



Purpose

Session 13 • Romans 15:14-21,30-33



ENGAGE

PREPARE: Display **Pack Item 1** (*Map: The First-Century Roman Empire*), **Pack Item 2** (*Poster: Outline of Romans*), and **Pack Item 4** (*Poster: Key Words in Romans*). Prepare the scenarios below on individual cards. Distribute the scenarios as adults arrive.

READ: Direct a volunteer to read the opening paragraph on page 109.

ASK: Which areas of your life come more naturally when it comes to being intentional, and which areas require more effort or discipline? (p. 109)

DISCUSS: Emphasize the impact of intentional living in various areas of life. Encourage adults who have a scenario to read their cards. Lead a brief discussion about each situation:

- John and Andy work out two mornings a week, holding each other accountable.
- David and Shelby want to save for a new car, so they develop a budget that allows them to build up their savings.
- Amelia sets a goal of reading the Bible in a year and faithfully follows through on reading daily.

WRITE: Point out that Paul's aim was to take the gospel beyond Rome and into regions untouched by its message. Knowing he could not fulfill this mission alone, he appealed to the believers in Rome for support.

TRANSITION: *Spreading the gospel is a partnership. Just as Paul sought partners to support him, we can support others as they share the good news of Jesus—and they can support us as well.*

EXPLORE THE TEXT

OVERVIEW: Direct attention to **Pack Item 2** (*Poster: Outline of Romans*) and note that the group is moving toward the end of Paul's letter. Briefly review the terms from the book of Romans found on **Pack Item 4** (*Poster: Key Words in Romans*). Highlight the word *gospel* and share that today's session will examine Paul's desire to partner with the Romans in spreading the gospel to other regions.

READ: Invite a volunteer to read **Romans 15:14-16** as the group notes three characteristics that describe the believers in Rome.

DISCUSS: Encourage the group to name the three characteristics in verse 14 and discuss how the characteristics would strengthen the church.

- **(15:14)** Paul praised the Romans for three qualities. First, they were “full of goodness,” a fruit of the Spirit that showed the gospel had changed them (Gal. 5:22). Second, they possessed sound knowledge—their minds had been renewed to see the world through a Christlike lens (Rom. 12:1-2). Third, they were able to instruct one another, a term Paul also used for parental training and for learning from Israel’s past mistakes (Eph. 6:4; 1 Cor. 10:11).

SHARE: Explain how Paul viewed his ministry—and why he believed the Romans might be willing to partner with him:

- **(15:15-16)** God called Paul to serve as a minister to the Gentiles, and Paul understood his role in priestly terms. Like Old Testament priests, he spoke on God’s behalf and presented offerings to Him. Paul embraced this image, longing to present as many Gentile believers as possible to God as an acceptable offering.

ASK: What is our responsibility in becoming spiritually ready to minister to others? (p. 111)

READ: Read aloud Romans 15:17-21 as the group listens for Paul’s testimony regarding the work of the Holy Spirit in his life.

EXPLAIN: Using **Pack Item 1** (*Map: The First-Century Roman Empire*), highlight locations such as Jerusalem, Antioch, Cyprus, Galatia, Philippi, Corinth, Athens, Ephesus, and Thessalonica. Point out that these are places where God used Paul to make a huge difference for the kingdom.

SHARE: Point out Spain (Tarraconensis) on the map. Note that this was Paul’s next desired destination. Explain why Paul longed to serve in unreached areas:

- **(15:20)** Paul sought to preach the gospel where Christ was unknown. Though he hoped to visit Rome, his greater ambition was to carry the gospel beyond it to unreached places like Spain, refusing to build on another’s foundation (Rom. 15:24,28; 1 Cor. 3:10).

WRITE: Write *Holy Spirit* on the board. Emphasize that Paul knew Jesus’s power through the Holy Spirit was the only reason he had enjoyed a fruitful ministry. Remind adults that we all need the Spirit to empower and equip our service for Christ.

ASK: Where do you sense God’s Spirit inviting you to attempt something that will fail unless He supplies the power? What is the first step of obedience? (p. 111)

READ: Invite a volunteer to read Romans 15:30-33 as the group listens for Paul’s appeal to the believers in Rome.

IDENTIFY: Lead the group to identify Paul’s specific requests. Lead a brief discussion on why each request was significant. Use information from **Day 4** and **Day 5** (pp. 114-115) to explain Paul’s offering for suffering Jews in Jerusalem and how that relates to the three requests.

SHARE: Note that while we ask people to pray for us, we also can be active in our prayers for them. Note that Paul offered a prayer on behalf of the Roman Christians.

ASK: What do believers stand to gain when they unite in prayer for the sharing of the gospel? (p. 111)

PRAY: Point out that Romans 15:30 is the memory verse for this session. Emphasize again the importance of prayer in our lives, especially when it comes to sharing the gospel with others. Suggest that a proper response to studying verses about prayer would be to spend time praying. Direct adults to find a partner and spend a few minutes praying for those who are sharing the gospel in dangerous situations and for their own sensitivity to opportunities God provides to share the gospel each day.

CHALLENGE

SUMMARIZE: Review these points from this week's Bible study passage:

- Believers are to join with others in ministry.
- Believers can be assured that the Holy Spirit empowers us to share the gospel.
- Believers need to pray for the spread of the gospel.

CHALLENGE: Encourage the group to consider each of these points and to write at least one idea for practically applying them in the margin. Urge them to pray about what they wrote and to find ways to act on their ideas during the week.

REFLECT: Direct adults to read and reflect on the **Apply the Text** activity on page 111. Allow some volunteers to suggest ways your group can partner with missions efforts by either praying, giving, or going.

APPLY: Guide adults to read the **Apply the Text** questions on page 115 during the week. Urge them to create a prayer journal where they can record names of people who need to accept Jesus and pray for them.

PRAY: Read aloud the lyrics of "Make Me a Channel of Blessing" (*Baptist Hymnal*, 2008, No. 375). Lead the group to consider how they can be a channel of blessing to others this week. Close in prayer, asking the Lord to use each person to spread the gospel and thanking Him for the Spirit's power in doing so.

AFTER THE SESSION

Send the group a text or email, reminding them to look for ways to be a blessing to others this week. Let them know that the next session will begin a new series from the book of 1 Samuel.

VISUAL IDEAS

These items are available in the *Explore the Bible: Leader Pack* (see goExploreTheBible.com) or you can use these descriptions to create your own.

Pack Item 1

Map: The First-Century Roman Empire
Sessions 1-13

Locate a map that highlights the key regions and cities that defined the Roman Empire during the time of Paul.

Pack Item 2

Poster: Outline of Romans
Sessions 1-13

Refer to page 9 of the DDG to create a poster that outlines the book of Romans.

Pack Item 3

Poster: The Doctrine of Man
Sessions 2, 8

Create a poster with a quote from Article III on “Man” in the *Baptist Faith and Message (2000)*.

Pack Item 4

Poster: Key Words in Romans
Sessions 2, 3, 5, 7, 13

Create a poster that defines key terms from the book of Romans, such as *atonement, faith, grace, gospel, justification, law, righteousness, sanctification, sin, and works*.

Pack Item 5

Poster: Key Verse: Romans 5:19
Session 4

Create a poster with the text of Romans 5:19.

Pack Item 6

Poster: Key Verse: Romans 12:1
Session 10

Create a poster with the text of Romans 12:1.

Pack Item 7

Poster: Showing Honor
Session 11

Create an application poster with three columns: *Authorities, Others, and Christ*. Leave room for responses under each column so adults can suggest ways to show honor to each group over the course of the session.

Pack Item 8

Handout: Romans Time Line
Sessions 1-13

Locate a study Bible with a time line of the major people and events related to the book of Romans. Include both biblical and non-biblical historical references for context.

Pack Item 9

Handout: Praying Scripture in Romans
Sessions 1-13

Create a handout to help adults pray through key Scriptures in the book of Romans. Focus on these questions: *What does this passage teach you about God and His character? How is God leading you to respond to what He is showing you about Himself?*



Pack Item 10

Handout: Justification by Faith Sessions 3, 8

Using a study Bible, Bible dictionary, or other resource, create an article that describes the biblical teaching of justification by faith, both theologically and practically, especially as it applies to Romans.

Pack Item 11

Handout: A New Way of Life Sessions 4-7

Using a study Bible, Bible dictionary, or other resource, create an article that describes how Paul used baptism as a symbol of a believer's new life in Christ and why it is significant in Christianity.

Pack Item 12

Handout: To Do or Not To Do Session 6

Create a handout that allows adults to identify things they do that they should not and things they want to do but don't (Rom. 7:14-23). Provide additional space for adults to list practical steps for aligning their lives with God's plan.

Pack Item 13

Handout: Adoption in the First Century Session 7

Using a study Bible, Bible dictionary, or other resource, create an article that describes adoption in the first century and how Paul used it as an illustration of a believer's relationship with God.

Pack Item 14

Handout: Jewish and Gentile Believers in Rome Sessions 9, 12

Using a study Bible, Bible dictionary, or other resource, create a handout with three columns: *Jewish Believers in Rome*, *Gentile Believers in Rome*, and *Key Principles from Romans*. Under the first two columns, list distinctives of each group. In the third column, highlight key principles for their unity from the book of Romans.



LEADER PACK SAMPLE POSTER

COMING NEXT QUARTER



1 SAMUEL

Session 1: **Prayer** (1 Samuel 1:9-18,24-28)

Session 2: **Calling** (1 Samuel 3:1-14)

Session 3: **Savior** (Luke 2:8-20)

Session 4: **Supremacy** (1 Samuel 5:1-10; 6:13-15,19-20)

Session 5: **King Demanded** (1 Samuel 8:1-9,19-22)

Session 6: **Obedience** (1 Samuel 15:7-23)

Session 7: **Valued** (Psalm 139:1-10,13-16,23-24)

Session 8: **Anointed** (1 Samuel 16:1-13)

Session 9: **Victory** (1 Samuel 17:32-47)

Session 10: **Friendship** (1 Samuel 18:1-9; 20:35-42)

Session 11: **Respect** (1 Samuel 24:1-11,16-20)

Session 12: **Discernment** (1 Samuel 25:14-19,29-35)

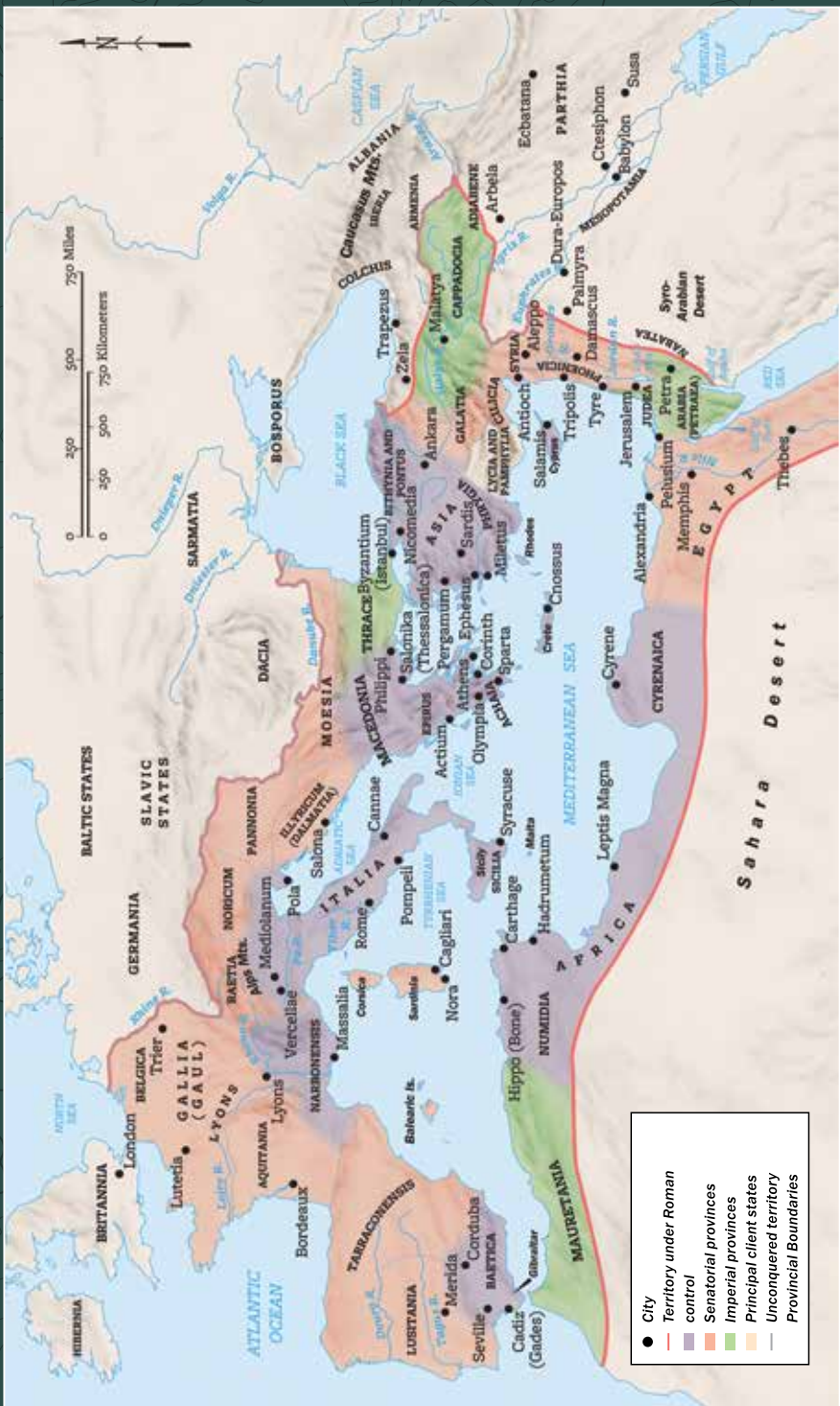
Session 13: **Guidance** (1 Samuel 30:1-8,21-25)

Explore

“You will seek me and find me when you search for me
with all your heart.” Jeremiah 29:13

THE FIRST-CENTURY ROMAN EMPIRE

"The First-Century Roman Empire" is adapted from "The Roman Empire in the Age of Augustus" in the Holman Bible Atlas (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1988), 186. Used with permission.



ROMANS

In some ways, we live in a world defined by sound bites and social media posts. We condense key events of our days down to 280 characters or to quick videos that are here today and gone tomorrow. While brevity can be a good thing, our obsession with what's temporary also runs the risk of trading genuine substance for empty cliches. In his letter to the Christians at Rome, Paul rejected flimsy theology. His systematic and logical explanation of the gospel left no doubt about the world's need for a Savior and our responsibility as Christ followers. By studying his words to the Romans, we can gain a better understanding of who God is, what God does, and the impact it should have on our lives each day.

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