GOSPEL IN ROMANS · STUDY NOTES

Study 5: Christian living

For personal study or groups

Your name

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How to use these notes. Watch each part's video on biblehelp.net, or read the text below. Look up each passage in your own Bible and write the answer on the lines. The verses are printed at the back if you need them. At the end there are questions to think about on your own or to discuss in a group.

PART 1

Christian behaviour

Romans so far

The whole world is guilty before God. God credits righteousness to those who believe. The believer has victory over sin and suffering. God has a plan for the salvation of Gentiles and Jews.

The final topic is **"Christian living" (Romans 12–16)**: the practical outworking of the first eleven chapters. Note: good doctrine produces good living.

Christian behaviour (chapters 12–13)

1. Being a living sacrifice, and using our gifts (12:1–8). We present our bodies as living sacrifices (vv. 1–2), humbly serving the church, Christ's body, with our different gifts (vv. 3–8; compare 1 Peter 4:10 and 1 Corinthians 12).

1 **Read Romans 12:1–8**

How should we use the gifts God has given us? Why is it best to use them in one church that you belong to?

See also: 1 Peter 4:10.

2. Overcoming evil with good (12:9–21). Evil should be hated and good desired; love heads a list of virtues (vv. 9–16). Evil must be overcome by good: respond with kindness, not evil (vv. 17–21).

2 **Read Romans 12:9–21**

How should we treat someone who does us wrong? Write down one way you could overcome evil with good.

3. Giving everyone their due (chapter 13). Governments should be honoured as God-appointed agents for our good (vv. 1–7; compare Matthew 22:17–21). Christians should love everyone, throw off sin, and put on Christ's character (vv. 8–14).

3 **Read Romans 13:1–7**

Who has appointed the governing authorities? How should Christians treat them?

See also: Romans 13:8–14; Matthew 22:17–21.

PART 2

Welcome one another in love

Welcome believers in love (14:1–15:13)

1. Receive them without despising or judging (14:1–13). Don't criticise over food (v. 2) or special days (v. 5); they are God's servants (vv. 4–9). We must all appear before Christ, so examine yourself instead (vv. 10–13).

4 **Read Romans 14:1–13**

What does Paul tell us not to do to other believers? Why is it so easy to criticise others and not ourselves?

See also: Mary was criticised, but Jesus defended her: Mark 14:6–8.

2. Receive them without hurting or hindering (14:14–23). No food is wrong to eat, though some may think it is (v. 14). But it is wrong to eat anything that damages another believer (vv. 15–23). Love stops us doing what is right for us if it would harm someone else (compare 1 Corinthians 8:9).

5 **Read Romans 14:14–23**

Why should we be ready to give up something that is right for us, if it would harm another believer? Give an example from today.

See also: 1 Corinthians 8:9.

3. Receive them as Christ received us (15:1–13). Christ pleased others, not Himself, so bear with those who are easily offended (vv. 1–6). Christ received us Gentile outsiders, so receive each other (vv. 7–13).

6 **Read Romans 15:1–13**

Whose example should we follow (verses 3 and 7)? Give an example of Christ's patience with His disciples.

PART 3

Paul's final remarks

Final remarks (15:14–16:27)

1. His reason and authority for writing (15:14–21). They need to be reminded of gospel truth (v. 15). As the apostle to the Gentiles, he has the authority to write (vv. 16–21).

7 **Read Romans 15:14–21**

What was Paul's great aim (verse 20)? Why is the teaching of Romans so important today?

2. His plans for visiting them (15:22–33). He will visit them on his way to Spain, but must first deliver the Gentile churches' gift to Jerusalem (vv. 22–28). He begs them to pray for his deliverance, so that nothing delays his visit (vv. 29–33).

8 **Read Romans 15:22–33**

What did Paul ask the Romans to do for him (verse 30)? What does this tell us about even the greatest Christians?

3. Greetings, warnings, and praise to God (chapter 16). He greets friends he has met in other places (vv. 1–16). He warns about division, and ends with greetings and praise (vv. 17–27).

9 **Read Romans 16:17–27**

What does Paul warn about (verse 17)? Why does Satan try so hard to divide churches?

Final conclusion

These practical chapters remind us that although faith alone saves, the faith that saves is never alone: it is full of love and good works.

THINK IT THROUGH

Questions for reflection and discussion

1. Which part of Romans 12 most challenges the way you live?

2. How can you welcome other Christians who see some things differently from you?

3. Looking back over the whole of Romans, what has been the most important truth for you?

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

Memory verse for study 5

Learn this verse by heart this week. Cut out the card and keep it where you will see it.

GOSPEL IN ROMANS · STUDY 5 · MEMORY VERSE

“Therefore I urge you, brothers, on account of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.”

Romans 12:1

Berean Standard Bible · biblehelp.net

“I have hidden Your word in my heart that I might not sin against You.” (Psalm 119:11, BSB)

AT THE BACK

The Bible passages (BSB)

1 **Romans 12:1–8** [1]*Therefore I urge you, brothers, on account of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.* [2]*Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.* [3]*For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but think of yourself with sober judgment, according to the measure of faith God has given you.* [4]*Just as each of us has one body with many members, and not all members have the same function,* [5]*so in Christ we who are many are one body, and each member belongs to one another.* [6]*We have different gifts according to the grace given us. If one's gift is prophecy, let him use it in proportion to his faith;* [7]*if it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach;* [8]*if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is giving, let him give generously; if it is leading, let him lead with diligence; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.*

2 **Romans 12:9–21** [9]*Love must be sincere. Detest what is evil; cling to what is good.* [10]*Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Outdo yourselves in honoring one another.* [11]*Do not let your zeal subside; keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.* [12]*Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, persistent in prayer.* [13]*Share with the saints who are in need. Practice hospitality.* [14]*Bless those who persecute you. Bless and do not curse.* [15]*Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep.* [16]*Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but associate with the lowly. Do not be conceited.* [17]*Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Carefully consider what is right in the eyes of everybody.* [18]*If it is possible on your part, live at peace with everyone.* [19]*Do not avenge yourselves, beloved, but leave room for God's wrath. For it is written: "Vengeance is Mine; I will repay, says the Lord."* [20]*On the contrary, "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink. For in so doing, you will heap burning coals on his head."* [21]*Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

3 **Romans 13:1–7** [1]*Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which is from God. The authorities that exist have been appointed by God.* [2]*Consequently, whoever resists authority is opposing what God has set in place, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.* [3]*For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Do you want to be unafraid of the one in authority? Then do what is right, and you will have his approval.* [4]*For he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not carry the sword in vain. He is God's servant, an agent of retribution to the wrongdoer.* [5]*Therefore it is necessary to submit to authority, not only to avoid punishment, but also as a matter of conscience.* [6]*This is also why you pay taxes. For the authorities are God's servants, who devote themselves to their work.* [7]*Pay everyone what you owe him: taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honor to whom honor is due.*

4 **Romans 14:1–13** *1Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on his opinions. 2For one person has faith to eat all things, while another, who is weak, eats only vegetables. 3The one who eats everything must not belittle the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does, for God has accepted him. 4Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand. 5One person regards a certain day above the others, while someone else considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. 6He who observes a special day does so to the Lord; he who eats does so to the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who abstains does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God. 7For none of us lives to himself alone, and none of us dies to himself alone. 8If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. 9For this reason Christ died and returned to life, that He might be the Lord of both the dead and the living. 10Why, then, do you judge your brother? Or why do you belittle your brother? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. 11It is written: "As surely as I live, says the Lord, every knee will bow before Me; every tongue will confess to God." 12So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God. 13Therefore let us stop judging one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way.*

5 **Romans 14:14–23** *14I am convinced and fully persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself. But if anyone regards something as unclean, then for him it is unclean. 15If your brother is distressed by what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy your brother, for whom Christ died. 16Do not allow what you consider good, then, to be spoken of as evil. 17For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. 18For whoever serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by men. 19So then, let us pursue what leads to peace and to mutual edification. 20Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a man to let his eating be a stumbling block. 21It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything to cause your brother to stumble. 22Keep your belief about such matters between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who does not condemn himself by what he approves. 23But the one who has doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and everything that is not from faith is sin.*

6 **Romans 15:1–13** *[1]We who are strong ought to bear with the shortcomings of the weak and not to please ourselves. [2]Each of us should please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. [3]For even Christ did not please Himself, but as it is written: "The insults of those who insult You have fallen on Me." [4]For everything that was written in the past was written for our instruction, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures, we might have hope. [5]Now may the God who gives endurance and encouragement grant you harmony with one another in Christ Jesus, [6]so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. [7]Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring glory to God. [8]For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of God's truth, to confirm the promises made to the patriarchs, [9]so that the Gentiles may glorify God for His mercy. As it is written: "Therefore I will praise You among the Gentiles; I will sing hymns to Your name." [10]Again, it says: "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people." [11]And again: "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and extol Him, all you peoples." [12]And once more, Isaiah says: "The Root of Jesse will appear, One who will arise to rule over the Gentiles; in Him the Gentiles will put their hope." [13]Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you believe in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

7 **Romans 15:14–21** *[14]I myself am convinced, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, brimming with knowledge, and able to instruct one another. [15]However, I have written you a bold reminder on some points, because of the grace God has given me [16]to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. [17]Therefore I exult in Christ Jesus in my service to God. [18]I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obedience by word and deed, [19]by the power of signs and wonders, and by the power of the Spirit of God. So from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ. [20]In this way I have aspired to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation. [21]Rather, as it is written: "Those who were not told about Him will see, and those who have not heard will understand."*

8 **Romans 15:22–33** *[22]That is why I have often been hindered from coming to you. [23]But now that there are no further opportunities for me in these regions, and since I have longed for many years to visit you, [24]I hope to see you on my way to Spain. And after I have enjoyed your company for a while, you can equip me for my journey. [25]Now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem to serve the saints there. [26]For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. [27]They were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual blessings, they are obligated to minister to them with material blessings. [28]So after I have completed this service and have safely delivered this bounty to them, I will set off to Spain by way of you. [29]I know that when I come to you, I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ. [30]Now I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. [31]Pray that I may be delivered from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my service in Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints there, [32]so that by God's will I may come to you with joy and together with you be refreshed. [33]The God of peace be with all of you. Amen.*

9 **Romans 16:17–27** *17Now I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who create divisions and obstacles that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Turn away from them. 18For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive. 19Everyone has heard about your obedience, so I rejoice over you. But I want you to be wise about what is good and innocent about what is evil. 20The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. 21Timothy, my fellow worker, sends you greetings, as do Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, my fellow countrymen. 22I, Tertius, who wrote down this letter, greet you in the Lord. 23Gaius, who has hosted me and all the church, sends you greetings. Erastus, the city treasurer, sends you greetings, as does our brother Quartus. 25Now to Him who is able to strengthen you by my gospel and by the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery concealed for ages past 26but now revealed and made known through the writings of the prophets by the command of the eternal God, in order to lead all nations to the obedience that comes from faith— 27to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen.*

Scripture: Berean Standard Bible (BSB), public domain. Quotations keep its American spelling. Like many English Bibles, it often says ‘man’, ‘he’ or ‘brothers’ where it means people in general, men and women alike.

FOR GROUP LEADERS

Study 5: Christian living

> **Memory verse:** “Therefore I urge you, brothers, on account of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.” (Romans 12:1). Say it together at the end, and ask who can say it without looking.

Aims

- Show that good doctrine produces good living: a living sacrifice, serving with our gifts, overcoming evil with good, being good citizens.
- Learn to welcome other believers in love over secondary matters.
- Close the course: Paul's purpose, his need of prayer, and the danger of division; faith alone saves, but saving faith is never alone.

Suggested timing (about 75 minutes)

- **5 min** Welcome and short prayer.
- **25 min** Part 1 video (4 min); Romans 12:1–8, 12:9–21, 13:1–7.
- **20 min** Part 2 video (3 min); Romans 14:1–13, 14:14–23, 15:1–13.
- **20 min** Part 3 video (3 min); Romans 15:14–21, 15:22–33, 16:17–27.
- **5 min** Closing prayer; celebrate finishing Romans.

Tips

- Romans 14 is about secondary matters (food, days), not about essentials of the gospel.
- Encourage commitment to one local church as the place to use one's gifts.
- End by reviewing the whole letter in a few sentences: guilty world; righteousness by faith; conflict and victory; God's plan; Christian living.

Answers to watch for

- **12:1–8:** living sacrifices; renewed minds; serving with different gifts.
- **12:9–21:** sincere love; overcome evil with good.
- **13:1–7:** governing authorities are established by God.
- **14:1–13:** we will all stand before God's judgement seat; stop judging.
- **14:14–23:** don't destroy someone for whom Christ died; pursue peace.
- **15:1–13:** bear with the weak; accept one another as Christ accepted you.
- **15:14–21:** Paul wrote to remind them, as minister to the Gentiles.
- **15:22–33:** join me in my struggle by praying for me.
- **16:17–27:** watch out for those who cause divisions; glory to the only wise God.