

Romans Part 4

Leader Guide

(NASB and ESV)

LIFE AS A LIVING
SACRIFICE
(CHAPTERS 12–16)

Romans Part 4 Leader Guide (NASB and ESV)

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THE PURPOSE OF LEADER GUIDES

These leader guides are intended for you, the leader, to help plan your discussions. They are designed to help you reason through the theology of the lessons and to ensure you have understood what your group should have learned from completing their homework. Leader Guides are not designed to do the homework for you! Please refer to them after you have completed your assignment as a student.

These guides can assist you in preparing the lesson plans to use for leading the discussions. This is not the only way to lead your discussion of the Scriptures, but it is one way you could approach the material in the lesson.

The Holy Spirit must be your guide as you plan to lead these discussions. He is the one who knows what your group needs. Be in prayer for them as they study and for yourself as you plan to lead the discussions.

Keep in mind learning is enhanced when your group is encouraged to verbalize what they've learned. Asking questions will help them to reason through the Scriptures they have studied. Ask the "5 Ws and an H" kinds of questions (Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How). Asking these kinds of questions requires more than a yes or no answer.

Visual aids can be a tremendous asset in helping your group to reason through the Scriptures. These discussion guides will give you some ideas for visual aids, but please feel free to adapt, change, or even replace these with your own ideas.

These guides can be used for either the NASB or the ESV Precept Upon Precept courses. The ESV follows the NASB with a slash / or is set off with parentheses.

ROMANS PART 4
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 1

Lesson emphasis:

- Romans overview

ROMANS 1:1–17

To begin this discussion, you might ask your group how Romans begins.

Who wrote Romans, and how did he identify himself?

Paul

Bond–servant (ESV—servant) of Christ Jesus
Called as an apostle
Set apart for the gospel of God

Received grace and apostleship to bring about obedience of faith
among the Gentiles / nations

Who did he write this letter to?

Believers in Rome

Called of Jesus Christ
Beloved of God in Rome
Called as saints
Gentiles / nations, verses 5–6, 13
Their faith was being proclaimed throughout the whole world

What historical information does Romans 1:9–15 give?

Paul had not been to Rome but longed to go. He was eager to preach the gospel to them in Rome. He wanted to use his spiritual gift for their benefit; he wanted mutual encouragement.

Relate this to Romans 15:14–33 and 16:17–27.

Paul wrote boldly on some points to remind the Roman believers.
He told them how he hoped to come to Rome.
He closed with warning against those who cause dissensions / divisions.

This tells why Paul wrote Romans.

Tertius wrote the words of this letter that Paul spoke to the Romans.

How does Romans 1:16–17 relate to the rest of Romans?

These statements seem to summarize what all of Romans is about.
They're the key verses.

The theme of Romans is: the righteous shall live by faith.

These verses also indicate that there were Jews among the saints in Rome.
There were two groups in the church at Rome, Jews and Gentiles.

At this point, ask your group about the main theme of each chapter.
Tell them to look at their At A Glance chart as a visual aid.

ROMANS 1:18–32

What is this about?

God's wrath revealed against men's unrighteousness

Men are without excuse when they face His wrath.

How might you summarize the theme of Romans 1?

God's righteousness in the gospel; His wrath against unrighteousness

ROMANS 2

What words are repeated in this chapter? What is it about?

Judgment and the Law are repeated.

Verse 9 mentions both Jew and Greek, just like 1:16.
The gospel is for the Jew first and also the Greek as is judgment.
There is no partiality with God.

Verses 17–29 are about Jews.

How can the theme of this chapter be stated?

God's judgment on all; Jews and the Law

ROMANS 3

How does this chapter begin?

Paul asked a question.

You might ask if your group noticed other questions in Romans.

This was one of Paul's ways of reasoning with the people he wrote.

What is this chapter about?

Both Jews and Greeks are all under sin.
There is none righteous.

Righteousness comes by faith in Jesus Christ.

God is just and justifier of one who has faith.

Ask what your group put on their At A Glance charts as the theme of this chapter.

All have sinned, none righteous; Justified by faith in Christ

How do the first three chapters relate? What's the flow of thought?

The gospel of God has power to save, reveal His righteousness.
All men are unrighteous and deserve God's judgment.
Righteousness comes by faith in Jesus Christ.

ROMANS 4

Who is this chapter about?

Abraham's example of justification by faith

Abraham believed God, and it was credited / counted as righteousness.
Righteousness by faith, not works of law

How can this chapter be summarized?

Abraham justified by faith, righteous

ROMANS 5

What and who is this chapter about?

The results of justification—peace with God, saved from His wrath.

There's a contrast between Adam and Christ.

All men were facing death because of sin, but Christ's death gives righteousness.

What's the theme?

Peace with God, many made righteous by Christ's death

Relate the main points of this chapter to the flow of thought from Romans 1.

Paul was eager to preach the gospel because it has the power of salvation for the Jew first and also the Greek. All men, Jews and Gentiles, are under sin and death, facing God's wrath and judgment.

Christ died so that those who believe in Him are made righteous and no longer face God's judgment but have peace with Him.

ROMANS 6

How does this chapter begin?

Another question

What are the answer and main points?

Believers died with Christ to walk in newness of life

Now free from sin, no longer slaves to sin but slaves to righteousness

Another free gift from God is eternal life in Christ.

How can this chapter be summarized?

Dead to sin and alive to God, slaves of righteousness

ROMANS 7

What's the key repeated word in this chapter? What does the chapter say about it?

The Law

Believers are dead to the Law. This is a good summary of this chapter.

ROMANS 8

What is the main theme in this chapter?

The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death.

Relate this to the content of Romans 6 and 7.

ROMANS 9

What is this chapter about?

Paul's grief for his people Israel

God's mercy

Israel pursued their own righteousness, not by faith

Theme, summary?

Paul's sorrow for Israel; God's mercy

What are Romans 9–11 about?

These chapters are about Israel and Paul's heart toward his fellow Jews.

ROMANS 10

How does this chapter continue about Israel?

Paul's desire for them was their salvation.

Christ is the end of the law
for righteousness
to everyone who believes

Righteousness is based on faith not law.

Ask what your group put on their At A Glance chart as the theme for this chapter.

Israel did not subject / submit to God's righteousness

ROMANS 11

What does this chapter say about Israel?

Their rejection means reconciliation for the world.

God has not rejected His people Israel.

This last statement is a good summary of Romans 11.

ROMANS 12

How does this chapter begin? How is it different from chapters 1–11?

“Therefore...by the mercies of God...”

Romans 1–11 describes the mercies of God.

Present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice.

Paul turned to instructions, primarily about how to live with brothers.

Love one another, fulfill the law—might be a good summary statement.

As you discuss these last chapters, ask about the main instruction(s) in each and how it relates to Jews and Gentiles living together as brothers. Relate to the church now.

ROMANS 13

Be in subjection to the governing authorities

ROMANS 14

Accept one weak in faith—don’t judge brothers

ROMANS 15

Accept one another.

ROMANS 16

Greetings, warning, praise

Paul, a Jew, sent greetings to his Gentile brothers, a good example.

His desire was obedience of faith among all.

The righteous shall live by faith, and Romans tells why and how.

To review the main segments of Romans, you can ask for the main point of each.

Romans 1:1–17 is the introduction and states the theme.

Romans 1:18–3:20 establishes that all have sinned, Jews and Gentiles.

Romans 3:21–5:21 presents that all are justified by faith—saved.

Romans 6–8 is about sanctification, freed from sin and the law by the Spirit

Romans 9–11 focuses on the Jews, God’s sovereignty in choosing and saving them

Romans 12–16 is how to serve one another in the body of Christ, Jews and Gentiles

ROMANS PART 4
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 2

Lesson Focus:

- Romans 12

REVIEW

To begin this discussion, you can ask what the main theme of Romans is.
Tell your group to look at their At a Glance chart as a visual aid for this part of the discussion.

The righteous shall live by faith.

What were the problems that Paul dealt with in this letter?

In Romans 16:17–19, Paul said that there were those who were causing dissensions and hindrances, deceiving some.

Some were probably the Judaizers who taught that one had to keep the law to be saved.

Others, the Antinomians, were against the law and taught that one didn't need to keep the law at all.

Paul warned the believers to turn away from them.

Who did he write this letter to?

The saints at Rome, primarily Gentiles

What are the main segments in Romans 1–11?

Romans 1:1–17 is the introduction and is about the gospel.
In the gospel is God's power for salvation to all who believe, have faith.
It's for Jews and Greeks.

Romans 1:18–3:20
There is none who is righteous. All have sinned.

Romans 3:21–5:21
Justified, made righteous, by faith not law

Romans 6–8
Believers, the righteous, died to sin and the Law; set free from slavery to sin.

This results in sanctification and eternal life.

The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, who indwells all of God's children, sets free. The Law's requirements are fulfilled by living according to the Spirit.

Believers look forward to being glorified with Him.

Romans 9–11

Israel

As a whole, they didn't have faith, but God's word didn't fail.

How does Romans 11 end?

God shows mercy to all, Jews and Gentiles.

ROMANS 12

As you discuss, you could list some of the main points Paul makes. See the end of this lesson's guide for a sample visual aid.

Verse 1

Why does this chapter begin with "therefore"?

Romans 1–11 are the mercies of God.

Therefore...because of His mercies, this is what one should do.

What's the first thing Paul urged his readers to do because of God's mercies?

Present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice.

- Acceptable to God
- Your spiritual service of worship (ESV—spiritual worship)

Living as opposed to a dead sacrifice like in the Old Testament sacrificial system

This is true worship, true service to God, giving one's life to do what He wants.

This is how the just live by faith—giving up his own life by faith to live holy.

It's being conformed into the image of the Lord Jesus Christ, Romans 8:29.

Compare with Romans 6:12–13.

Verse 2

What is the next thing Paul instructed his readers to do?

Do not be conformed to this world is a command.

Ask your group what they learned from the word studies as they discuss.

conformed

The translation here is good because the word basically means to be conformed or fashioned to another's pattern.¹

world

This refers to the "world system, practices and standards of those without God."²

How does this command in verse 2 relate to the urging in verse 1?

A body presented to the Lord as a living and holy sacrifice is one that is not like the world. It's a different life from the way the world lives.

It's a life acceptable to God, a righteous life.

To discuss some application of this, you might ask your group if they are in the process of becoming less like the world and more like Jesus.

This is what believers are to do because of what Jesus did for them.

This is the righteous life being lived by faith—trusting what He says.

It's a sacrifice to change from being like the world and its thinking.

What is the next thing Paul said to do?

Be transformed by the renewing of your mind

transformed

This means to "be changed in form"³ or "change completely."⁴

The mind plays the key role in this transformation.

A believer's mind needs to be renewed—not think the same way.

Believers thought the way the world does when they were part of it.

¹James Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: Showing Every Word of the Text of the Common English Version of the Canonical Books, and Every Occurrence of Each Word in Regular Order.*, electronic ed. (Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship., 1996). G4964.

²James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)*, electronic ed. (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997). GGK172.

³Barclay Moon Newman, *Concise Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament*. (Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft; United Bible Societies, 1993). 115.

⁴Horst Robert Balz and Gerhard Schneider, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1990-c1993). 2:415.

You can ask your group how they are doing that now.

By studying the Bible, God's Word
By discussing it with others who are doing the same
By applying what they've learned to their lives, daily

According to 2 Corinthians 3:18, how else is the word *transformed* used in reference to believers?

Believers are being transformed into Christ's image by His Spirit within.

It says, in a different way, the same truth that Romans 12:1–2 says.

Why does verse 2 say that one should be transformed?

So that you may prove / discern what the will of God is.

His will is always

- Good
- Acceptable
- Perfect

How do verses 1 and 2 fit together?

If one presents his body as a sacrifice—lays down his life...

If he changes the way he thinks—not the world's thoughts, but God's...

then he'll know God's will and do it.

The will of God is not a mystery. It is living according to His Word, what He says.

The specifics of a renewed mind follow through to the end of the letter to the Romans.

Verses 3–13

What are these verses about, and how do they relate to verses 1 and 2?

This last segment of Romans is how believers are to live and relate to one another while serving the Lord—living righteously by faith.

This passage is about grace and gifts in serving the body of Christ.

Paul says to believers how they're to think about themselves and their individual service

- Not more highly than you ought to think
- Think with sound / sober judgment

We are many members in one body.

Because we are one body in Christ, then we are members one of another.
But we don't all have the same function; we have gifts that differ.

What are the gifts listed here?

Prophecy
Service
Teaches
Exhorts
Gives / contributes
Leads
Shows mercy (ESV—does acts of mercy)

Encourage your group that they'll spend the next lesson studying spiritual gifts.

Verses 14–21

What are these verses about and how do they flow from the previous?

This continues telling how believers, the righteous, are to view other people.
Be devoted / hold fast to one another, and bless even those who curse you.

Be of the same mind toward (ESV—live in harmony with) one another, not haughty in mind. Relate this to verses 2 and 3.

Encourage your group that all of these instructions will also be studied in more detail.

Romans 1–11 The mercies of God

Romans 12 Therefore

Present bodies a living sacrifice
 Spiritual service of worship

Not conformed—transformed in mind

Don't think too highly of self

Be of same mind toward one another (ESV—Live in harmony with one another), not haughty

ROMANS PART 4
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 3

Lesson Focus:

- Romans 12:3–8
- Spiritual gifts

REVIEW

To begin this discussion, you can ask what the main theme and segments of Romans are. Tell your group to look at their At a Glance chart as a visual aid for this part of your discussion.

The righteous shall live by faith.

Romans 1:1–17

The gospel is God's power for salvation to all who believe, Jews and Greeks.

Romans 1:18–3:20

God's wrath is revealed against all unrighteous. None is righteous.

Romans 3:21–5:21

Justified, made righteous, by faith not law.

Romans 6–8

Believers, the righteous, died to sin and the Law; set free from slavery to sin.
The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus sets free.

Romans 9–11

Israel, as a whole, didn't have faith.

What were the problems Paul dealt with in this letter?

In Romans 16:17–19 Paul said that some were causing dissensions and hindrances, deceiving others. He warned believers to turn away from them.

Judaizers taught that one had to keep the law to be saved.

Antinomians were against the law and taught that one didn't need to keep it at all.

Who did he write this letter to?

The saints at Rome, primarily Gentiles

What is Romans 12 about?

This begins the last segment of Romans about how the righteous serve the Lord and one another.

It starts with a sacrificed body and a transformed mind.

There is a sample visual aid at the end of this lesson's guide which you can use as your group discusses the main points in this lesson.

ROMANS 12:3–8

What are the first instructions or exhortations in these verses?

Don't think more highly of yourself than you ought.
Think with sound / sober judgment as God has allotted / assigned to each a measure of faith.

These statements, in their context, are to believers and in the context of serving the body of Christ with spiritual gifts.

What illustration did Paul present in verses 4 and 5?

A physical body compared with Christ's body, the Church.

What did Paul teach in this section of Romans about spiritual gifts?

gifts

This word means "gift of grace"¹; "the result of a gracious act of God."²
This same word is used in 1 Peter 4 and 1 Corinthians 12.

Spiritual gifts are supernatural abilities for serving Christ's body.

All believers are one body in Christ, but all don't have the same function.

Believers have gifts that differ according to the grace given to each one.

How are believers, or the righteous, to use their gifts?

Those who have the gift of prophecy are to use it according to the proportion of faith.
Speak what they hear from the Lord to others in the body.

¹ Robert L. Thomas, *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries: Updated Edition* (Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc., 1998, 1981). G5486.

² Timothy Friberg, Barbara Friberg and Neva F. Miller, *Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*, Baker's Greek New Testament library (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2000). 407.

The message he gives to the body of Christ is based on his faith in what he heard from the Lord.

The one who is given service as a gift is to use it in serving others.
The same is true for the ones with the gifts of teaching and exhortation.

Verse 8 also mentions three other gifts and how to use them.

Gives / contributes, with liberality / in generosity

Leads, with diligence / zeal

Shows (ESV—does acts of) mercy, with cheerfulness

1 PETER 4:10–11

What does this passage teach about spiritual gifts?

Each believer has received a gift.
Employ / use it in serving one another as good stewards of God's grace.

It seems from this text that there are two general categories of gifts.

Speaking

They are to speak God's utterances / oracles, His Word.

Serving

Those who serve are to do so with His strength.

The result is that God is glorified.

At this point, you might ask for a quick summary of what you've discussed so far.

Each believer receives a gift to use for serving others in Christ's body.

We have different gifts, different functions in the body.

Speaking God's Word

Prophecy

Teaching

Exhortation

Serving with His strength

Service

Giving / contributing

Showing mercy

1 CORINTHIANS 12

What are the main points this chapter teaches about spiritual gifts?
While discussing, compare with Romans and 1 Peter.

The first thing Paul wrote here is that believers are not to be unaware / uninformed concerning spiritual gifts. Some today don't understand spiritual gifts.

How do verses 4–7 compare with Romans 12?

There are varieties of gifts, but they're given by the same Spirit.

The gifts are for a variety of ministries / service, but the same Lord is over all.

There are even varieties of effects / activities of these ministries, but the same God who works in / empowers all believers.

Believers don't all have the same function; we have gifts that differ.

What is the description of a spiritual gift according to verse 7?

Manifestation of the Spirit

A manifestation is a showing or making something visible.

A spiritual gift shows who is in a believer—the Holy Spirit, who gives the gifts.

Why is each believer given a manifestation of the Spirit?

For the common good
1 Peter 4 says to serve one another.

How do verses 8–11 relate to verses 4–7?

This gives some specifics of different gifts being given by the same Spirit.

Word / utterance of wisdom and word / utterance of knowledge seem to be speaking gifts.

The following gifts fit in the category of serving, even though some call some of these gifts the “sign gifts.”

Faith
Gifts of healing
Effecting / working of miracles

Prophecy is listed again here.
Distinguishing of spirits / the ability to distinguish between spirits
Kinds of tongues and interpretation of tongues are speaking gifts.

The Spirit distributes to each believer his or her gift(s).
The Spirit of God decides which gift is given to which believer.

Spiritual gifts are not natural talents or learned abilities.
They're spiritual abilities distributed by God's Spirit.

What is the illustration in verses 12–26? What does the illustration teach about gifts?

Again, the physical body is used as an illustration.

Verse 13 says that when one is baptized into the body of Christ—saved, then that one drinks of the Spirit, the same Spirit with all other believers.

When the Spirit becomes part of an individual at salvation, He distributes to that one his or her gift(s) or manifestation of who is in him or her.

As each part of the physical body is important for its proper function, all the gifts are important in Christ's body.

God placed each member in the body as He desired.

The different members need each other as none is a whole in itself.
No one has all the gifts and functions independently of the rest of the body.

There is to be no division in the body as it functions.

Compare this with Romans 12:3.

No one member is to think more highly of himself than he ought. Why? All spiritual gifts are distributed to each one individually as the Holy Spirit wills. All are necessary. There should be no division in the body because of differing gifts but each should care for the other.

What are the main points of verses 27–30?

There is an order for the gifts established by God for the church.

1st apostles—those sent with the message
2nd prophets—those who speak the Lord's Word
3rd teachers—those who teach His Word and explain it
These are speaking gifts that are to speak God's Word.

Then miracles, healings, helps, administrations—some of the serving gifts using God's strength working as they should based on God's Word.

Then tongues is mentioned again.

All don't have the same gifts.

NOTE: Verse 31 can be a puzzle to many, but help your group to understand that it doesn't contradict what the text has clearly taught. It's easier to interpret when studying 1 Corinthians 13 and 14 also.

In context it seems to tell the Corinthian church to desire the gifts listed as 1–3 in verse 28 because those speaking gifts establish the body in the Word of God as 1 Peter says.

EPHESIANS 4:1–16

What does this passage teach about spiritual gifts?

Verses 1–6 establish the passage as the part of this letter which is about a believer's walk.

One body and one Spirit, as mentioned in Romans and 1 Corinthians.

Verse 7 begins the part about spiritual gifts.

Grace given

When Christ ascended, He gave gifts to men.

He gave some apostles
some prophets
some evangelists
some pastors / shepherds and teachers

NOTE: There is probably not enough time to discuss verses 9–10 and it does not deal directly with spiritual gifts.

The word "gift(s)" in this passage is different from the one used in the other passages, but it still means a gift. Also some think that the apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastors / shepherds–teachers are the gifts to the church.

What is the result of these speaking gifts for the body?

Equipping the saints for the work of service / ministry—God's Word does that.

Building up Christ's body

Attaining unity of the faith
Becoming mature, no longer children tossed by doctrines

Growing up in Christ in love

To end your discussion, you might ask your group:

Do you know your gift(s)? Or at least can you identify which category?

Why do you have a gift? Are you using it properly?

Do you have a better appreciation for the different gifts in Christ's body?

Spiritual gifts:

manifestation of the Spirit
 speaking and serving

Who?	Why?	Gifts
Each believer is given a gift Holy Spirit distributes as He wills God placed as He desired	Common good God be glorified Serving one another Equipping Building up Christ's body	<u>Romans 12</u> Prophecy Service Teaching Exhortation Giving Leading Mercy <u>1 Corinthians 12</u> Word of wisdom Word of knowledge Faith Gifts of healings Effecting of miracles Prophecy Distinguishing of spirits Kinds of tongues Interpretation of tongues Apostles Prophets Teachers Helps Administrations <u>Ephesians 4</u> Apostles Prophets Evangelists Pastors / shepherds and teachers

ROMANS PART 4
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 4

Lesson Focus:

- Romans 12:9–21
- Christian relationships

REVIEW

To begin this discussion, you can ask what the main theme and segments of Romans are. Tell your group to look at their At a Glance chart as a visual aid for this part of your discussion.

The righteous shall live by faith.

Romans 1:1–17

The gospel is God's power for salvation to all who believe, Jews and Greeks.

Romans 1:18–3:20

God's wrath is revealed against all unrighteous. None is righteous.

Romans 3:21–5:21

Justified, made righteous, by faith not law.

Romans 6–8

Believers, the righteous, died to sin and the Law; set free from slavery to sin.

The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus sets free.

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Israel, as a whole, didn't have faith.

What were the problems Paul dealt with in this letter?

In Romans 16:17–19 Paul said that some were causing dissensions and hindrances, deceiving others. He warned believers to turn away from them.

Judaizers taught that one had to keep the law to be saved.

Antinomians were against the law and taught that one didn't need to keep it at all.

Who did he write this letter to?

The saints at Rome, primarily Gentiles

What is Romans 12 about?

This begins the last segment of Romans about how the righteous serve the Lord and one another.

It starts with a sacrificed body and a transformed mind.

Then Paul tells about serving one another by the use of spiritual gifts.

There is a sample visual aid at the end of this guide which you can use as your group discusses the main points in this lesson.

ROMANS 12:9–21

What are the instructions and/or exhortations in verses 9–13?

Love without hypocrisy (ESV—let love be genuine)

Abhor what is evil

Cling / hold fast to what is good

Be devoted to one another in brotherly love (ESV—love one another with brotherly affection)

Give preference to one another in honor (ESV—outdo one another in showing honor)

Not lagging behind in diligence (ESV—do not be slothful in zeal)

Fervent in spirit

Serving the Lord

Rejoicing in hope

Persevering / patient in tribulation

Devoted to / constant in prayer

Contributing to the needs of the saints

Practicing hospitality

What do these exhortations or instructions have to do with?

How believers are to treat one another

Love is the emphasis or source.

You might lead your group to discuss how they can apply each one of these.

What cross-references in the lesson relate to these exhortations?

Philippians 1:27–2:8

Regard / count one another as more important / significant than yourself and look out for the interests of others. This passage speaks of love's consolation and the fellowship / participation of the Spirit. Paul called the Philippian believers to be of the same mind, united in spirit.

Do nothing from selfishness or conceit. Jesus is the supreme example of what it means to give preference to one another in honor.

James 2:1–9, 14–17

Love your neighbor as yourself; don't show partiality.
Give your brothers and sisters what they need.

Ephesians 6:7–8 and Colossians 3:23–24

Whatever work is done for others should be done heartily as unto the Lord.
Serving others is serving Him.

Ephesians 6:18–20; 2 Thessalonians 3:1–2; Philippians 1:19–20

These all mention prayer.

Pray at all times in the Spirit. Relate this to Romans 8:26–27.
Be alert with perseverance and petition / supplication for all saints.
Pray for the furtherance of the gospel.
Pray for those who take the gospel to be delivered from evil.

Romans says, “devoted to / constant in prayer.”

As your group discusses these things, help them to understand that these were written for them.
This is how the righteous live by faith.

This can be a very applicable discussion of how they relate to the people around them.

Verse 14

How does the text change at verse 14? Who is this about?

The previous verses are about how to love and serve other believers.
At verse 14, the change is to how to treat those who persecute.
Verse 20 uses the word “enemy.”

From 14–21, Paul tells the righteous how to live among those who are against them.

Bless those who persecute you; don't curse them.
This is a command.

What did Jesus say about this?

Matthew 5:43–48

Jesus said to pray for those who persecute you and love your enemies, not just those who love you. Even tax collectors and Gentiles do that.

Give time for your group to discuss application of verse 14.

Verses 15–18

Who do these verses seem to be about? What are the instructions and / or exhortations?

This seems to be about how to treat all people.

Rejoice with those who rejoice.
Weep with those who weep.

Be of the same mind (ESV—live in harmony) toward one another, not haughty in mind.
This is similar to verse 3.

Associate with the lowly.

Respect / take thought what is right / honorable in the sight of all men.

As far as possible with you, be at peace with all men.

Give time for your group to discuss how they can apply these things to their lives.
How does the renewing of their minds in Bible study help them with the way they think about these things?

Relate Jesus' example in Philippians 1:27–2:8.

He associated with the lowly when He became a man.

He didn't regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but took the form of a bond-servant to serve others.

Verses 19–21

What are these verses about?

This regards those who have done wrong or evil to a believer.
It sounds similar to verse 14.

Don't take revenge. God will do that for all believers.

Feed and give drink to your enemy.

Don't be overcome by evil, but overcome it with good.

You might ask what your group learned from their study of verse 20 "heap burning coals on his head."

One possible interpretation is—during those days people kept their fires going with hot coals which were used to cook and to heat. One of the most valuable possessions anyone had was a good stock of coals. People carried the coals in buckets on their heads.

So if a person gave coals because someone needed them for fire, they heaped the coals into the bucket on his head. It was a good thing to do for another.

The message is that we are to do good for our enemies.

How does verse 21 relate to that?

Overcome with good.

If one yields to the temptation to take revenge, then that one was overcome by evil.

Give time for your group to discuss application from these last verses.

Believers	Enemies	All people
Love without hypocrisy Be devoted to one another in love Give preference to one another in honor	Bless, don't curse Feed and give drink Overcome evil with good	Respect what's right Be at peace

ROMANS PART 4
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 5

Lesson Focus:

- Romans 13

REVIEW

To begin this discussion you can ask what the last segment of Romans is about.

Romans 12 begins the last segment about how the righteous serve the Lord and one another.

It starts with a sacrificed body and a transformed mind.

Then Paul tells about using spiritual gifts to serve the body of Christ.

It ends as he tells believers how to relate to one another, all men, and even enemies.

ROMANS 13

Verses 1–7

What and who are these verses about?

Subjection to governing authorities

Remind your group of the historical setting for these instructions.

Rome was the governing authority.

Times were not always easy for Christians under Roman rule.

If Paul wrote this letter around A.D. 52 to 56, that was only about 10 years before Nero's reign of persecution.

Use the chart in the lesson as a visual aid for this part of your discussion.

What are the specifics in these verses?

Every person, believers and unbelievers, are to be subject to governing authorities. This is a command, not an option.

God established authority.

There is no authority except from Him, even the Roman Empire.

Those who resist the authority oppose God and bring condemnation / judgment on themselves.

Rulers are established to bring about good behavior and punish evil.

They're to be God's ministers of good. As His minister, rulers bring wrath on those who practice evil. Therefore, God's Word tells believers to pay taxes, custom, fear, and honor to whom each is due.

What happens when believers are under governing authorities who are evil?

Acts 4 and 5

These events took place in about A.D. 30 to 33 in Jerusalem.
Israel was supposed to have the ideal rulers representing God.

But the governing Jewish authorities were against those who believed in Jesus.
These authorities were the ones who had Him put on the cross.

They commanded the apostles not to speak of Jesus anymore, but they chose to obey God over men. God had told them to proclaim the gospel in Jerusalem.

Exodus 1:15–21

Egypt was a godless society like Rome.

The king commanded the Hebrew midwives to kill the Hebrew baby boys. The midwives feared God above Pharaoh and didn't kill the children.

As a result, Moses' life was spared, and he was raised up to deliver Israel out of Egypt.
God honored the midwives because they feared Him.

NOTE: Debate might arise concerning the midwives lying to Pharaoh. Try to move your group along as this is not the point of this lesson, and there is still more to discuss.

Relate this to Philippians 3:20.

The believer's citizenship is in heaven.

His ultimate authority is God.

Paul does not say that being subject to the governing authorities means that Christians have to do something that is sin. If the government says to do something that is morally wrong, then the appeal is to the higher law, God's. But there might be a price to pay.

There is nothing in Romans 13 which says that being in subjection means one cannot seek for better government. There is a lawful, right way to do that.

Give time for your group to discuss how all of this applies to them.

Some people think that Romans 13:7–8 says that believers are not to borrow money. Is that what this is teaching?

It simply says to pay what one owes.

But it doesn't say never borrow.

The context of verses 8–10 is not money, but love. Don't let your group get into a debate regarding Christians borrowing money.

Verses 8–10

What are verses 8–10 about?

Love is the key repeated word in these verses.

Owe nothing to anyone, except love for one another.

Loving one's neighbor fulfills the law, God's law and man's law. Relate this to verses 1–7.

Verse 9 is a quote from the Ten Commandments.

The summary of the four commandments is another Old Testament quote: love your neighbor as yourself. He shows how love fulfills the Law.

Love does no wrong to the neighbor.

According to the cross-references, what did Jesus teach about this?

Luke 10:30–37

This is the parable of the good Samaritan.

A man who needed help was passed by a priest and a Levite.

The priests and Levites were to have been the most holy men in Israel.

They were the ones who should have been keeping God's law, and loving people.

A Samaritan stopped to help the man and take care of him until he recovered. Samaritans were hated and considered unclean by the Jews.

The one who was hated became the neighbor to the man in need.

A neighbor supplies another's needs.

Matthew 5:42

Don't turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

Give him what he needs.

John 3:16

God loved the world, which was in need. So He sent His Son as provision.

How is it possible to love like this?

Direct your group to their answers on Day Four questions 2 and 3, Romans 12:9–13:14.

Verses 11–14

What are these verses about?

This is a call to action.
Paul encouraged the Roman believers to wake up.
The Lord’s return was much nearer than when they believed.

The same is true now, and even more so.

Why love this way? Salvation is nearer. The completion of salvation is nearer.
Relate to Romans 8:28–30—foreknown, predestined, called, justified, glorified.

What are the commands in these verses?

Lay aside the deeds (ESV—cast off the works) of darkness.

Put on the armor of light.

Behave / walk properly...as in the day

Not in carousing / orgies
drunkenness
sexual promiscuity / immorality
sensuality
strife / quarreling
jealousy

Put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Make no provision for the flesh—the things in verse 13 which we’re not to do.

Give time for your group to discuss each of these and how it applies now.

Relate the 1 Thessalonians passages to these last verses in Romans 13.

The Thessalonians had turned from idols to serve a living and true God and wait for Jesus’ return. He delivers from the wrath to come.

Paul encouraged them to increase and abound in love for one another so that Christ may establish their hearts without blame in holiness before God at the return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He also encouraged them to be alert and sober, not sleepy, because the day of the Lord will come when it is not expected.

Close your discussion by encouraging your group that the Lord is coming, and we need to be ready to meet Him.

ROMANS PART 4
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 6

Lesson Focus:

- Romans 14

REVIEW

To begin this discussion you can ask what the last segment of Romans is about.

Romans 12 begins the last segment about how the righteous serve the Lord and one another.

It starts with a sacrificed body and a transformed mind.

Then Paul tells about using spiritual gifts to serve the body of Christ.

It ends as he tells believers how to relate to one another, all men, and even enemies.

Romans 13 says to be subject to governing authorities and love your neighbor.

ROMANS 14

What is this chapter about?

Accepting / welcoming and not judging one another

How does this relate to Romans 12–13?

The subject is serving and loving Christian brothers, thereby serving the Lord.

As a visual aid for this discussion, you can direct your group to the chart in the lesson on Day 3.

NOTE: The word “strong” is not used until Romans 15:1, but “weak” is used twice in Romans 14:1–2. Weak and strong are used in this guide to describe the contrast in the brothers.

Verses 1–4

Who and what are these verses about?

The command is to accept / welcome the one who is weak in faith.

Weak in faith

Eats vegetables only

Is not to judge his brother who has faith to eat all things

Strong brother

Accept / welcome the one weak in faith.
Don't pass judgment on / quarrel over his opinions, about what not to eat.
He has faith to (ESV—believes he may) eat all things.
Don't regard weak brother with contempt / despise.

Ask your group who they think the weak and strong brothers are, according to the context of Romans.

Weak—probably the Jewish believers
They were the ones who might have been affected by the Judaizers' teaching to keep the dietary restrictions of the Law.
Romans 2 speaks of the Jews judging others for breaking the Law.

Strong—probably the Gentile believers

Why are these brothers not to judge each other?

They are both God's servants.
He is able to make them stand, weak or strong.

God had accepted them both.

Give time for your group to discuss any application.

Verses 5–9

What are these verses about?

This brings up another point of difference between the weak and strong brothers.

One regards / esteems one day of the week above others.

This is probably a reference to the Jewish believers holding the Sabbath (Saturday) in higher regard than the others days because of what the Law says about the Sabbath.

One, probably the strong brother, regards / esteems all days of the week the same.

You might ask if this is a barrier today between some brothers.
What is the solution according to these verses?

Each brother is to be fully convinced in his own mind that what he is doing/thinking is right before the Lord.

This is a matter of conscience.

Observing or not observing a certain day, eating or not eating is for the Lord.
Both give thanks to the Lord.

The motive behind all of this is that all is done for the Lord. He is to be the focus.

Verses 3–4, the Lord is the one being served.

He is the Lord, ruler, master of each brother. He is able to make them stand.
He is able to bring the weak to become strong.

So the strong is to accept / welcome the weak because the Lord does.
The weak is not to judge the strong because the Lord is who he thanks and serves.

Verses 10–12

How is the flow of thought continued in these verses?

Why do you judge your brother?

This is a question for the weak brothers.

Why do you regard your brother with contempt / despise?

This is a question for the strong brother.

How do verses 11–12 relate to verses 3–4 and 7–9?

Paul explained more about all believers serving and answering to the same Lord, master.

Each one will give an account of what he has done to God Himself.
The Lord is the master and judge, no one else.

How does 2 Corinthians 5:10 relate to this?

Paul wrote about the end of a believer's physical life in verses 1–9.

Verse 10 mentions “the judgment seat of Christ,” which is similar to “the judgment seat of God” in Romans 14:10.

It's when believers will give an accounting and be recompensed for the deeds done in their physical bodies, good or bad.

The judgment seat of Christ is not dealing with salvation. Jesus did that on the cross.

Give time for discussion of how this relates to judging or regarding with contempt one's brother. You might also help your group to consider, individually, if they have a tendency to be the weaker or the stronger brother.

Verses 13–23

How do these verses relate to the weak and strong brother?

The instruction is for both groups.

Don't judge one another.

Determine / decide not to be an obstacle or stumbling block for a brother.

Nothing is unclean in itself, unclean to eat.

But if a weak brother thinks something is unclean, then it is to him.
And he might also think that it's unclean for any man of faith to eat.

What was Paul's reasoning in verses 15–20?

Don't hurt / grieve a brother Christ died for, especially for the sake of food.
Eating what one wants at the expense of a brother is not walking in love toward that brother.

The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking
but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

What are the warnings in verses 20–23?

Don't tear down / destroy God's work for the sake of food.
Tear down is the opposite of building up a brother, verse 19.

All things are clean, as the strong brother Paul said in verse 14.
But if a strong brother is seen eating something considered unclean by a weak brother, then he offended his brother by eating it.

According to verse 21, the stumbling blocks were
Eating meat
Drinking wine

What three areas are possible stumbling blocks in this chapter?

Eating meat
Not observing one day above the others
Drinking wine

Are these still possible stumbling blocks? How can we avoid them?

How does 1 Corinthians 8 and 9 relate to Romans 14?

The emphasis in these passages is eating food or meat which had been sacrificed to an idol.

Paul, a strong brother, knew that an idol was nothing.
He also understood his liberty in the Lord to eat anything.

But if it was a cause of his weaker brother stumbling, he chose not to eat.

Take care that your liberty does not become a stumbling block to the weak. If you sin against the brethren and wound their conscience, it is sin against Christ.

Paul's reasoning for this was that he might do all things for the sake of the gospel, that he might by all means save some.

What is the meaning of Romans 14:22–23?

Each believer has his own conviction about these things before God.

The weak brother is the one who has doubts about them.

He condemns himself if he goes against what he believes because it's not from faith, and whatever is not from faith is sin.

The context here has to do with externals, non-essentials regarding the faith; in this particular situation—
eating meat or not,
observing a day or not,
drinking or not drinking wine.

Give time in closing your discussion for your group to share application.

ROMANS PART 4
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 7

Lesson Focus:

- Romans 15

REVIEW

To begin this discussion you can ask what the last segment of Romans is about.

Romans 12

This begins the last segment about how the righteous serve the Lord and one another.

It starts with a sacrificed body and a transformed mind.

Then Paul tells about using spiritual gifts to serve the body of Christ.

It ends as he tells believers how to relate to one another, all men, and even enemies.

Romans 13

Be subject to governing authorities and love your neighbor.

Romans 14

This begins the teaching about weak and strong brothers, although the word “strong” is not used until 15:1.

Refer to the first two columns of the “Accept / Welcome One Another...” chart as a visual aid for this part of your discussion.

According to Romans 14:1–12, what is the Principle of liberty?

Accept / welcome the one weak in faith, not passing judgment (ESV—quarreling over) on his opinions.

Who are you to judge another man’s servant?

The Lord is able to make His servants stand.

We’ll all stand before Him to be judged, give an account of how we treated one another.

According to Romans 14:13–23, what is the Principle of love?

Don’t cause a brother to stumble because of your freedom.

Walk in love.

Don’t hurt / grieve a brother for the sake of food, a day or wine.

Don’t let good, or liberty, be called evil.

Pursue peace and building up brothers.

ROMANS 15

How does this chapter continue the subject of weak and strong brothers?

We who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength.

This is strength or weakness of faith.
14:1 says those weak in faith.

We're to please our neighbor for his good and edification, not our own.

We should follow Christ's example of not pleasing self, but others.

Verses 1–13

Use the third column of the chart “Accept / Welcome One Another (According to)” as a visual aid—Example of Christ.

What is His example in these verses?

He took the reproach of others on Himself. It's a quote from the Old Testament.

The prayer in verses 5–6 is for unity to glorify God.

Therefore, accept / welcome one another, as Christ did.
Relate this to 14:1–3.

Christ accepted / welcomed both Jew and Gentile.

He became a servant to the Jews because of the promises given to the fathers. The Scriptures were written for our encouragement, verse 4. God is faithful to His Word.

Jesus also extended mercy to Gentiles. Paul quoted Psalms, Isaiah, and Deuteronomy to show that the Gentiles have been on God's heart from the beginning.

Verse 13 is a prayer or blessing.

How does Ephesians 2:11–22 relate?

Gentiles were formerly separated from God's people.
They were strangers to His promises and covenants.

Christ's blood made the way to bring them near to Him and to the righteous and faithful of Israel.

Christ became our peace.

He made both into one group, made the two into one new man.
Now through Him both have access to the Father in one Spirit.

Now Jews and Gentiles are fellow citizens of God's household.

Give your group time to discuss any application from Romans 14:1–15:13.

Verses 14–33

The chart for Day Five is a good visual aid for this part of your discussion.
What do these verses tell about Paul?

He encouraged the Roman believers that as they were full of goodness and all knowledge, they were capable of admonishing / instructing each other.

Paul was bold and gracious.

a minister of Christ Jesus
a minister of the gospel of God
a minister to the Gentiles

The Roman church was mostly Gentile.
Paul wrote this letter to them so that his offering of the Gentiles to God might be one acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

His desired result was that they be obedient in word and deed.

Paul had preached the gospel from Jerusalem and as far as Illyricum in the power of the Spirit with signs and wonders. But he'd not preached it at Rome, 1:8–15.

He had not gone to Rome because he was preaching Christ where He had not already been named. Then he planned to go to them.

He was on his way to Jerusalem to take a gift for the poor Jews. Macedonia and Achaia, mostly Gentile believers, had taken a contribution for them.

What was Paul's prayer request?

Rescued from those disobedient in Judea when he went to Jerusalem
Jews there might take offense to a Jew ministering to Gentiles.

His service for Jerusalem would prove acceptable to the Jewish saints there.
Come to Rome in joy by God's will.
Find rest in their company.

These verses end with a blessing for the church at Rome.

How does the blessing relate to the content of Romans 14–15?

The God of peace be with them.

Accept / welcome one another.

Love one another.

Build up one another.

These things make for peace.

You might end your discussion by asking how this relates to brothers in churches now.

ROMANS PART 4
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 8

Lesson Focus:

- Romans 16

REVIEW

To begin this discussion you can ask what the problems were that Paul dealt with in his letter to the Romans.

In Romans 16:17–19, Paul said that some were causing dissensions / divisions and hindrances, deceiving others. He warned believers to turn away from them.

Judaizers taught that one had to keep the law to be saved.

Antinomians were against the law and taught that one didn't need to keep it at all.

Who did he write this letter to?

The saints at Rome, primarily Gentiles

Use the following to review the content of Romans. You can do this at the beginning of this discussion or at the end, like in the lesson. Tell your group to look at their At a Glance chart.

What are the main theme and segments of Romans?

The righteous shall live by faith.

Romans 1:1–17

The gospel is God's power for salvation to all who believe, Jews and Greeks.

Romans 1:18–3:20

God's wrath is revealed against all unrighteous. None is righteous.

Romans 3:21–5:21

Justified, made righteous, by faith not law

Romans 6–8

Believers, the righteous, died to sin and the Law; set free from slavery to sin.

The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus sets free.

Romans 9–11

Israel as a whole didn't have faith.

What is Romans 12–15 about?

Romans 12

This begins the last segment of Romans about how the righteous serve the Lord and one another.

It starts with a sacrificed body and a transformed mind.

Then Paul tells about using spiritual gifts to serve the body of Christ.

It ends as he tells believers how to relate to one another, all men and even enemies.

Romans 13

Be subject to governing authorities and love your neighbor.

Romans 14

This begins the teaching about accepting the brother who is weak in faith.

Romans 15

This chapter continues about the weak and strong brothers.

Then it changes to some personal statements about Paul and his plans for ministry.

ROMANS 16

What is this last chapter about? How did Paul end this letter to the church at Rome?

Greetings, warnings, and a blessing or benediction

Who are verses 1–2 about?

Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchrea

NOTE: Cenchrea was about five miles from Corinth.

She was going to Rome, and Paul encouraged the believers there to receive her and help her in what she might need.

Verses 3–16

What are these verses about?

Paul sent his greetings, and those of all the Gentile churches, to some specific believers in Rome.

Prisca and Aquila were Jews who ministered alongside Paul to Gentiles.
He mentioned some as “kinsman,” probably a reference to Jews.

Even in the greetings, he encouraged Jews and Gentiles to work with and for one another in the cause of Christ.

Verses 17–20

What are these verses about?

Warning

Watch for those who cause dissensions / divisions and hindrances / obstacles.
Turn away from / avoid them.

These might fall into the category of either Antinomians or Judaizers.

They deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting with smooth and flattering speech.

They're slaves of their appetites, not the Lord.

Be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil.

Exhortation

Paul rejoiced because of their obedience.
The God of peace will soon crush Satan.

Verses 21–24

What are these verses about?

These were people with Paul who sent their greetings to those in Rome.

Timothy was Paul's fellow worker.

Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater were fellow Jews.

Tertius seems to have been Paul's scribe.

Gaius hosted Paul and the church when Paul wrote to the Romans.

The grace of our Lord Jesus is mentioned twice in verses 20 and 24.

Compare this with the way Paul opened Romans, 1:1–7.

There is grace for both Jews and Gentiles in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Verses 25–27

What are these verses?

A prayer or benediction to close the letter

According to the revelation of the mystery now manifested
Jews and Gentiles in one body

By the Scriptures of the prophets made known to all nations

According to God's command

The result is obedience of faith.

Relate this to Romans 1:1–7, 15–17.

Paul thoroughly preached the gospel in this letter.

He was not ashamed of the gospel because it is God's power for salvation to everyone who believes, Jew and Gentile.

You might ask your group how God is described at the end.

Discuss how these truths relate to the teaching in Romans and to believers' lives.