

THE GOSPEL CHANGES EVERYTHING



ROMANS

GC Discussion Guide

GC Discussion Guide through
ROMANS

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Week One
ROMANS 1:1-17

CHAPTER 1:1-17

1. From vs. 1-7, what do we know about this letter? Who wrote it and to whom was it written?
2. From vs. 2-5, how is Jesus described?
 - a. Which of these descriptions stand out to you, and why?
3. We see in v. 8-15 that Paul has a deep longing to come to Rome. Why does Paul have this deep desire to be with them? What does this tell you about the importance of embodied ministry?
 - a. What must take place in order for your gospel community to feel this kind of deep affection for one another and desire to be together? Have you experienced that? What hinders you? How does gathering together lead to mutual encouragement?
4. How has someone else's faith in this room been encouraging to you (v. 12)?
5. What is the gospel (v. 16)?
 - a. What would it mean to be ashamed of the gospel?
 - b. What reason does Paul give for not being ashamed of the gospel? How does that answer address the reasons you have for being tempted to be ashamed?
 - c. How does it encourage you that the gospel is the power of God - not you or your story or your moral adherence to the law?

Week Two

ROMANS 1:18-32

CHAPTER 1:18-32

1. What is the wrath of God (v. 18)?
 - a. How does the wrath of God make you feel?
2. What truth is being suppressed (v. 18)? How do you suppress the truth?
3. Where in creation do you see God's "eternal power and divine nature" (v. 20)? What parts of creation create awe and wonder of God within you?
4. The thrust of vs. 22-25 is not whether or not we worship, it is that we will either worship created things or the Creator. In what ways do we worship created things rather than the Creator (v. 25)?
 - a. How is sexual immorality an example of worshipping created things over the Creator (vs. 26-27)?
 - b. How are the things listed in vs. 29-32 examples of worshipping created things over the Creator?
5. What does it mean when vs. 24, 26, and 28 state that "God gave them up..."?
6. Why do we suppress knowledge and worship of God and instead worship created things?
7. Tim Keller - "[this] is the backdrop on which the bright jewel of the gospel shines all the brighter." How is this true for you? How is Romans 1:16-17 our hope in light of these truths?

Week Three

ROMANS 2:1-16

CHAPTER 2:1-16

1. What is meant by the phrase to condemn yourself by passing judgment on others (v. 1)?
2. In what ways do you see evidence of the Law being “written on [everybody’s] hearts,” even if they do not know the Law or believe the Law?
3. It says in v. 16 that God will judge according to the gospel.
 - a. Why is it good news for us that God’s judgment is according to the gospel?
4. Romans 2:4 similar to 2 Peter 3:9 describes God’s patience towards us and how His patience and kindness are intended to lead us toward true change.
 - a. In your walk with Jesus, are you more motivated by fear of God’s wrath and disappointment or by appreciation for his grace and kindness?
 - b. Thinking about it practically, how can you be motivated daily by the grace and kindness of God?
5. Name someone in your life that you need to display this kind of patience and kindness toward. Explain why.

Week Four

ROMANS 2:17-29

CHAPTER 2:17-29

1. In what ways do we “boast in God” but not live out what we believe (vs. 17-23)?
2. This second part of Chapter 2 is confronting the religious believer. He is saying that you may have all of the do and don’ts or rights and wrongs down but do not display the kindness and goodness of God in your behavior toward outsiders. As a result, the name of God is blasphemed “among the gentiles” (or unbelievers) because of us (the church).
 - a. Does your life and this community lead others to blaspheme God or to be curious and interested about God (v. 24)? What needs to change?
3. Do you have an example of how someone’s life or a community made you curious about God?
4. Read vs. 25-29 again. This is the modern equivalent of claiming salvation by “being born into it”, “being baptized”, political affiliation, moral standards, etc.
 - a. What are some ways that you are tempted to rely on other things for justification and salvation apart from the gospel?
5. In what ways do you seek praise from others more than pleasing God (v. 29)? Why do you do these things, and what are some practical ways you can seek to please God more than man?

Week Five
ROMANS 3:1-20

CHAPTER 3:1-20

1. In this section, Paul asks a lot of rhetorical questions. He is anticipating the objections and questions he knows will come. Which of these questions stands out to you? Why?
2. Sin is oftentimes talked about as something that is outside of us (and it is, in many ways), but these verses are addressing the state of our heart. Why do we focus more on our external actions rather than addressing the sinful state of our heart?
3. Re-read v. 20. “Through the law comes knowledge of sin (v. 20).” How have you experienced this in your life? In what ways do you find yourself trying to use “works of the law” to be justified by God and approved of by others?
4. If we’re honest, so far Romans has focused on the depths of our sins and the consequences of it. Why do you think Paul sets up the letter this way? What might this tell us about our own understanding and presentation of the gospel?
5. The language of “none is righteous,” “no one does good” in vs. 10-12 bring condemnation on all people. We not only sin, we are sinners. In what ways do you minimize your sinfulness? (*Source: Gospel-Centered Life, Thune and Walker*)
 - a. Defensive - tendency to justify sin or talk about successes
 - b. Hide - tendency to conceal sin
 - c. Faking - maintaining appearances and appearing righteous
 - d. Blaming - your sin is never your fault
 - e. Downplaying - your sin is not a big deal or is not a problem
6. How does the gospel address your defensiveness, hiding, faking, blaming, and downplaying?

Week Six

ROMANS 3:21-31

CHAPTER 3:21-31

1. What is the significance of the word “but” in verse 21? Why is it important to understand the depth of our sinfulness before understanding the gospel?
2. Propitiation (v. 25) means the wrath of God is satisfied. What would or should change about your life if you believed the wrath of God is satisfied for you?
3. In what ways are you tempted to boast in “a law of works” (v. 27)?
4. There are several references to the Old Testament in this passage. How is Paul showing these Jewish and Gentile believers that the entirety of the Old Testament points to Jesus? Why is this important? How do you typically view and approach the Old Testament?
5. Romans 3:26 says that God is both just and the justifier. How does the gospel show that God is both just and the justifier?
 - a. What are some of the practical implications of being “justified”?
 - b. How do we live if we aren’t justified by faith?
 - c. What would change in your life if you believed you were justified?

Week Seven
ROMANS 4

CHAPTER 4

1. Why is Paul emphasizing that Abraham's faith was counted to him as righteousness BEFORE he was circumcised? (Remember: What does circumcision represent? What was the significance of circumcision for Jews at that time? Why would this be an important point to make? Why was Abraham significant to them?)
2. What was the promise made to Abraham (v. 21)? (See Genesis 12:1-3; Genesis 15; Genesis 17:1-14)
3. What is righteousness (v. 3)? What is faith (v. 16)?
4. There were times when Abraham questioned God and even had doubts (Genesis 15). However, it was his belief and his faith that were credited to him as righteousness.
 - a. How might that be different from how you have learned or conceptualized faith?
 - b. What are things that cause you to doubt and your faith to waver (v. 19-20)?
 - c. Are doubts always bad, and if not, how do we approach and engage our doubts?
5. How is the truth that these words "will be counted to us" (v. 24) also an encouragement to you today?

Week Eight

ROMANS 5:1-11

CHAPTER 5:1-11

1. Paul repeats the phrase “by faith” in vs. 1 and 2. Why is he continually emphasizing “by faith”? Why would the original audience need this reminder? How do we need this reminder?
2. This passage talks about rejoicing in the midst of our suffering (v. 3). What reasons does the text give for this? How is this a richer vision for “hope” than what the world offers?
 - a. How have you seen suffering produce endurance, character, and hope within you in the past?
 - b. Gospel Communities are meant to be a place for care and carrying one another’s burdens. Where have you seen our GC do this? How can we improve?
3. How are we described in vs. 6-10? (sinners, ungodly, enemies)
 - a. Why is it important to understand that our sinful nature makes our hearts inclined to be enemies of God?
4. Jesus died for us – sinners, enemies. What does it mean that we have “peace with God” (v. 1)? Why is this a truth you need to remember today?

Week Nine

ROMANS 5:12-21

CHAPTER 5:12-21

1. In v. 12 there is another “therefore” at the beginning of the sentence.
“Therefore” implies that he is building upon his previous statement.
As a result, can someone summarize the main point(s) of vs. 6-11?
2. How is Adam “a type” of the one to come – Jesus (v. 14)? Why is it important that we understand and believe that sin came through one man, Adam (v. 12)?
3. What do we receive through the one man, Jesus’, sacrifice (v. 17)?
4. What is the difference between condemnation and justification? How would you explain them to someone who is not familiar with that language?
 - a. In what ways do you still feel condemnation and shame?
 - b. What is the difference between condemnation/shame and conviction?
5. Paul repeats that God’s grace is a “free gift.” Why does that matter?

Week Ten

ROMANS 6:1-14

CHAPTER 6:1-14

1. In your own words, what is the rhetorical question being asked in verse 1?

What is the difference between legalism and license?

- a. Legalism – Legalists continue to live under the law, believing that God’s approval is somehow dependent on their right conduct.
- b. License – Licentious people dismiss the law, believing that since they are “under grace,” God’s rules don’t matter much.

(Source: Gospel-Centered Life, Thune and Walker)

2. We all are legalistic and licentious people depending on the sin or circumstance. What are some areas of your life that you know you are legalistic (believing that God’s approval is dependent upon your right conduct)? What are some areas of your life that you are licentious (believing that “God will forgive me anyway” or “it’s not a big deal”)?

- a. What is the problem with both of these heart postures?

3. Look again at v. 1 and pair this verse with Matthew 5:29-30. What should our attitude towards sin be?

4. What does it mean to be “set free from sin” (v. 7)? However, we still sin. Is this a contradiction, why or why not?

5. Re-read vs. 12-14 and consider splitting up guys and girls. Name a sin that is currently ruling over you. How do you need to repent of presenting your members as tools for unrighteousness (v. 13)? How can you practically fight to not let sin reign within you and pursue obedience this week? How can your community help you in this fight? Be specific.

Week Eleven

ROMANS 6:15-23

CHAPTER 6:15-23

1. It says “we are not under the law but under grace” in v. 15. What is the role of the law in the new covenant?
2. Why do you think Paul uses the analogy of slavery here? How does it deepen or expand your understanding of what he is trying to say?
3. Paul talks about becoming obedient from the heart (v. 17). Give an example of a time where your heart led you to obey or an example where obedience led to a change of heart.
4. Re-Read vs. 20-23. What is the fruit of being “slaves to sin” compared to the fruit of being “slaves of God?”
5. Can you think of a time when running after sin was what you thought you wanted, but it only brought regret, shame, and negative consequences? Can you think of a time when pursuing righteousness was hard and difficult, but it led to growth and spiritual fruit?

Week Twelve

ROMANS 7

CHAPTER 7

1. What are the benefits of being released from the law and instead, living by the Spirit (v. 4-6)? See Ephesians 4:23-24, Colossians 3:10, Galatians 5:16-18.
2. In your own words, what are the rhetorical questions he is asking in these verses (v. 7 and v. 13)?
3. What is the purpose of the Law now (v. 7)?
4. How can you relate with the back and forth nature of vs. 13-25?
 - a. What does it mean when Paul says that he knows what is right, but he does not have the ability to carry it out (v. 18)?
 - b. In what ways do you relate to the apostle Paul here?
5. Where does deliverance from your struggle with sin and your flesh come from (vs. 24-25)? How is this encouraging to you, and how do you access this deliverance?
6. How would you use this passage to encourage someone who feels condemned by their sin and failure to keep the Law?