside out and back to front (2:18). The big issue is what they do with their privilege?

### Mr & Mrs Privilege Judgment

As the picture was painted of Mr & Mrs Hedonist in chapter 1, Mr & Mrs Privilege would have been nodding with great approval. The massive mistake Mr & Mrs Privilege make is they never look in the mirror at themselves. They are happy to use the Law to judge others, but never themselves (2:1-3).

The privileges he received should have led to deep humility and thankfulness towards God. Instead, it led to a heart full of pride.

### The Heart of Pride

**2:4** – Contempt for the riches of God's kindness, forbearance, and patience.

**2:5** – Stubborn and an unrepentant heart.

**2:8** – Self-seeking.  
– Rejecting God's truth and following evil.

## GOD'S JUDGEMENT

The heart of Mr & Mrs Privilege is full of pride, so what does God think?

### God's Judgement

**2:1, 3** Guilty of the same sins as those in Romans 1.

**2:2, 3, 6** The Law they use to judge will be used on them.

**2:5** Judging like this stores up wrath for themselves.

### The Judgment With A Mirror

To apply *Romans 2* correctly, you have to refer back to *1:28-32*. Here we have a list of sins that people commit who have never heard of God's Law. What Paul skillfully does, is show that those with God's Law commit the same sins.

#### Greed (1:29)

##### Law Judgement

- ◆ Do you agree that greed is wrong? Think of an example when someone has been greedy towards you.

##### Mirror Judgement

- ◆ Have you ever been greedy?

#### Gossip (1:29)

##### Law Judgement

- ◆ Do you agree that gossip is wrong? Think of an example where you have been hurt by gossip.

##### Mirror Judgement

- ◆ Have you gossiped about another person and hurt them?

#### Mercy (1:31)

##### Law Judgement

- ◆ Do you think being unkind and spiteful is wrong? Think of a time when someone was unkind and spiteful to you.

##### Mirror Judgement

- ◆ Have you been unkind and spiteful to another person?

### Judgment on the Last Day

#### 1. A judgment that's truthful (2:2)

The first victim when mankind rebels is God's truth. When God enters the courtroom, his perfect truth will be the only gauge by which mankind will be judged.

#### 2. A judgment that's inescapable (2:3)

The second truth Paul presents to us is devastating. On the last day, all people will stand before God: Jew or Gentile, rich or poor, black or white. There will be no one missing and no way out.

#### 3. A judgment that's patient (2:4)

On the last day of history, God will remind us that his judgment was patient and kind. The reason for his patience and kindness was to bring us all to repentance.

#### 4. A judgment that's just & fair (2:5-10, 2:9-11)

A judgement that's based upon perfect truth will be just. Those who refuse to respond in repentance to God's patience and kindness will receive his anger (2:5). Those who choose to live selfishly and reject his truth will experience His wrath (2:6-9). All will be judged fairly by the light they have been given, whether Jew or Gentile (2:9-11). *"The day of God's wrath will also be the time when righteous judgment will be revealed."* J.Stott

#### 5. A judgment that's public (2:16)

On the last day God, will expose people's actions, words, and hidden motives.

### God's Righteousness

Once again, our only hope is something outside of ourselves, Which is the mercy, grace and righteousness of Christ (1:17).



## **SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS**

- 1.** How is Mr & Mrs access to knowledge about God different to Mr & Mrs Hedonist? Compare 1:19-22 with 9:4-5.
- 2.** What should this privilege have led to?
- 3.** What did it lead to? Look up 2:4-8.
- 4.** In reality, was there any difference in the behaviour of Mr & Mrs Hedonist and Mr & Mrs Privilege? Compare 1:28-32 with 2:1-6.
- 5.** What truths mark God's judgement? Look up 2:1-11, 16.
- 6.** Which person are you most like, Mr & Mrs Hedonist or Mr & Mrs Privilege?
- 7.** What is The Privilege's only hope 1:16-17?

**STUDY 4**

# **PRIVILEGED PRIDE: MR & MRS PRIVILEGE**

**ROMANS 2:17-29**



## THE LINK

### CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

Whether Jew or Gentile, we are guilty and without excuse before a holy God (1:20, 2:1).



## THE TRUTH

### THE SEAT BELT TEST

Israel's privilege led to pride instead of humility, arrogance instead of repentance.



## THE MESSAGE

### THE MEAT OF THE PASSAGE

For the past two weeks, Paul has intended to convince us that every human being has fallen short of God's glory. Whether Jew or Gentile, we are guilty and without excuse (1:20, 2:1).

#### Mr & Mrs Privilege

The verses today show us a different angle to Mr & Mrs Privilege. Last week we saw how they used God's law to judge others, but never themselves. The first thing to be clear about is that the privileges are all God-given. Therefore as Paul opens up the heart of Mr & Mrs Privilege once more, we must see the privileges as wonderful gifts from a God. The table shows that all the privileges were part of what it meant to be one of God's people and part of Israel.

Privileges	OLD TESTAMENT	ROMANS
One of God's people.	Dt 7:7	2:17
Knows God's will.	Dt 4:8	2:18
Instructed by God's Law.	Isa 48:17	2:18
Guide to the blind and light for those in the dark.	Is 42:6	2:19
Access to God's knowledge and truth.	Isa 48:17	2:20
Teacher of God's law.	Dt 4:9-10	2:20

#### What You Think Is What You Are

The blessings that Israel received should have led to humility and praise, but instead is lead to pride and self-importance.

- ◆ You **'call'** yourself a Jew (2:17)
- ◆ You **'rely'** on the law (2:17)
- ◆ You **'boast'** in God (2:17)
- ◆ You **'know'** his will (2:18)
- ◆ You **'approve'** of what is superior (2:18)
- ◆ You're **'instructed'** by God's law (2:18)
- ◆ You're **'convinced'** that you are a **'guide'** to the blind and foolish (2:19-20)
- ◆ You **'teach'** others (2:21)
- ◆ You **'preach'** against stealing (2:21)
- ◆ You **'say'** that people should not commit adultery (2:22)
- ◆ You **'abhor'** idols (2:22)
- ◆ You **'boast'** in the law (2:23)

The privileges have led to a haughty and arrogant spirit. The way Paul brings this out is devastating, as he first sums up their 'attitude' (2:17-20), and then the reality of their disobedience (2:21-24). Their chests may initially be puffed out with pride, but Paul wants to bring their attention to some devastating home truth's.

## What You Actually Are

Paul's next move is to get Mr & Mrs Privilege to have a little look at Israel's history book and then to ask a few straightforward questions.

1. Is Israel's history marked by them teaching the nations God's truth? (2:21)
2. Is Israel's history marked by sexual and spiritual faithfulness? (2:22)
3. Is Israel's history marked by love and obedience to God's law? (2:23)

When Paul turns the spotlight on Israel, it's pretty depressing. There are so many places we could go to in the Old Testament, but Malachi is probably the best. It's the last Old Testament book and brings all of Israel's history to a climax.

### Stealing (Romans 2:21, Malachi 1:8, 3:8-9)

Israel steals from each other and God.

### Adultery & Idolatry (Romans 2:22, Malachi 2:11-13)

These two go hand in hand. Israel's spiritual adultery is seen most clearly in whom their men chose to marry. The law had forbidden them to marry people outside of Israel, as this was the quickest route to idolatry. Repeatedly Israel chose to ignore God's warning and therefore ended up prostituting themselves to other gods.

### Disobeying God's Law (Romans 2:23, Malachi 3:6-7)

The summing up of Israel's attitude towards God is devastating. Having the law of God is one thing; obeying it is quite another (Rom 2:23). Many words could be stamped over Israel's history to sum it up; the one that Paul chooses is 'blasphemous' (Rom 2:24).

## APPLYING THIS TO OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

### Stealing (Romans 2:21)

To be utterly thankless is a form of stealing. As human beings, we live in God's world not as tenants but as landlords. Every day we receive so many good gifts, but instead of thanking him and glorying in his kindness and goodness, we ignore him.

## Adultery

Just like Israel, we reject the one true God and instead choose to give our finest love and affection to created things instead of the creator. The problem we have in our culture is that we are so drugged by secularism that we don't see it.

The book of Hosea in the Old Testament is given over to expressing just how repulsive God finds this attitude and behaviour. A prophet is commanded to go and marry a prostitute, which is God's graphic way of depicting his relationship to Israel. Even though the prophet Hosea is full of love and faithfulness to Gomer, the prostitute, she still foolishly chooses to leave her husband and return to a life of prostitution.

A helpful way of helping the young people to feel the power of this is through a song by Sam Smith. The song and accompanying video show powerfully the horror and pain that comes with adultery. This is the pain God feels when we choose to love the created rather than the creator. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nCkpzqqog4k>

### Circumcision (Romans 2:25-29)

Many of the young people may wonder what all the fuss about circumcision is and why it seems to be such a big deal? The first thing to say is that circumcision was a physical sign pointing to a spiritual reality (2:28-29). One of the best ways to illustrate this is a wedding ring. A wedding ring is the sign of a promise made and a reminder that it must be honoured. The same is true of circumcision, as it's a sign of a promise made and a reminder that it must be kept. If a Jew is repeatedly unfaithful to God, the sign then becomes meaningless (2:25). If we take a brief look at Israel's history, we see that circumcision, on the whole, was meaningless, for its history was full of spiritual unfaithfulness.

With the coming of the Spirit, everything changes, for the Spirit circumcises our hearts so that we by nature love and adore the God who saves us (2:28-29).

### Our History

If we look at our own history, is it really that different from Israel's? If not, then it's clear that we need God's righteousness (1:16-17).





## **SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS**

- 1.** How does Paul describe Mr & Mrs Privilege's attitude in light of what God had given them? Look up 2:17-22.
  
- 2.** What was Israel's history marked by?
  - Compare 2:21 with Malachi 1:8, 3:8-9
  
  - Compare 2:22 with Malachi 2:11-13
  
  - Compare 2:23 with Malachi 3:6-7
  
- 3.** Circumcision served the same purpose as a wedding ring; it was a reminder of who you belonged to. How had Israel completely misused this reminder? Look up 2:25-29.
  
- 4.** If we were to look at our own attitude to the privileges God has given to us, would it be similar to Israel to different? Why or why not?
  
- 5.** What is The Privilege's only hope 1:16-17?

**STUDY 5**

**THE GOSPEL  
IN TWO  
WORDS:  
'BUT NOW'**

**ROMANS 3**



## THE LINK

### CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

We have seen that both Mr & Mrs Hedonist and Mr & Mrs Privilege stand condemned before God (**1:24,26,28, 2:3**), without excuse (**1:20, 2:1**).

Today Paul finishes giving his evidence, showing that the whole world stands condemned before a holy God.



## THE TRUTH

### THE SEAT BELT TEST

*"The history of the world is the judgment of the world."*  
F.F.Bruce.

Our only hope is to trust in the cross.



## THE MESSAGE

### THE MEAT OF THE PASSAGE

As we teach Romans to our young people, don't be surprised if they begin to wonder whether or not there's any good news. Paul structures the book to start with the bad news about mankind before he shows the good news of the gospel.

#### The Court Room

To properly understand Romans, we must see the difference between a western legal system and how Paul represents the courtroom scene. In western culture, the judge is an objective and detached person seeking to bring the rule of law and justice between two offended parties. In Romans, the picture is entirely different, for God is both the judge, the one we've rebelled against, and the person who gives the sentence.

#### The Allegation

The allegation God brings before mankind is summed up in **Romans 3:23**, "**for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God**". All the way through Paul looked at mankind from different angles, but every time the verdict was the same.

### DAY 1

#### MR & MRS HEDONIST IN THE DOCK (1:18-32)

#### The Evidence

- ◆ **They suppress it** – refusing to acknowledge God as God (**1:18**).
- ◆ **They exchange it** – exchanging the truth of God's character for a lie. The created for the creator (**1:22,25**).
- ◆ **They change the order** – having created God in their own image, they now choose to define the kind of morality they want to live by (**1:24-28**).

### The Consequence

- ◆ Their thinking becomes depraved (1:28), darkened, foolish and futile (1:21).
- ◆ Their morality and therefore behaviour becomes degrading (1:24); indecent (1:27); unnatural (1:26); shameful (1:27); relationship destroying (1:29-32).

### The Verdict

- ◆ Guilty (1:24, 26, 28)
- ◆ No excuse (1:20)
- ◆ Facing God's anger (1:18)

## DAY 2

### MR & MRS PRIVILEGE IN THE DOCK (2:1-16)

#### The Evidence

- ◆ A judgment based on *God's truth* (2:2)
- ◆ A judgment based on *God's righteousness* (2:5, 12-13)
- ◆ A judgment based on *God's all-seeing eye* (2:6, 16)
- ◆ A judgment based on *God's terms* (2:6-11)

#### The Verdict

- ◆ Guilty (2:3)
- ◆ No excuse (2:1)
- ◆ Facing God's anger (2:5-9)

## DAY 3

### MR & MRS PRIVILEGE IN THE DOCK (2:17-29)

#### The Evidence

Mr & Mrs Privilege comes into the courtroom convinced they're superior therefore not guilty (2:18). The tactic Paul takes is simple, let's look at your history. As he takes Mr & Mrs Privilege through their own history, a catalogue of disobedience is displayed (2:21-23). Instead of Israel being a light for people to see God's character, they have become a laughing stock (2:24).

In response to Paul's accusations, Mr & Mrs Privilege turn to the covenant of circumcision. The answer Paul gives is clear: circumcision without obedience is useless (2:25-27), for the outward sign without inward obedience

is worthless (2:28-29).

#### The Verdict

- ◆ Guilty (2:27)
- ◆ No excuse (2:27)
- ◆ Facing God's anger (2:27)

Our role as youth workers is to apply the words of Paul with skilful accuracy. We must make sure that we don't water down any of his words but instead, let them speak into our contemporary culture.

*"All human beings, of every race and rank, of every creed and culture, Jews and Gentiles, the immoral and moralizing, the religious and the irreligious, are without any exception sinful, guilty, inexcusable and speechless before God". There is no ray of light, no flicker of hope, no prospect of rescue."* J.Stott.

#### The world in the dock (3:9-20)

All the evidence points to the fact that the whole world is guilty and therefore deserve God's judgment.

*"The history of the world is the judgment of the world."* F.F.Bruce.

With the evidence that's been given, no wonder mankind is speechless (3:19-20). This brilliant quote by D.A.Carson sums up Paul's words perfectly

*"God knows that it is for our good that he be at the centre of absolutely everything. It is not that he wants to have a certain preference among peers; he is not our peer! When you and I want to be especially praised by our peers, by our fellow human beings, we want to be stronger and wiser or richer or more beautiful than they are; we want to be thought of as superior. But God is superior. He is not just like us. He is God. Equally important, God in his love knows that we must see him at the centre of everything or we are lost and undone. To see him this way is for our good. It is out of love that God insists that he be God, that idols must be banished. And he is correspondingly angry when by our actions, thoughts, and deeds we declare, "It will not be so"*

The problem with mankind is that they have declared loud and clear, **"It will not be so"**, and Paul has not shirked from showing us exactly how. The table on the next page reminds us just how clear Paul has made it.

## OUR REBELLION

**3:9** Jews and Gentiles =  
**All** are under the power of sin.

**3:10** **No one** righteous, not even one.

**3:11** **No one** seeks God.  
**No one** understands God.

**3:12** **All** have turned away.  
**Together** become worthless.  
**No one** who does good.  
Not even **one**.

**3:13** Tongues **practice** deceit.

**3:14** Mouths **full** of cursing and bitterness.

**3:15**

**3:16**

**3:17**

**3:18**

## WHAT'S THE PICTURE?

Turned our back on God.

Throats that smell like death.  
Lips full of snake like poison

Feet swift to shed blood.

Ruin and misery mark their way.

The way of peace they do not know.

No fear of God before their eyes.

## THE CROSS OUR ONLY HOPE

Throughout Romans 1-3, Paul's one aim is to show that we are facing God wrath, and we have no hope. *"There is no ray of light, no flicker of hope, no prospect of rescue."* J.Stott. Only when the pigsty of our sin has been seen will we see the beauty of the gospel.

Having convinced us of sin and the judgment we deserve, he now pens the most beautiful words in the Bible. *"But now, apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been made known."* 3:21. Our prayer should be that our young people are thirsting for an answer to the judgement they deserve.

## THREE KEY TRUTHS THAT PAUL WANTS US TO GRASP ABOUT THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD.

### But now - God's Righteousness

#### *It's focused upon the historical Jesus*

The place where Paul focuses our gaze is the historical Jesus. The Jews who oppose God's gospel go to the law for support, but Paul goes straight to the cross. This is the message the prophets told us to look forward to and long for (3:21-22).

#### *It's focused upon his righteousness*

With great skill, Paul's shown us that if our righteousness were a bank balance, we would all be massively in debt. We are in the dock, guilty and condemned before the judge that we have offended. *'But now'* the judge pays into our bank balance the life of his perfect Son. This perfect life put us in total credit. For the very first time, we are in a position of freedom facing no more accusation and completely free from punishment.

These two quotes from John Stott help us understand exactly what state and condition God's righteousness has brought us into.

*"The righteousness of (or from) God is a combination of his righteous character, his saving initiative and his gift of a righteous standing before him. It is his just justification of the unjust, his righteous way of 'righteousing' the unrighteous."*

*"To condemn is not merely to punish, but to declare the accused guilty or worthy of punishment; and justification is not merely to remit that punishment, but to declare that punishment cannot be justly inflicted..... Pardon and Justification therefore are essentially distinct. The one is the remission of punishment; the other is a declaration that no ground for the infliction of punishment exists."*

The *'but now'* makes it possible for every Christian to shout from the rooftops (8:1). Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,

#### **But now – God's Grace (3:24)**

Why does God give us His righteousness? Because he is 'full of grace.' This is one of those gospel truths that makes Christianity so wonderfully unique from every other faith. We stand before God condemned and deserving judgment. Yet the triune God makes the move by redeeming us from the punishment we deserve. He makes the move and pays Christ's righteousness into our bank account, not because we deserve it or have earned it. Neither earn it nor do we deserve it; instead, it's all grace..

#### **But now – God's Justice (3:25-26)**

The problem with God giving us the righteousness of Christ is justice. How can a holy God who hates sin (1:18; 2:5; 3:5) remain just while at the same time forgiving sinners? We know from scripture that God hates sin and must punish it (Dt 25:1; Pr 17:15; Isa 5:23; Ex 23:7).

#### **Jesus The Sacrifice (3:25-26)**

In the Old Testament, God provided the sacrificial system to deal with Israel sin (Lev 17:11). The Old

Testament sacrificial system was a picture of the great sacrifice to come. When the sacrifices were made, blood had to be shed, and death had to take place. It was only through the bloodshed and the death of the lamb that sins could be atoned for. Here Paul shows that it's through the shed blood and sacrifice of Jesus that our sins are punished and therefore atoned for.

This is the very heart of the gospel. God's justice against sin must be satisfied, and Jesus' death pays the ransom price that saves us from God's wrath. It's our blood that should be shed and our death that should be taken. We are the ones who deserve the punishment, but Jesus takes it for us (3:25-26).

*"But in the courts of heaven, God sets up the system. He is not only perfectly just, but he is also the offended party. And in the person of his own dear Son he absorbs the penalty on ~behalf of the people who put their faith in him." D.Carson.*

#### **But now – God's Salvation (3:27-31)**

The death of the Lord Jesus opens up the gospel to all people. The disease of sin affects all; therefore, God's remedy is for all, whether Jew or Gentile (3:22, 29). Here Paul clarifies that our response must be one of faith (trust) in the cross of Jesus.

- ◆ Through faith in Jesus Christ (3:22)
- ◆ Received by faith (3:25)
- ◆ Those who have faith in Jesus Christ (3:26)
- ◆ Justified by faith (3:28)
- ◆ Through that same faith (3:30)

#### **So now – Go and boast (3:27-31)**

Paul finishes chapter three with a reason and encouragement to boast. Clearly, we are not to boast in our own righteousness, for we have none (3:27). Instead, we are to boast of Christ's righteousness and the cross that saves us from the coming wrath. A true understanding of the cross will give our young people the boldness and courage not to be ashamed (1:16-17).



## **SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS**

- 1.** What images and words does Paul skillfully use to reveal mankind's universal rebellion? Look up 3:9-18.
  
- 2.** Think back to the news you have watched and listened to, the things you have seen on social media, or situations at school or college. How do they reflect what Paul says in 3:9-18?
  
- 3.** What is God's verdict on your and mankind's rebellion as a whole? Look up 3:19-20.
  - What hope does Paul give to condemned rebels? (3:21-31)
  
  - Why is it so important for God to give us Christ's righteousness? (3:21-22)
  
  - Why is it so important for God's justice to be satisfied? (3:25-26)
  
- 4.** How does Jesus sacrifice satisfy God's justice? (3:25-26)
  
- 5.** What's God's motive in giving these gifts to us? Look up 3:24.
  
- 6.** Faith = Trust . What does a person need to do to receive Christ righteousness and the forgiveness that comes through Christ's sacrifice?
  
- 7.** What is the right response of someone who puts their trust in Christ? Look up 3:27-31. Pray for an opportunity to boast this week.

**STUDY 6**

# **PROMISE OR PERFORMANCE**

**ROMANS 4:1-25**





## **THE LINK**

### **CONNECTING THE JIGSAW**

Paul has shown us that the only way to deal with our rebellion is to trust in Christ's righteousness and sacrifice. Today Paul will show from the Old Testament that it has always been God's way.



## **THE TRUTH**

### **THE SEAT BELT TEST**

Whether it's the message of the Old or the New Testament, salvation is by faith in God's promise to be forgiven.



## **THE MESSAGE**

### **THE MEAT OF THE PASSAGE**

#### **MANKIND'S STORY - NOTHING TO BOAST ABOUT**

Having revealed the guilt of mankind (**1:18-2:29**), Paul shows us that the whole of mankind is guilty.

- 1.** All are under the power of sin (**3:9**)
- 2.** All have turned away from God (**3:10-18**)
- 3.** All mouths are silent (**3:19**)
- 4.** All the world is held accountable (**3:19**)
- 5.** All stand condemned (**3:20**)

With the verdict of our guilt certain, Paul then shows how the cross is the only answer to the judgement we deserve (**3:21-31**). The purpose of the cross is to move mankind from a place of judgment, to a place of safety. When Jesus dies, he takes the punishment for our rebellion and then pays his righteousness into our bankrupt account. The response that God commands from us is to put our faith (trust) in Christ's sacrifice (**3:22, 25, 26, 28, 30**).

In Romans 4, Paul wants to take us back to the Old Testament hero Abraham. His reason for doing so is to show us that 'faith' trust has always been at the centre of how God relates to his people.

#### **Israel's hero's - With nothing to boast about (4:1-6)**

A big mistake Christian's can make is to think the Old Testament resembles law, therefore works. Whereas the New Testament resembles the cross, therefore salvation by faith alone. Paul shows us that the way God deals with his people has always been through 'faith alone' and never works.

The person he uses as a great example of living by faith is Abraham. Paul begins Romans 4 in the same way he ended the previous chapter (3:27). Like each of us, Abraham is justified by faith and not by works (4:1-3). To prove his point, Paul singles out two key truths.

### **Believing not boasting**

It logically follows that if salvation is based upon our own works, then we have something to be proud of (4:1-2). Yet we know that this cannot be, for each of us stand condemned before God's judgment seat (3:23). Instead, like Abraham we refuse to base our salvation upon works (4:4), and instead put our faith in the promises of God. The reason Abraham is our great example is that he chooses to believe God's promises (4:3, 5-6).

### **Blessings not boasting**

Paul then turns from Israel's great patriarch to Israel's great king. The words Paul uses in *Psalms 32:1-2* reveal that David, trusted in God alone for his righteousness. When David looked at his life, I am sure he would agree with Paul's summing up in *Romans 3:19-20*. Therefore, it should be no surprise that David focuses on grace, instead of obedience to the law, when he declares his 'transgression forgiven', 'sins covered', and 'the Lord not counting his sin against him'. Having shown us how David and Abraham trusted in God's righteousness, Paul focuses again on circumcision and the law.

### **Credit not circumcision**

The number one passion of Paul is for the gospel to go to the ends of the earth (1:5-6, 13, 16-17; 2:10; 3:22, 29). If Paul thinks anything is getting in the way of that happening, he will oppose and expose it. For some people, the law and especially circumcision, was becoming far too important. In fact, some were saying that the cross-plus circumcision was needed to be accepted by God. To show that they are wrong, Paul returns to the Father of faith, Abraham.

### **The great apostle asks two simple questions.**

#### **1. Is God's blessing for circumcised and uncircumcised? (4:9)**

Paul answers with a resounding YES. If all are condemned (3:27), then faith in God's promises must be for all, whether circumcised or not (4:11-12).

#### **2. When was Abraham justified before he was circumcised or after? (4:9-10)**

The faith Abraham displays in believing God's promises happened before he was circumcised, not after. Therefore, circumcision cannot be significant for salvation; otherwise, Abraham would not have been declared righteous (4:10-12).

Therefore Abraham, far from being a dividing line between Jews and Gentiles, actually brings them together. The promise that came to him was always meant to bring blessing to the world (15:3-5), not division. So Paul uses the little word 'all' to describe Abraham.

- ◆ 4:11 – He is the father of all.
- ◆ 4:16 – All Abraham's offspring.
- ◆ 4:16 – He is the father of us all.

Therefore, when a person puts their faith in Christ (3:23), whether Jew or Gentile, Abraham becomes their father, as they follow him along the path of faith (4:11b-12).

*"Abraham is the father of uncircumcised believers, for he himself was in that condition when he was justified. And he is the father of circumcised believers. This is not because they have a circumcision like his, but because they have a faith like his!"* S. Olyott.

## Promise not pride

Having exposed the lie that circumcision was the means of gaining God's favour, Paul now turns to the second stumbling block, the law. Again Paul points to the fact that the promise was given to Abraham before the law was received by Moses (**4:13; Gen 15:4-6**). This proves that the law cannot be the means of Abraham being declared 'righteous.' The purpose of the law was not to bring salvation, but instead to reveal our deep need for it.

- ◆ **4:14-15** – Law leads to transgression, which leads to wrath.
- ◆ **4:16-17** – Promise leads to faith which leads to grace.

To put your trust in the law makes God's promise worthless (**4:14-15**). The purpose of the law is to reveal our sin and need for forgiveness (**4:15**). The purpose of God's promise is to show us that only God's righteousness will give us hope of salvation.

***"As Paul has written in Galatians, 'if the inheritance depends on the law, then it no longer depends on a promise.' Law and promise belong to different categories of thought, which are incompatible. Law-language ('you shall') demands obedience, but promise-language ('I will') demands faith. What God said to Abraham was not 'Obey this law and I will bless you', but 'I will bless you; believe my promise.'" J.Stott.***

The repeated word that comes through this section is the word 'credited' (**4:3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 22, 23**).

When God promised to bless the world through Abraham's offspring, its fulfilment seemed impossible, yet Abraham still believed (**4:18-21**). Paul wants us to follow Abraham and believe God's promise (**4:22-25**). Our salvation, like Abraham's, is wholly invested in what God has done. When our bank balance was hugely in debt, God paid into it the righteous life of his beloved son.

## APPLICATION FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

Looking at this passage first-hand, you could understand a young person wondering what on earth it has to do with them. When ancient people like Abraham and David talk of circumcision and law, the 'so what?' question is bound to be on their lips. Our job as youth leaders is to constantly show the young people just how relevant God's word is so that they can answer the 'so what' question. Here are a few pointers to help answer the 'so what' question.

### A Real Story

We have seen that Abraham is the big daddy of faith. He was the main man they looked to and sought to follow. The big mistake Jewish believers made was to make him the reason to exclude Gentiles from the blessing that comes through faith.

Here Paul confronts this danger by proving that the blessings of grace are open to all, both Jew and Gentile. The promises of the gospel are open to all who follow in the footsteps of Abraham (**4:11,16**). This should give our young people massive courage and every reason to declare, 'I am not ashamed.' The postmodern culture refuses to see any significant purpose in history, agreeing with Shakespeare that history is a "tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing". But these promises show that history is governed and moulded by the promises of God.

### A Strong Faith

Secondly, Abraham teaches us what faith really is. In our culture, 'faith' is a fuzzy word that means something completely different from what it means biblically. In his book 'The God Who is There' Don Carson describes how people view faith as "a personal, subjective, religious choice". That is clearly not what the Bible means by faith. Instead, we follow a God who makes promises and then fulfils them in history (**1:1-6; 4:24-25**).

***“Faith is not burying our heads in the sand, or screwing ourselves up to believe what we know is not true, or even whistling in the dark to keep our spirits up. On the contrary, faith is a reasoning trust. There can be no believing without thinking.”*** J.Stott.

When our young people understand their Christian faith in this light, they can go into their school classroom with confidence and an expectation that people will be converted.

### **One Way**

The third major application is to see that that the promises given to Abraham affect the whole world (**Gen 12:3; 15:5; 17:7**). We are to follow Abraham because he is the ‘father of us all’ (**4:11, 16**), which means ‘all people’ whether Jew or Gentile.

### **All Means All**

All human beings, including young people, are attracted to people like themselves. The promises of the gospel challenges that and forces us to love all people, whether they come from our class, colour or creed.

At the beginning of Romans, Paul showed that we are indebted to all, whether Jew or Gentile (**1:14-15**). In **Romans 4**, we see this becoming a reality. This is where we are to challenge our young people and ourselves. All means all, therefore, includes the popular and unpopular. It means those who are difficult to love and those who are easy. All means all.

### **One Means One**

What we have in Romans is the beginning of Paul revealing to us that all God’s promises lead to Christ (**4:24-25**). To refuse to bow the knee to Christ is to live outside of God’s forgiveness, therefore facing his wrath. Our prayer as youth leaders is that our young people are so convinced by God’s truth and so in love with Christ that they declare his gospel to the world.

***“The church today, and in every generation, must make sure the door is wide enough open to let in people of every ethnic group, every type of family, every geographical region, every sort of moral (or immoral) background. But it must also make sure that the defining characteristic of the membership for this multi-ethnic family remains firmly stated and adhered to: the faith that Jesus is Lord and that God raised him from the dead. Keeping this balance, and doing so in the right spirit, remains a major task facing Christians in the twenty-first century.”*** N.T. Wright



## **SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS**

- 1.** What would you say was the major difference between the Old & New Testaments?
- 2.** What's the link between what Paul says in 3:27-31 and what he says about Abraham in 4:1-5? Here's a hint, it's based on boasting.
- 3.** Circumcision worked like a wedding ring. It was a reminder of who you belonged to. How does Paul use Abraham to expose Israel's wrong thinking about circumcision? Look up 4:9-12.
- 4.** How does this quote help us to further understand Paul's illustration of Abraham?  
  
*"Abraham is the father of uncircumcised believers, for he himself was in that condition when he was justified. And he is the father of circumcised believers. This is not because they have a circumcision like his, but because they have a faith like his." S. Olyott.*
- 5.** The purpose of the law was to reveal our sin, therefore showing us our need for forgiveness. How does Paul use Abraham to expose Israel's wrong thinking about the law? Look up 4:13-15.
- 6.** Why is it such a relief that our salvation is based upon the promise of God's forgiveness and not upon our performance? Look 4:16-17, 23-24.
- 7.** How has the way Paul explained the story of Abraham changed the way you understand the links between the Old and New Testaments?

**STUDY 7**

# **LIVING IN THREE TIME ZONES**

**ROMANS 5:1-11**



## THE LINK

### CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

Having understood how we were at war with God, now Paul reveals the peace God has brought through the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross.



## THE TRUTH

### THE SEAT BELT TEST

Live now in the reality of what God has done and what God will do.



## THE MESSAGE

### THE MEAT OF THE PASSAGE

The key to understanding *Romans 5* is to see it within three different time zones. Paul wants to draw our attention to these time zones to lay the foundation for our Christian assurance. The table below shows how gospel truth fits into each time zone.

<b>TIME ZONE 1</b> <i>Christ's Life</i>	<b>TIME ZONE 2</b> <i>Our Life Now</i>	<b>TIME ZONE 3</b> <i>The Future Reign of Christ</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have been justified (5:1,9)</li> <li>- Christ dies for the ungodly (5:6)</li> <li>- While we were sinners Christ died for us (5:8)</li> <li>- Christ sheds his blood for us (5:9)</li> <li>- We were reconciled (5:10)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Justified (5:1,9)</li> <li>- Peace with God (5:1)</li> <li>- Access to his grace (5:2)</li> <li>- Boast in the future hope of glory (5:2)</li> <li>- Glory in our sufferings (5:3)</li> <li>- Undergo radical character change (5:4-5)</li> <li>- God's love poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit (5:5)</li> <li>- Powerless (5:6)</li> <li>- Ungodly (5:6)</li> <li>- Enemies (5:10)</li> <li>- Sinners (5:8)</li> <li>- Reconciled (5:10,11)</li> <li>- Boast in God's salvation (5:2, 11)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hope of God's Glory (5:2)</li> <li>- Saved from God's wrath (5:9, 10)</li> <li>- Reconciled (5:10, 11)</li> </ul>

### War (5:1)

The radical nature of this verse can only be understood in the light of what Paul outlined in chapters 1-3. We have seen that every human being willfully rebels against their creator. The table below highlights God's response to our rebellion.

### God's Wrath

- 
- 1:18** – God's wrath is displayed by giving us what we desire.
- 
- 2:5** – The more we rebel, the more wrath we store up.  
– Judgement day is described as 'the day of God's wrath!'
- 
- 2:5** – Those who are self-seeking and reject God's truth face His wrath.
- 
- 2:8** – The law brings wrath, i.e. if we disobey God's Law, we will face God's wrath.
- 

### Peace (5:1-2)

With this background, the reality that God is at 'peace' with us is staggering! The fundamental truth to communicate to our young people is **NOT** one of sentimentality or inner peace, but instead one of legal standing. Since chapter one, Paul has repeatedly brought us into God's courtroom, and the final sentence is damning (**3:23**), for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. We were are guilty and without hope (**3:20**), yet through Christ's death, we have been declared both righteous (**3:22-23**) and forgiven (**3:25-26**). The war is over, for the death of Jesus has brought peace between God and man.

### Access (5:2)

Now that we have peace, we can approach God freely. The peace we have is not merely a laying down of weapons and hostility, but full acceptance. The picture Paul wants us to be thinking of when we read these verses is the Old Testament Temple.

### The Temple

*The Temple in the Old Testament gave three clear messages to God's people.*

- ◆ God is holy, so don't come near.
- ◆ The only way to approach God is through a blood sacrifice.
- ◆ Only the priest is allowed to approach God on behalf of the people.

*The work of Christ upon the cross changes all of the above points.*

- ◆ Through Christ's shed blood, we can freely approach God (**5:9-11**).

### WHAT WE WERE

- ◆ **We were powerless (5:6)**  
We were unable to save ourselves.
- ◆ **We were ungodly (5:6)**  
We were rebels against God's authority.
- ◆ **We were sinners (5:8)**  
We had missed the standards that God set.
- ◆ **We were enemies (5:10)**  
We were at war with God, and he with us.

### WHAT CHRIST DID

- ◆ **When we were powerless - Christ died (5:6)**
- ◆ **When we were ungodly - Christ died (5:6)**
- ◆ **When we were sinners - Christ died for us (5:8)**
- ◆ **When we enemies - Christ died for us (5:10)**

### WHAT WE ARE NOW

#### We Are Loved (5:8)

The motive for sending His Son to die, was his amazing love. From being an enemy, we are now one of his loved children.



**We Are Justified (5:9)**

We stood before God guilty. Our moral bank balance was hugely overdrawn until Jesus paid the debt by shedding his blood.

**We Are Reconciled (5:10-11)**

We stood before God rebellious enemies, but through the cross, our sin was punished. The death of Jesus has brought us back into friendship with God, and we are reconciled.

**APPLICATION FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE****Our Standing**

In a world that bases worth on face, figure and fashion, our young people know for sure that they are loved eternally. The love God has for them is based wholly upon his Sons work upon the cross and not their performance.

**Our Focus**

Our focus for understanding every circumstance in life is now the cross of Christ and his future return. We live in time Zone 2, knowing life can only be properly understood by looking back to the cross and forward to his return.

**Our Confidence**

Basing reality upon the cross of Christ and his imminent return gives us confidence to cry "I am not ashamed!"



## SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1. Before we get stuck into Romans 5, have a look back over chapters 1-4 and remind yourselves how God views our rebellion against him?

1:18

2:5

2:8

4:15

2. How should chapters 1-4 affect how we understand positive words like peace, access and reconciled, but also negative words like enemies, powerless and ungodly?

3. The key to understanding Romans 5 is to see it within three different time zones. Paul draws our attention to these time zones to lay the foundation for Christians assurance.

Read through Romans 5:1-11 and fill in the table below:

**TIME ZONE 1**  
*The past: Christ's Life*

**TIME ZONE 2**  
*The present: Our Life Now*

**TIME ZONE 3**  
*The Future: Reign of Christ*


**4. Have you ever thought of your life as three time zones? Sum up in a tweet, hashtag or Insta each time zone.**

**5. Which time zone do you think you spend the most time thinking about and why?**

**6. What would it look like to live life now in time zone 2 in the light of time zones 1 & 3?**

- For you and your gospel team/ community?

- How would it give you a deeper confidence to live out your Christian life?

**7. What strategies or disciplines can you work into your life so that time zones 1 & 3 control how you live in time zone 2?**

- How can you do this not merely as an individual but as a gospel team/community?

## **Prayer**

**Pray that God would help you remember the time zones this week and live in the light of them.**

**STUDY 8**

# **THE GLORY OF SUFFERING**

**ROMANS 5:1-11**



## **THE LINK**

### **CONNECTING THE JIGSAW**

Having established the three time zones, we now focus on the link between suffering and glory.



## **THE TRUTH**

### **THE SEAT BELT TEST**

Live now in the reality of what God has done and what God will do.



## **THE MESSAGE**

### **THE MEAT OF THE PASSAGE**

Last session, we looked at how the cross brings us back into friendship with God. Today, our aim is to see how the cross helps us live in a fallen and broken world and what it means to 'glory in our suffering'

#### **SUFFERINGS DUE TO THE FALL**

When Adam and Eve chose to rebel against God's perfect rule, the consequences of their decision affected every aspect of human nature. Their rebellion changed the landscape from a place where suffering was alien, to a place where suffering was part and parcel of everyday life.

#### **SUFFERINGS DUE TO FOLLOWING**

As followers of Christ who live in a fallen world, we must expect persecution.

*"The second object of joy is unexpected: 'we rejoice in our sufferings' (verse 3). If this seems strange to us, let us remind ourselves that in the New Testament suffering is viewed as normal experience of a Christian. New converts were warned that the kingdom of God could be entered only 'through many tribulations' (Acts 14:22); and when tribulation came their way, as it regularly did, they could not complain that they had not been prepared for it. But suffering was not only regarded as an inevitable feature of the Christian lot; it was looked upon as a token of true Christianity, as a sign that God counted those who endured it worthy of his kingdom (cf 2 Thes, 1:5). Besides, it had a salutary moral effect on those who experienced it, for it helped them to cultivate endurance and steadfastness of character, and when these were linked to Christian faith, Christian hope was the more stimulated."*

F.F.Bruce

For the Christian, suffering comes from two directions, a fallen world and the cost of following Jesus. As our young people face suffering, what does it look like to 'glory in it'?

## LOOK TO THE RIGHT TIME ZONES

The primary role of the Holy Spirit is to focus our attention on time zones 1 & 3. As we learn to look back to the cross and forward to Christ's return, we learn to face suffering in time zone 2. To fully appreciate what it means to 'glory in suffering,' we need to look forward.

### TIME ZONE 1 *The past*

Christ death guarantees:

- Peace (5:1)
- Access (5:2)
- Glory (5:2)

### TIME ZONE 2 *The present*

Jesus suffering brings us peace (5:1).

Jesus suffering guarantees us access into God's presence (5:2).

Zones 1 & 2 control how we face all suffering now (5:1-5).

### TIME ZONE 3 *The Future*

Jesus suffering guarantees future glory (life with God) (5:2).

## LOOK TO THE RIGHT EXAMPLES

### Suffering due to the fall

It is important for all of us to have heroes, especially young people. A great hero to have when it comes to suffering is Joni Ericson. Her life is a testimony to amazing courage and seemingly unshakable trust in God. At the age of 19, she broke her neck and was confined to a wheelchair. More recently, in her early sixties, she suffered from breast cancer.

Here are some quotes that reflect the Holy Spirit's work in Joni's life, which helped her look back to time zone 1 and forward to time zone 3. As she's done that, she's learnt how to triumph in her sufferings.

### TIME ZONE 1

Joni Quotes:

*"Real satisfaction comes not in understanding God's motives, but in understanding His character, in trusting in His promises, and in leaning on Him and resting in Him as the Sovereign who knows what He is doing and does all things well."*

*"Jesus is strong...but He's also approachable. He is able to carry our load...but He'll never make us feel embarrassed or defeated for asking."*

All these truths are only knowable because of God's historical salvation acts recounted in scripture.

## TIME ZONE 2

Joni Quotes:

***"God is more concerned with conforming me to the likeness of His Son than leaving me in my comfort zones. God is more interested in inward qualities than outward circumstances - things like refining my faith, humbling my heart, cleaning up my thought life and strengthening my character."***

***"Sometimes God allows what he hates to accomplish what he loves."***

***"The greatest good suffering can do for me is to increase my capacity for God."***

This is a brilliant example of Joni taking the truths of time zone 1 and applying them to her life. Through her suffering, frustration, and labour pains of her present terrible situation, she has learnt to persevere and hope in God's promise.

## TIME ZONE 3

Joni Quotes:

***"It is a glorious thing to know that your Father God makes no mistakes in directing or permitting that which crosses the path of your life. It is the glory of God to conceal a matter. It is our glory to trust Him, no matter what."***

***"The best we can hope for in this life is a knothole peek at the shining realities ahead. Yet a glimpse is enough. It's enough to convince our hearts that whatever sufferings and sorrows currently assail us aren't worthy of comparison to that which waits over the horizon."***

These quotes have been born out of the reality of many years of pain and suffering. Wonderfully we see the work of the Holy Spirit gently moulding Joni's character to the likeness of the Lord Jesus.

## PRAY THE RIGHT PRAYERS

It is these truths and examples that must mould our prayers. When we encounter suffering either as individuals or in the people we love, we must remember to pray, remembering these time zones. We pray asking the Spirit to help us remember that the cross proves God's unshakable love towards us. We ask the Spirit to focus our gaze on the future new creation when the labour pains will be over and the joy of the new creation realised.



## SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

Last session, we looked at how the cross brings us back into friendship with God. Today, our aim is to see how the cross helps us live in a fallen and broken world and what it means to 'glory in our suffering'.

### 1. Think back to the time zones we thought about in the last session.

*The primary role of the Holy Spirit is to focus our attention on time zones 1 & 3.*

*As we learn to look back to the cross and forward to Christ's return, we learn to face suffering in time zone 2. To fully appreciate what it means to 'glory in suffering', we need to look forward.*

**How do you think suffering & glory, perseverance and hope fit into those time zones?**

**Look up 5:1-5.**

*Remember - that when the Bible uses the word hope, it means something guaranteed.*

#### TIME ZONE 1

*The past*

Christ death guarantees:

- Peace (5:1)
- Access (5:2)
- Glory (5:2)

#### TIME ZONE 2

*The present*

Jesus suffering brings us peace (5:1).

Jesus suffering guarantees us access into God's presence (5:2).

Zones 1 & 2 control how we face all suffering now (5:1-5).

#### TIME ZONE 3

*The Future*

Jesus suffering guarantees future glory (life with God) (5:2).



2. It is important for all of us to have heroes, especially young people. A great hero to have when it comes to suffering is Joni Ericson. Her life is a testimony to an amazing courage and seemingly unshakable trust in God. At the age of 19, she broke her neck and was confined to a wheelchair. More recently, in her early sixties, she suffered from breast cancer.

**Read these quotes and discuss how time zones 1 & 3 helped Joni persevere in developing her character development.**

*“Real satisfaction comes not in understanding God’s motives, but in understanding His character, in trusting in His promises, and in leaning on Him and resting in Him as the Sovereign who knows what He is doing and does all things well.”*

*“God is more concerned with conforming me to the likeness of His Son than leaving me in my comfort zones. God is more interested in inward qualities than outward circumstances - things like refining my faith, humbling my heart, cleaning up my thought life and strengthening my character.”*

*“The best we can hope for in this life is a knothole peek at the shining realities ahead. Yet a glimpse is enough. It’s enough to convince our hearts that whatever sufferings and sorrows currently assail us aren’t worthy of comparison to that which waits over the horizon.”*

3. Think of three ways your life would be different from your friends if you followed Joni’s example and lived life now in the light of times zones 1 & 2.

4. How should these three time zones shape your prayers?

**STUDY 9**

# **WHO ARE YOU STANDING BEHIND?**

**ROMANS 5:12-21**



## THE LINK

### CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

Paul continues to build a foundation that leads to a confident faith.



## THE TRUTH

### THE SEAT BELT TEST

God divides history into two. You are either standing behind Adam or Jesus.



## THE MESSAGE

### THE MEAT OF THE PASSAGE

The clearest way of understanding this section of Romans is to see how Paul divides the whole human race into two halves. The image of standing behind Adam or Jesus will be used throughout this study. The table below shows how this is the case.

The truth about Adam	What you inherit if you stand behind Adam	The truth about Jesus	What you inherit if you stand behind Jesus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sin enters through him (5:12)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inherit Adam's sin (5:12)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- God's gift of grace comes through him (5:15)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We receive God's grace (5:15)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Death enters through him (5:12, 14, 15, 17, 21)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Marked by the death Adam brings (5:12, 14, 15, 17, 21)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He justifies us (5:16)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We receive justification (5:16)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pattern of the whole human race (5:14)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We are condemned and judged (5:16, 18)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- His obedience bring us righteousness (5:19)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- His obedience makes us righteous (5:19)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Marked by judgement and condemnation (5:16, 18)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Marked by Adam's disobedience (5:19)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He brings us eternal life (5:21)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Through his grace and righteousness, I receive eternal life (5:21)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Through him all are condemned (5:18)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Exempt from eternal life (5:21)</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Marked by disobedience (5:19)</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Marked by sin and death (5:21)</li> </ul>			

## STANDING BEHIND ADAM

This brilliant passage brings home to us the reality of our spiritual position before God. Every one of us is born standing behind and therefore belonging to Adam, the first rebel (5:18). As we stand behind him, we are enveloped in his deathly shadow (5:17, 21), which leads to judgement (5:18).

These are sobering truths for our young people to consider. They may have great personalities, many friends and a future filled with privilege and opportunity. Yet their position leaves them being marked by **SIN**, **DEATH** and **JUDGEMENT**.

## STANDING BEHIND JESUS

The second Adam (Christ) reverses the judgment of God. We now are marked by righteousness instead of sin (5:17, 19, 21) and life instead of death (5:17, 18, 21). When we choose to stand behind Jesus, the change is radical as we move from **SIN**, **DEATH** and **JUDGEMENT** to **RIGHTEOUSNESS**, **LIFE** and **FREEDOM**.

Once we belong to the second Adam, our lives are marked by freedom

- ◆ 5:6 – We are no longer powerless.
- ◆ 5:8 – We are now seen by God as righteous
- ◆ 5:9 – We are longer facing God’s wrath but instead enjoying his unconditional love.
- ◆ 5:10 – We are no longer viewed by God as his enemy but instead as loved children.

It’s also worth looking at this passage in the light of the three time zones we thought about in the last study.

### TIME ZONE 1

*Christ’s Life*

- 5:9 Since we have been justified by his blood.
- 
- 5:10 For if, while we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son.
- 
- 5:15 But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man.
- 
- 5:17 For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man.
- 

### TIME ZONES 2 & 3

*Our life now & The future reign of Christ*

- How much more* shall we be saved
- 
- How much more*, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!
- 
- How much more* did God’s grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many!
- 
- How much more* will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!
-

## APPLICATION FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

If we teach and apply these verses properly to our young people, it will fundamentally change how they view their friends, family and everyone they meet. From now on, they should view people as either standing behind Adam, therefore marked by sin, death and judgement. Or standing behind Jesus, therefore marked by righteousness, life and justification. This should never merely be a theological exercise for our young people but instead the foundation for evangelism. If their friends and family remain standing behind Adam, then they will face God's wrath. With this hopefully understood, godly compassion should be the number one response. With their salvation secure, they should now be seeking to pay the debt of passing on God's good news **(1:14)**.

### **Confidence**

The wonderful truths of chapter 5 should fill our young people with confidence to declare ***'I am not ashamed'*** **(1:16)**. Their confidence is grounded completely in the work of Christ on the cross to reverse the effects of Adam's rebellion. With confidence, our young people can know that they are no longer enemies of God but instead unconditionally loved by Him.



## SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

The clearest way of understanding this section of Romans is to see how Paul divides the whole human race into two halves. The image of standing behind Adam or Jesus will be used throughout this study.

1. Read through Romans 5:12-21 and ask what's true of Adam and how has it affected your standing and condition?

TEXT	TRUE OF ADAM	HOW IT AFFECTS YOU

2. If a person remains standing behind Adam then their state and condition is SIN, DEATH and JUDGEMENT. How should that affect the way you view your family and friends? You might want to remind yourself of Romans 1:14.

**3. Read through Romans 5:12-21 and ask, what's true of Jesus and how could it affect your standing and condition?**

TEXT	TRUE OF JESUS	HOW IT AFFECTS YOU

**4. If we are standing behind Jesus then your state and condition is **RIGHTEOUSNESS, JUSTIFICATION** and **LIFE**. What guarantees this state of being?**

- Righteousness (5:15-19)

- Justification (5:16,18-19)

- Life (5:20-21)

**5. Why should this give you great confidence?**

**6. Think of three friends you really care about that are presently standing behind Adam and pray for them.**

**STUDY 10**

# **YOU GOTTA SERVE SOMEBODY**

**ROMANS 6**





## THE LINK

### CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

Having shown us the foundation of our new state and condition, Paul explores how it affects our relationship to sin.



## THE TRUTH

### THE SEAT BELT TEST

My new identity and master set me free from sin and its power.



## THE MESSAGE

### THE MEAT OF THE PASSAGE

At this point, it's good to take a breather and ask, what's been the story so far?

### THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

1. The gospel belongs to God and is built upon His historical acts through Christ (1:1-6).
2. All people have rebelled (3:20, 23), both Jew or Gentile, therefore, face God's wrath (1:18, 2:5, 8, 5:9).
3. **The answer to our rebellion is:**
  - The righteousness of Christ which justifies us (3:21-24).
  - The sacrifice of Christ that absorbs God's anger towards our sin (3:25-31).
4. The message of the Old Testament was always one of justification by faith. We see this revealed through the lives of Abraham and David (*Romans 4*).
5. **The fruits of our justification are:**
  - Peace with God through Christ (5:1).
  - Access to his presence through grace (5:2).
  - Hope for the future (5:3-5).
  - God's love is known and experienced through the power of the Spirit (5:5).
  - Protection from the curse of Adam, which is sin, death and judgement. Instead, we stand behind Christ and receive righteousness, life and freedom (5:12-21).

So, the message is clear; salvation from God's anger is only to be found in trusting Christ's righteous life and sacrificial death, 3:23-25. The only thing that we contribute to our salvation is a life of rebellion and willful sin. Our salvation is totally God's work and dependent wholly upon his grace and mercy. With that clearly understood, certain questions pop instantly into Christians' minds, the first of which we will look at today.

## MAIN TEACHING POINT

God has rescued us from sin (*Romans 1-5*).  
So, what now is the believer's relationship to sin?

### Paul's Argument Explained

- ◆ We died to sin. This is the foundation of Paul's argument.
- ◆ Therefore, how on earth can we live in it any longer? (**6:2**).
- ◆ Paul uses the illustration of baptism as a picture of our union with Christ (**6:3**).
- ◆ Having shared in his death, God also wants us to share in his resurrection life (**6:4-5**).
- ◆ Our former self was crucified with Christ in order that we might be freed from sin's slavery (**6:6-7**).
- ◆ Both the death and resurrection of Christ were decisive events. He died to sin once for all, but he lives continuously unto God (**6:8-10**).
- ◆ We must realise that everything that's true of Jesus is now true of us, namely 'dead to sin' but alive to God (**6:11**).
- ◆ Now that we are alive, we must offer our bodies to God as instruments of righteousness (**6:12-13**).
- ◆ Sin is not our master, for we are no longer under law but instead 'under grace.'
- ◆ Grace does not encourage sin; it outlaws it (**6:14**).

To help explain the chapter further, I will ask a few questions.

## PART 1 - ROMANS 6:1-14

### Q. If God has done it all, can I carry on sinning?

*You must realise what the cross has achieved.  
A new identity - leads to a new lifestyle.*

Your position and status are totally new. You were once an enemy of God, standing behind Adam, marked by death. Now you are a friend of God, standing behind Christ, marked by life. This legal change puts you in an utterly different position, for you were once condemned,

but now you are free, for Christ has paid the debt for your rebellion. Now when God looks into our spiritual bank account, he sees Christ's earnings in the form of His perfect life. The power of sin has been completely defeated through Christ's life, death, resurrection and ascension to glory. This is our new identity – so to be carefree about sin – denies it all.

## PART 2 - ROMANS 6:15-23

If *Romans 6:1-14* is primarily about the Christian's new identity, **6:15-23** is primarily about the Christian's new master, lifestyle and future.

### Key Words Paul Uses in Romans 6

SIN	6:2, 6:6, 6:7, 6:10, 6:11, 6:12, 6:13, 6:14, 6:15, 6:16, 6:17, 6:18, 6:22, 6:23
DEATH	6:3, 6:4, 6:5, 6:9, 6:10, 6:13, 6:21, 6:23
SLAVES	6:6, 6:16, 6:17, 6:18, 6:19, 6:20, 6:22
LIFE	6:4, 6:10, 6:13, 6:19, 6:22, 6:23
RIGHT	6:13, 6:16, 6:18, 6:19, 6:20
FREE	6:7, 6:18, 6:20, 6:22
GRACE	6:1, 6:14, 6:15
DIED	6:2, 6:7
DEAD	6:4, 6:9, 6:11

## 1. NEW STATUS (6:1-14)

### Paul's Illustrations

#### Marriage

- ◆ Saturday morning, the person is legally single – by the afternoon, they are legally married.
- ◆ Their status is completely changed – that is what has happened to the Christian.

#### Baptism & Crucifixion

- ◆ We were once represented by Adam, therefore in a position of guilt and judgment.
- ◆ Paul uses two illustrations baptism and crucifixion. He uses these illustrations to show that we have been immersed into all that is true of Christ.
- ◆ We are baptised in to his death (6:3, 5).
- ◆ We are baptised into his resurrection life (6:4, 5, 8-9).
- ◆ Our old sinful life was crucified with Christ, which sets us free from sin (6:6-7, 11-14).

TRUE OF CHRIST		TRUE OF US	
6:2	Jesus died to sin		We die to sin
6:3, 5	Jesus died		We die
6:6-7, 11	Jesus deals with our sin		We are now free from sin's slavery
6:4	Jesus was buried		We are buried
6:4, 5	Jesus is raised		We are raised
6:4, 8	Jesus has resurrection life		We have resurrection life

## 2. NEW MASTER (6:15-18)

- ◆ **Sin** – mentioned 14 times (6:15, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23).
- ◆ **Righteousness** – mentioned 6 times (6:15, 16, 18, 19, 20).
- ◆ **Slaves** – mentioned 7 times. 6 of the 7 in verses (6:15-23).

Again, Paul divides people into two groups – you are either ruled by sin or righteousness.

#### All of us are slaves

##### Sin

- ◆ What the unbeliever lives for reveals who and what owns them (6:16).
- ◆ The unbeliever is a slave of sin (6:17-18).

##### Christ

- ◆ The Christian offers themselves to be ruled by Christ (6:16).
- ◆ Christ's cross wins their heart and affection (6:17).
- ◆ The Christian has been set free from sin to live righteously (6:18).

### 3. NEW LIFESTYLES (6:19-23)

#### Illustration

- ◆ New landlord or new Captain.
- ◆ Your master – dictates your lifestyle

#### Slave to sin – their lifestyle is marked by:

- ◆ The mark of being owned by sin is DEATH.
- ◆ When a person walks away from the source of all life as Adam did, they are then walking only in one direction – DEATH (6:16, 21, 23).
- ◆ The mark of death is that you have no desire to live for God.

#### Slave of righteousness – their lifestyle is marked by:

- ◆ The slave of righteousness has brand new desires.
- ◆ You are dead to sin – The married man is dead to the bachelor life – it's gone – finished. It's a chapter of his life that is NO more.
- ◆ If the unbeliever's condition is death, the believer's is LIFE.
- ◆ They are always walking towards LIFE (6:19, 22, 23).
- ◆ The new freedom leads to the believer offering every part of their lives to righteousness (6:16).
- ◆ This is not a one-off act, but a lifestyle that the slave of righteousness is marked by (6:19-21).

### 4. NEW GIFT (6:23)

- ◆ **Death** – mentioned 9 times (6:16, 21, 23)
- ◆ **Life** – mentioned 6 times (6:19, 22, 23)

Both masters reward their subjects.

- ◆ **Master Sin** – The wages He pays is death (6:16, 21, 23)
- ◆ **Master Christ** – He pays no wages but instead gives a gift (6:19, 22, 23).

#### Destination – DEATH

In his mercy, God allows those ruled by sin to taste death. The purpose of tasting death is to lead them to repentance and trust in the only one who can set them free and give them life.

If the warning's ignored, they finish up at the destination they have chosen to walk towards – DEATH. This time it will be for all eternity (6:23).

#### Destination – LIFE

Those who've been saved stand behind Christ. The gift they are given is the life that's been won by Christ (6:23).

Therefore to sin is to deny

1. Your new master
2. Your new desires
3. Your new future Hope

### APPLICATION FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

When our young people sin, it in no way affects their salvation, for their status is unchanged.

The victory that Jesus wins should radically change how our young people view and relate to sin now. Their new master has defeated sin and therefore gives our young people the power to defeat it.



## SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

The key issue Paul is dealing with here is the radical nature of grace. If Jesus has done everything to save me, and change my state and condition, then why can't I carry on enjoying my sin (6:1)?

**1. What are the two illustrations Paul uses in 6:1-14?**

**2. What is Paul seeking to illustrate here?**

- What are we baptised into?

- What has been crucified?

**3. Paul's argument is: now that you stand behind Jesus, everything that is true of him, is now true of you.**

	TRUE OF CHRIST	TRUE OF US
6:2	Jesus died to sin	We die to sin
6:3, 5	Jesus died	We die
6:6-7, 11	Jesus deals with our sin	We are now free from sin's slavery
6.4	Jesus was buried	We are buried
6:4, 5	Jesus is raised	We are raised
6:4, 8	Jesus has resurrection life	We have resurrection life

**4. Before you belonged to Jesus, who was your master? Look up 6:15-18.**

**5. Who is your new master? Look up 6:15-18.**

**6. What radical effect should your new master have upon your lifestyle? Look up 6:19-23.**

**7. What wages does your old master pay? Look up 6:16, 21, 23.**

**STUDY 11**

# **GRACE & THE SINFUL IMPOSTER**

**ROMANS 7**



## THE LINK

### CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

- ◆ Our new status changes our whole approach and relationship to the law.
- ◆ Once we were married to the law, so facing God's wrath.
- ◆ We are now married to Christ, so protected by his righteousness.



## THE TRUTH

### THE SEAT BELT TEST

1. My Master changes how I view the Law of God.
2. The law is no longer able to crush me, for I now look to my righteous saviour.



## THE MESSAGE

### THE MEAT OF THE PASSAGE

We have seen the last few weeks that the gospel is centred on God's grace and not obedience to the law. When we forget this, our Christian lives become joyless and reflect a law approach to living rather than a grace approach to living. In this great chapter, Paul gives us the tools to make sure we stay grace centred, therefore joyful, instead of law centred and therefore lifeless.

### THE LAW IN ROMANS

#### What has Paul said about the law so far in Romans

2:12	It is God's means of judging us.
2:13	If we obey the law completely, we will be declared righteous.
2:14-15	Even the gentiles have the law written on their hearts.
2:17-26	God's gift of the law to Israel, lead to pride and prejudice
3:19	The law leaves us silenced and guilty before God.
3:20	The law reveals our sin.
3:21	A new righteousness outside of the law is given to us from God
3:27-31	Our failure to keep the law should leave us humbled, and drive us to trust in Christ's new righteousness.
4:15	The law brings wrath
4:13-16	Abraham was NOT saved through obedience to the law
5:13	Sin reigned before the law was given
5:20-21	The law reveals our sin, and leads us to recognising why we need God's grace and righteousness.
6:14-15	The Christian now lives under grace not law.

In his commentary on Romans, John Stott sums up brilliantly all that Paul has been saying about the law so far. *“The law reveals sin not salvation, wrath not grace”*.

### Q. Is the Law good or Bad?

The law is the dominant theme all the way through **Romans 7**, as it is mentioned twenty-four times in twenty-nine verses. When we read the chapter, it’s clear that Paul is never negative about the law, instead, he calls it holy, righteous and good.

### What does Paul say about the law?

- 7:7 The law is not sin.
- 7:12-13 The law is holy, righteous, and good.
- 7:14 The law is spiritual.
- 7:16 The law is good.
- 7:22 In his inner man, Paul knows that the law is good.

In the light of these verses, we can never be negative about the law. Instead, we should try and understand its purpose.

If the law is holy, righteous and good, we must be very careful not to be negative about it. The two questions we need to ask are.

**What was its purpose for Israel?**

**What is its purpose for today?**

## THE LAW IS LIKE A MIRROR

The timing of when the law was given to Israel is crucial if we are to understand its purpose. The Ten Commandments were given to Israel after being saved from Egypt and not before (**Ex 19:1-7**). The purpose of the law was for Israel to see the beauty and the brilliance of God’s character reflected in it. As they gazed at God’s

law and character, they were then called to reflect it to the nations around them (**Isaiah 60:1-3**).

## THE LAW IS LIKE AN ALARM

As well as a mirror, the law served as an alarm to warn Israel against sin. When we look at the words the Psalmist uses, we see how wonderfully it worked.

### Psalm 119

- ◆ Living by the law, leads to young men living pure lives (**119:9**).
- ◆ Living by the law, leads to people not wanting to disobey it (**119:10-11**).
- ◆ Living by the law, leads to you wanting to be taught by it (**119:12**).
- ◆ Living by the law, leads to you delighting in it (**119:14, 16**).
- ◆ Living by the law, leads to you wanting it to dominate your thinking (**11:13, 119:13, 16**).

## THE CHOICE OF LIFE OR DEATH

The Law presented Israel with a choice. Were they going to reflect God’s character by listening to its warnings? Or to put it into Deuteronomy language, were they going to choose life or death.

### Look up Deuteronomy 30:15-20

#### The path to life

1. Love God (**30:16, 20**).
2. Walk in His ways and keep His commands (**30:1**).
3. Refuse to worship false gods (**30:17**).
4. Listen to His voice (**30:20**).

#### The path to death

1. Cold and disobedient hearts (**30:17**).
2. Worship false gods (**30:17**).



**Q. Did Israel look in the mirror and listen to the alarm?**

The best way to answer this is to look at the grid we used in study 5.

DID THEY LISTEN TO THE ALARM?	WHAT WAS THE REFLECTION?
<b>3:9</b> All are under the power of sin.	
<b>3:10</b> No one righteous, not even one.	
<b>3:11</b> No one seeks God. No one understands God.	
<b>3:12</b> All have turned away. Together become worthless. No one who does good. Not even one.	Turned their backs on God.
<b>3:13</b> Tongues practice deceit.	Throats that smell like death. Lips full of snake like poison
<b>3:14</b> Mouths full of cursing and bitterness.	
<b>3:15</b>	Feet swift to shed blood.
<b>3:16</b>	Ruin and misery mark their way.
<b>3:17</b>	The way of peace they do not know.
<b>3:18</b>	No fear of God before their eyes.

These verses prove to us that Israel chose death instead of life (3:23). This choice left Israel under the power of sin (3:9), and therefore facing God's wrath (4:15).

**Q. If the law is holy, righteous and good, why did Israel rebel against it?**

It's this question that Paul wants to explain in Romans 7. The way Paul seeks to answer the question is to look at the relationship between law and sin. Both law and sin are the dominant themes as 'law' is mentioned twenty-three times, and 'sin' fourteen.

**SIN THE EVIL IMPOSTER**

From the beginning of time, Satan's one aim is to pervert all that is good. This being the case, it should not surprise us that he makes the law of God one of his main targets.

Satan's first move is to use the law as a means of tempting people to sin. He is happy for people to hear the alarm, but once heard, he then uses the attention gained to make sin attractive (7:7-13).

A close look at the words used in 7:7-13 brings this out clearly.

The fault is not with the law but with the sin that has deceived people into constantly doing the very thing that they knew to be wrong (7:12-24).

*“Indeed the extreme sinfulness of sin is seen precisely in the way it exploits a good thing (the law) for an evil purpose (death)”* J. Stott.

Having deceived a person into rebelling against God, sin now finishes the person off by crushing them with guilt (7:21-24).

### Summary of Paul's Argument

- ◆ The law is God-given, therefore holy, righteous and good (7:12).
- ◆ Its purpose is to show Israel God's character so that they can reflect it.
- ◆ As an alarm, it highlights sin so that we can avoid it (7:7a).
- ◆ Like Israel we stand behind Adam and are ruled by sin.
- ◆ Sin takes God's holy law and uses it to entice Israel to sin (7:7-8).
- ◆ Once Israel broke the law, sin then used their disobedience to crush them with guilt (7:21-24).

### Q. Was there any hope for Israel?

#### Lady Law needs to Die

The illustration Paul uses is marriage. Just like someone is bound to their husband or wife, so Israel was bound to the law (7:1-2a). Their only hope was for Lady Law to die so that they could be released and set free (7:2b-3). Through the death of Christ, Lady Law dies, freeing them to marry Lady Grace. This introduces us to a new life of freedom through the power of the Holy Spirit (7:4-6).

Being united to Christ are the central truths that *Romans 6-7* are teaching.

### ROMANS 6

6:3	United with Christ.
6:7	Freed from sin.
6:4	Raised with Christ.
6:4	New life in Christ.
6:11	New life results in holiness and eternal life.

### ROMANS 7

7:4	United with Christ.
7:6	Freed from the law.
7:4	Raised with Christ.
7:6	New life in the Spirit.
7:4	New life results in bearing fruit for God.

### Q. What's the laws purpose today?

Our young people may feel that the themes of law and grace have no real bearing on their lives. Hopefully, a clear application of this chapter will change that.

### WHEN WE LOOK IN THE MIRROR - LOOK TO CHRIST

As Christians, when we look into the mirror of God's law, we see the same as what Israel saw. We see a law that's holy, righteous, and good (7:12). As soon as we see God's law we must remind ourselves straight away that we're not married to it (7:4).

Instead, we remind ourselves that we are married to Lady Grace, therefore secure and free. We must refuse to return to the never-ending cycle of failure that Paul explains in (7:19-23). The beauty of the gospel is that when we look into the mirror of God's law now, it's not our reflection we see, but Christ's (7:24-25). This realisation brings us to one of the greatest sentences in the whole Bible, *“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”* (8:1).

### WHEN WE HEAR THE ALARM - LOOK TO CHRIST

When our young people hear the alarm bell of God's law, they must remember their new status. Before, they were ruled by sin and the law, but now they are married to grace (7:4, 6). The alarm bell of the law changes from being something that condemns and threatens assurance to something that now points to Christ and produces confidence in the face of sin and failure. When their focus is wholly upon Christ, the Spirit leads them to victory over sin and joyful slavery to their new master (6:11-18 and 7:4).

# NOT ASHAMED





## SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

We have seen the last few weeks that the gospel is centred on God's grace and not obedience to the law. When we forget this, our Christian lives become joyless and reflect a law approach to living rather than a grace approach to living. In this great chapter, Paul gives us the tools to make sure we stay grace centred therefore joyful, instead of law centred and lifeless.

1. Take a quick backward glance at what Romans chapters 1-6 has said about God's Law and its purpose.

### What has Paul said about the law so far in Romans?

2:12

2:13

2:14-15

2:17-26

3:19

3:20

3:21

3:27-31

4:15

4:13-16

5:13

5:20-21

6:14-15

2. How Christians relate to God's Law the Ten Commandments is Paul's big theme in Romans 7. When you hear the word law or Ten Commandments, what thoughts instantly come to mind?
3. What are the key words or phrases that Paul uses to describe God's Law? Look up 7:7, 12-13, 14, 16, 22.

**4. If the law is holy, righteous and good, why did Israel rebel against it?**

This question Paul wants to explain in *Romans 7*. The way Paul seeks to answer the question is to look at the relationship between law and sin. Both law and sin are the dominant themes as 'law' is mentioned twenty-three times, and 'sin' fourteen.

From the beginning of time, Satan's one aim is to pervert all that is good. This being the case, it should not surprise us that he makes the law of God one of his main targets. Satan's first move is to use the law as a means of tempting people to sin. He is happy for the law to alert people to their sin, but once heard, he uses the attention gained to make sin attractive (*7:7-13*).

**A close look at the words used in 7:7-13 brings this out clearly.**

WHAT SIN DOES	WHERE SIN LEADS
7:8,11	7:5
7:8	7:10
7:9	7:11
7:11	7:13
7:13	
6:4, 8	

**5. Having deceived a person into rebelling against God, what is Satan's next move?**

Look up 7:21-24.

**Summary of Paul's Argument In Romans 7:**

- The law is God-given, therefore holy, righteous and good (*7:12*).
- Its purpose is to show Israel God's character so that they can reflect it.
- As an alarm, it highlights sin so that we can avoid it (*7:7a*).
- Like Israel, we stand behind Adam and are ruled by sin.
- Sin takes God's holy law and uses it to entice Israel to sin (*7:7-8*).
- Once Israel has sinned, the law crushes you with guilt (*7:21-24*).

**6. What difference does the life, death and resurrection make to how you relate to God's Law today?**

**7. When the law reveals your sin and then crushes you with guilt, what difference does Jesus make?**

ROMANS 6	ROMANS 7
6:3 United with Christ.	7:4
6:7 Freed from sin.	7:6
6:4 Raised with Christ.	7:4
6:4 New life in Christ.	7:6
6:11 New life results in holiness and eternal life.	7:4
6:23 Freed from the consequences of sin	1:16-17 8:1



# REFRESH

***WHAT ROMANS HAS  
TAUGHT US ABOUT GOD'S  
CHARACTER SO FAR...***

## ROMANS 1

### STANDING UNDER GOD'S ANGER

#### Key Truths

- ◆ He is angry at sin and sinners, and they face his anger and wrath (**1:18**).

#### Summing up

- ◆ All mankind is guilty before God without excuse (**1:20**).

## ROMANS 2

### STANDING BEFORE GOD'S JUDGMENT

#### Key Truths

- ◆ His judgement upon mankind will be based on truth (**2:2, 16**).
- ◆ His final judgement will be inescapable (**2:3**).
- ◆ Even though angry, He is kind and patient (**2:4**).
- ◆ His judgement upon mankind will be just (**2:6, 11**).

#### Summing up

- ◆ All mankind is guilty before God without excuse (**2:1**).

## ROMANS 3

### THE CROSS OUR ONLY HOPE

#### Key Truths

- ◆ He declares all people under the power of sin (**3:9-19**).
- ◆ He declares that no one is righteous before Him (**3:20**).

#### Summing up

- ◆ People's only hope of avoiding God's justice, and gaining a righteousness that will save them, is through the perfect life and sacrificial death of Jesus (**3:21-30**).

## ROMANS 4

### BELIEVING GOD'S PROMISE

#### Key Truths

- ◆ Trusting God's promise has and always will be the way back into friendship with God (**4:13-15**).
- ◆ All those who trust God's promise will be justified through the death of Christ (**4:23**).

#### Summing up

- ◆ The world is divided into those who trust God's promise and those who do not.

## ROMANS 5

### PEACE - THE WAR IS OVER

#### Key Truths

- ◆ The sacrificial death of the Lord Jesus completely changes our status before God. Before we faced his anger, now we have peace and access into his presence (**5:1-2**).
- ◆ All mankind stands behind Adam or Christ.
- ◆ If Adam, then we are marked by **SIN, DEATH & JUDGEMENT**
- ◆ If Christ, then **RIGHTEOUSNESS, LIFE, & FREEDOM**.

#### Summing up

- ◆ Everything true of Christ is now true of us (**5:19**).

## ROMANS 6

### THE CROSS SETS US FREE FROM SINS RULE

#### Key Truths

- ◆ The reality of grace leads to a passion for holy living, not a freedom to sin (**6:1-2**).
- ◆ The death of the Lord Jesus has freed every Christian from the domain and power of sin (**6:11, 22**).

#### Summing up

- ◆ Everything true of Christ is now true of us (**6:3-7**).

## ROMANS 7

### THE CROSS SETS US FREE FROM THE LAWS RULE

#### Key Truths

- ◆ The law is holy, righteous and good (**7:13-14**).
- ◆ The imposter sin uses the law to entice Israel to rebel (**7:7-12**).
- ◆ The rebel aims to crush you with the guilt of your own sin (**7:14-24**).
- ◆ The death of Jesus frees us from being married to the law, therefore freeing us from death (**7:1-6, 11**).
- ◆ We are no longer married to the law, but instead to Christ (**7:1-6**).

#### Summing up

- ◆ I now face NO condemnation from God for my rebellion (**8:1**).

## THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY IN ROMANS 8

### The Role of the Trinity

There is probably no chapter in Romans that so clearly reveals the different roles that the persons of the trinity play in God's eternal salvation plan.

	THE FATHER	THE SON	THE SPIRIT
8:1		In Christ = no condemnation.	He gives life.
8:2		Christ sets you free from the law of sin and death.	The Spirit sets you free from the law of sin and death.
8:3	God sends Christ to be a sin offering.	Christ – defeats the power of the law. Christ comes in human flesh to defeat sin.	
8:4		In Christ we meet the laws requirements.	We no longer live according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.
8:5			Our minds are set to what the Spirit desires.
8:6			The Spirit filled mind leads to life and peace.
8:9			The mark that you are a Christian is that you have the Spirit.
8:10			The sign that you belong to Christ is that you have the Holy Spirit
8:11			If the Spirit of life lives in you, then you have his life.
8: 12-13			The presence of the Holy Spirit always leads to a Holy life.
8:14			The Spirit leads God's children.
8:15			The Spirit brings your adoption as God's children.
8:15			Your new status as God's child dispels fear.
8:15			The Spirit enables you to cry 'Abba Father'
8:16			The Spirit reminds us that we are God's children.



**THE FATHER**

**THE SON**

**THE SPIRIT**

**8:17** We are heirs of God if we share in his sufferings.

Belonging to Christ, means we share in both his sufferings and glory.

**8:26**

He helps us in our weakness.

**8:26**

The Spirit prays for us with wordless groans.

**8:27**

The Spirit intercedes for us, according to God's will.

**8:28**

God works good in all circumstances for his people.

**8:29**

God's eternal plan is that we reflect the character of His Son.

**8:30**

God's called children are justified and will be glorified.

**8:31**

God's presence with His people makes them unbeatable

**8:32**

If God gives his Son to us, then nothing good will be held back.

**8:33**

God chooses us.  
God justifies us.

**8:34**

He...  
- Died for us  
- Rose again  
- Sits at the right hand of the Father  
- Intercedes for us

**8:35-36**

Nothing can separate us  
Christ's love.

**8:37**

God's love makes us more than conquerors .

**8:38-39**

Nothing can separate us from God love in Christ.

Nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ

**STUDY 12**

# **THE SPIRIT FILLED CONTROL CENTRE**

**ROMANS 8:1-17**



## **THE LINK**

### **CONNECTING THE JIGSAW**

Paul has shown us how the Christian relates to sin (*Romans 6*) and the law (*Romans 7*). In *Romans 8*, Paul shows the role of the Holy Spirit in making us like Christ (**8:29**).



## **THE TRUTH**

### **THE SEAT BELT TEST**

The work of the Holy Spirit is to mould our characters to the likeness of Jesus.



## **THE MESSAGE**

### **THE MEAT OF THE PASSAGE**

If the Apostle Paul watched the Pixar/Disney film *Inside Out*, I am sure he would use it as a brilliant illustration of ***Romans 8:1-17***. If you read the plot below and then follow the link to the film trailer, you will see why.

#### **Inside Out**

The film *Inside Out* describes the life of a little girl called Riley, who lives in Minnesota with her parents. When her father gets a new job, they move across to the other side of the country, a decision that causes Riley's world to be severely rocked. The film aims to explore her five core emotions Joy, Sadness, Disgust, Fear, and Anger. The emotions live in Headquarters, Riley's conscious mind, influencing Riley's actions and memories via a control console. Her new memories are housed in coloured orbs, which are sent into storage at the end of every waking period. The most important or "core" memories are housed in a hub in Headquarters and power five "islands", each of which reflects a different aspect of Riley's personality. Joy acts as the dominant emotion to keep Riley in a happy state, but she and the others do not understand Sadness's purpose, other than making Riley cry.

#### **Link to film plot:**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inside\\_Out\\_\(2015\\_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inside_Out_(2015_film))

#### **Link to film clip:**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1t0A\\_tZGrYw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1t0A_tZGrYw)

The image in the film has the emotions doing their utter best to control and influence Riley for good. Although Riley thinks she's in control, she's actually at the mercy of her circumstance. This brilliantly sums up how people live their lives, thinking they are in control, reacting to their emotions while being tossed this way, and that by circumstances outside of their power. The table below seeks to show how these core emotions are represented in ***Romans 8***.

JOY	SORROW	ANGER	DISGUST	FEAR
<p><b>8:1</b> Joy in God's pardon.</p>	<p><b>8:18-25</b> The sorrow of living within a fallen creation.</p>	<p><b>8:12-13</b> Hating the fact that we once thought selfishly.</p>	<p><b>8:12-13</b> Disgusted with ourselves that we once lived for death.</p>	<p><b>8:1</b> Free from the fear of judgement.</p>
<p><b>8:5-8</b> The joy of thinking like God.</p>	<p><b>8:18-21</b> The Spirit helps us to contrast our suffering now, with the glory to come.</p>			<p><b>8:14-17</b> Our new status as God's child exposes fear and commands it to go.</p>
<p><b>8:9-11</b> The joy of knowing the power of God's Spirit working within you.</p>	<p><b>8:26-27</b> In our sorrow the Spirit helps us in weakness. He groans with us, and for us in prayer.</p>			<p><b>8:28</b> Fear of the future is dispelled by the realisation of God's Sovereignty.</p>
<p><b>8:14-17</b> The joy of adoption, knowing we are God's children.</p>				<p><b>8:31-39</b> Fear of the future is met by the fact that God is for us.</p>
<p><b>8:28-30</b> Joy in being made into the likeness of God's Son.</p>				<p>Jesus is at God's right hand praying for us.</p>
<p><b>8:34</b> Joy of knowing that the Son is ruling at the Father's right hand. interceding for us.</p>				<p>God's love is shown in giving us His best.</p>
<p><b>8:31-39</b> The joy of knowing that nothing can separate you from God's love.</p>				<p>Nothing can separate us from God's love.</p>

Today, we will focus on how the Holy Spirit controls and develops the emotions of joy, anger, and disgust.

## JOYS FOUNDATION

### Status Sorted (8:1, 14-17, 34)

The Christian's joy is founded upon the new status which God has brought to us through His Son.

- ◆ **8:1** – The historical life and work of Christ save us from the condemnation we deserve.
- ◆ **8:2** – The historical life and work of Christ allow the Spirit to set us free from sin and death.
- ◆ **8:3-4** – The historical life and work of Christ break the power of the flesh forever.
- ◆ **8:11** – The historical life and work of Christ give his people resurrection life.

This new status is built completely upon the historical life, death and resurrection of Jesus, which cannot be threatened by outward circumstance. The word joy often gets mixed up with the word 'happiness', but in reality, they are two very different things. Happiness is based primarily upon present circumstances, whereas joy is not.

*"Joy is the settled assurance that God is in control of all the details of my life, the quiet confidence that ultimately everything is going to be alright, and the determined choice to praise God in every situation."*

R.Warren

## THE DIVINE TAKEOVER

With our status sorted by the historical acts of Christ, the control centre of our mind is now ready for the Holy Spirit to move in and take control. If we fully understand how the Holy Spirit runs the control centre, then we have to get to grips with a Bible understanding of the word 'flesh'.

## USE OF THE WORD 'FLESH'

### When the Flesh is GOOD (8:3-4)

The first use of the word 'flesh' points towards redemption. The word flesh in **8:3-4** is speaking of the flesh and blood of our human body. In Adam, the human body was attacked and forever weakened by sin, leaving us defeated by the requirements of the law (**8:3**). When God's Messiah invades the world, he comes in the flesh and line of David (**8:4, 1:2**). Unlike Adam, he refuses to bow to temptation and defeats the power of sin. This victory redeems mankind, which includes our human bodies. "Christ came in real flesh, but not in 'sinful flesh'; sin was unable to gain a foothold in his life. Therefore, he is said to have come 'in the likeness of sinful flesh' (**8:3**). Having come thus, he dealt effectively with sin in humanity: he repelled its attempts to secure an entrance into his life, and when in death he presented his sinless life to God as a sin offering, God by this means 'condemned sin in the flesh' (**8:3**) – the territory ruled by sin was redeemed from its domination through the incarnation, sacrifice and victory of the man Christ Jesus.

### When the Flesh is BAD (8:5-17)

The second way Paul uses the word 'flesh' is very different to the first. Here Paul is not speaking of our physical body, but instead our sinful nature, which he declares to have nothing good in it (**7:18**). It's the sinful nature that we inherited from Adam that Paul calls 'flesh' in **8:5, 6, 7, 8**.

The basic meaning of the word 'flesh' is to live for yourself. Just like the original rebellion in Eden, you become the rule maker. A good definition of 'flesh' might be 'You in Charge'.

The table below contrasts the difference between the Spirit and the flesh.

## SPIRIT FILLED

- 8:1** He gives life.
- 8:1** Sets you free from the law of sin and death.
- 8:2** He gives life.
- 8:5** If you are filled with the Spirit you will think like the Spirit.
- 8:6** The mind filled with the Spirit leads to life and peace.
- 8:9** The mark that you are a Christian is that you have the Spirit.
- 8:10** The body is dying, but Spirit gives life because of Christ's righteousness.
- 8:11** The proof and guarantee that you will rise on the last day is that the Spirit of Christ lives in you.
- 8:12** Those who have the Spirit owe nothing to rebel living.
- 8:13** Those who have the Spirit have given up with death as their destiny. From now on life is their future.
- 8:14** The proof that you belong to God, is that you have his Spirit
- 8:15** The Spirit enables you to cry Abba Father
- 8:16** The Spirit loves to remind us that we belong to the Father
- 8:17** God's children share in Christ's suffering and glory

## REBELLIOUS LIVING

- 8:5** If you live according to the flesh, you will think in accordance to the flesh.
- 8:6** The rebel mind leads to death.
- 8:7** The rebel mind is hostile to God and will not obey him.
- 8:8** Rebel minds cannot please God.

## ANGER AND DISGUST

The Holy Spirit takes these two emotions and uses them to shape our likeness of Jesus (**8:29**).

### **No loyalty (8:12)**

Now the Holy Spirit's in charge, we owe no loyalty to our old way old life. The old way of life was consumed with the 'flesh'. The thought of returning to the old way of life generates within the Christian godly disgust and anger, which the Holy Spirit wants to grow and develop.

### **No Sympathy (8:13)**

But the emotions must lead to action, which means Spirit-filled thinking and living. The Holy Spirit's aim is to create in us a mind that loves what God loves, and hates what God hates "We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ (**2 Cor 10:5**). This is an ongoing process that will touch every area of a young person's life, such as relationships, schoolwork, family life, internet, TV, hobbies, etc. The Holy Spirit is committed to making us like Christ (**8:29**), and anything that compromises that must go.

## A TRUSTWORTHY FATHER

Every time the Christian turns away from sin and what the flesh offers, the Holy Spirit desires that they turn to a Father who loves them. The Holy Spirit wants to remind every child of God that you were once slaves (**6:17-18**), but now you are an adopted child of the Father (**8:14-15**). When we suffer for our faithfulness to Christ, the Holy Spirit wants to remind us that suffering ultimately leads to glory (**8:17**). As the chapter comes to a climax, the implications of what it means to have God as your Father becomes clear (**8:37-39**).



## **SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS**

- 1.** What is a Christian's joy based on? Look up 8:1-4, 11.
  
- 2.** How does joy differ from happiness, and why is this important to how you approach to your Christian faith?
  
- 3.** Paul uses the word flesh in two ways.
  - One describes our physical bodies, which is good (8:3-4)
  - The other, our human nature, which is bad (8:5-17)

Look up 8:1-17, and follow the relationship/differences between the Holy Spirit and the flesh.

<b>THE SPIRIT FILLED LIFE</b>	<b>THE FLESH FILLED LIFE</b>
8:1	8:5
8:1	8:6
8:2	8:7
8:5	8:8
8:6	
8:8	
8:9	
8:10	
8:11	
8:12	
8:13	
8:14	
8:15	
8:16	
8:17	



**4.** What do you think it means or looks like to have your mind set on the flesh or the Spirit? Look up 8:5-13.

- At school?

- At home?

- What you watch and listen to on social media?

- At your sports team or hobby?

**5.** When fighting the flesh is difficult, or you clearly fail, where does the Holy Spirit want you to turn? Look up 1:1-4 & 8:14-17.

**6.** What difference should that make?

**STUDY 13**

**NOT  
ASHAMED:  
THE SPIRIT  
TEACHES  
YOU TO  
REMEMBER**

**ROMANS 8:1-27**



## THE LINK

### CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

Last session, we saw how the Holy Spirit helps us fight the flesh, so we resemble Jesus. In this session, Paul shows us how the Holy Spirit helps us look forward to the glory ahead while living in a fallen and broken world.

- ◆ **8:1** – Because of Jesus, we face no condemnation.
- ◆ **8:14** – Because of Jesus, we are children of God.
- ◆ **8:15** – Because of Jesus, we are no longer slaves ruled by fear.
- ◆ **8:15** – Because of Jesus, we are adopted into God's family and able to cry 'Abba' Father'.
- ◆ **8:16-17** – Because of Jesus, they are children of God and fellow heirs with Christ.



## THE TRUTH

### THE SEAT BELT TEST

The Holy Spirit teaches us to live a life full of gospel hope.

### THE CONTRAST: LOOKING TO THE RIGHT TIME ZONES

The primary role of the Holy Spirit is to focus our attention on the glory that is ahead. As we learn to look back to the cross and forward to Christ's return, we understand how to face suffering in time. To fully appreciate what it means to 'glory in suffering,' we need to look forward to **Romans 8**.



## THE MESSAGE

### THE MEAT OF THE PASSAGE

Last session, we began to explore how Paul teaches us to live like Jesus in a fallen and broken world. When we are converted, the Holy Spirit moves into the control centre of our lives, reforming both how we think (**8:5-8**) and act (**8:9-11**). With these two things in place, the Spirit seeks to turn our gaze to the future glory that awaits (**8:6**). This new hope of glory begins to shape every aspect of the Christian's life.

#### Sadness (8:18-30)

The book of Romans always applies gospel truths to the real world. This passage is full of words such as suffering, frustration, bondage, decay, groaning and weakness. These words describe the present world that our young people experience every day.

#### Glory (8:18)

Just as football fans share in the glory of their victorious team, so we share in the glory of our crucified and risen saviour. The Christian always lives life now, in the light of the glory ahead.

#### Liberation & Freedom (8:19-22)

The fallen and broken creation will one day be liberated from all the decay and vandalism that sin has brought. Instead of God's creation groaning like a woman in labour, it will be liberated from the devastating effects of the fall. This is what the Holy Spirit wants to remind us of.

### REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE

*The Holy Spirit wants our young people to remember their new status*

### Redemption (8:23)

In a world where disease brings death and destruction, the Christian looks ahead to the day when their physical body will be redeemed. A body that will be free of decay, disease, pain and the constant threat of death.

### The Companion (8:26-27)

The effects of the fall can weaken our resolve to love and live for Christ. What we desperately need is a companion who will constantly remind us of the great truths of *Romans 8*. The Holy Spirit is the companion that helps us in our weakness, as He prays for us when suffering suffocates our ability to speak and seek God. The tenderness of the Holy Spirit is a wonderful comfort and reveals to the compassion, patience and deep love God has for his children. He is the Spirit who brings life and peace (8:6).

### Glorified (8:30)

Although the true realisation of glory lies ahead, Paul speaks as if it's a present reality. A helpful picture might be that of a victorious Olympian who wins a gold medal. Their glory is secure, all they need to do is climb onto the rostrum and receive the medal. This is the situation we find ourselves in. Our saviour has won the victory through his death and resurrection; all we need to do is to follow him up the rostrum to receive the medal.

Our young people face the same challenge as the first Christians back in Rome. When faced with hardship or suffering, the temptation will always be to judge reality by what we see instead of the cross. This is why the Holy Spirit's work is to help us judge all reality by the cross of Christ. *"The Holy Spirit inspiration is as needed as the Son's mediation."* J.Stott.

THE FALLEN WORLD		THE CHRISTIAN'S HOPE	
8:18, 23	A creation marked suffering	8:18	We suffer now, but glory follows
8:20	A creation marked by futility	8:21	We look forward to creation's liberation
8:21	A creation marked by corruption	8:23	We look forward to our physical bodies being redeemed
8:22	A creation that groans longing for a better future	8:22-23, 18, 21	Groaning now. Glory later.

## FEAR & THE FATHER (8:31-39)

The last emotion Paul draws our attention to is fear. As with the other emotions, Paul wants to confront them with the truth of the gospel. In these last eight verses, he gives us four solid truths.

### 1. His Character (8:31)

When fear threatens to take over our control centre, the Holy Spirit reminds us that we once faced an inescapable judgement (1:18, 2:3, 16). Our future now is 100% different, for we no longer face condemnation (8:1), but instead, a God who is for us (8:31).

### 2. His Best (8:32-34)

When fear threatens to take over our control centre, the Holy Spirit reminds us of the depths of our Father's love for us. The logic Paul follows is clear, if our Father gives us His very best, then His love must be unfathomably deep.

### 3. His Rule (8:34)

When fear threatens to take over our control centre, the Holy Spirit reminds us that our risen saviour is upon the throne.

### 4. His Love (8:37-39)

All these truths point to the inescapable reality that nothing can therefore separate us from our Father's love.



## SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

Last session, we began to explore how Paul teaches us to live like Jesus in a fallen and broken world. When we are converted, the Holy Spirit moves into the control centre of our lives, reforming both how we think (8:5-8) and act (8:9-11). With these two things in place, the Spirit seeks to turn our gaze to the future glory that awaits (8:6). This new hope of glory begins to shape every aspect of the Christian's life.

1. When Paul speaks about suffering, what areas does he highlight, and what words does he use to describe suffering? Look up 8:18-39.
2. Think of examples of examples from this month's news where Paul's words apply.
3. What examples in your life have you felt the power of Paul's words?
4. How does Paul contrast our fallen world with our gospel hope?

THE SPIRIT FILLED LIFE	THE FLESH FILLED LIFE
8:18, 23	8:18
8:20	8:21
8:21	8:23
8:22	8:22-23, 18,21

5. Think about the positive words Paul uses to describe the hope we have
  - Liberation & Freedom (8:19-22)
  - Redemption (8:23)

How will God put these things into reality, and what do you think they will look like?

6. What truths about the Holy Spirit and God the Father should give you assurance and hope? Look up 8:26-39.

# NOT ASHAMED



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# **NOT ASHAMED!**

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