



Purpose

BELIEVERS ARE TO BE INTENTIONAL ABOUT MAKING
CHRIST KNOWN TO ALL PEOPLE.

Scripture Passage: Romans 15:14-21,30-33 Memory Verse: Romans 15:30

As a boy, I worked hard in the fields to help harvest and prepare the vegetables my family would freeze and eat throughout the year. With a limited income, this was a necessity in our household. As an adult, I have never raised a decent garden, but I did try once. I bought all the seeds I needed, then set about the task of tilling and planting. When I was done, everything looked so beautiful. I almost could taste the produce my efforts would yield. However, I discovered that planting and watering aren't enough. Weeding is also required. And because I was not intentional in that area, it wasn't long before my beautiful garden turned into a sea of weeds!

Like a gardener, we must be intentional with sharing our faith. Amazing plans and good intentions mean little if we lose our passion for telling people about Jesus. As you prepare to lead this final session from the book of Romans, think about what holds you back from sharing your faith. Ask God to help you be sensitive to opportunities He provides and to respond with boldness. Consider ways you can encourage the adults in your class to share Jesus as well.



Weekly Podcast: Group Leader Training

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We recognize the importance of being intentional about our health—brushing our teeth, paying attention to what we eat, and staying active. We try to show that same intentionality in our work by getting up when the alarm goes off and arriving on time. Likewise, as believers we are to be intentional about making Christ known to all people. (PSG, p. 118)

Which areas of your life come more naturally when it comes to being intentional, and which areas require more effort or discipline?



Understand the Context (Romans 15:14–16:27)

By Romans 15 Paul was nearing the conclusion of his letter to the church in Rome. In the first eleven chapters, he shared the theological doctrines of justification and reconciliation. Then, in chapters 12–14, he explained the implications of the gospel and salvation for Christian living. In chapter 16 Paul shared his travel plans and a series of greetings to those whom he knew in Rome, even though he had yet to travel to that city. So, what role did Romans 15 play in this context?

Paul continued the discussion of the strong and the weak from Romans 14. He continued to remind them that the strong, or those who had matured in their Christian faith, had an obligation to keep in mind others who had not yet understood the full implications of the freedom we experience through the gospel (Rom. 15:1). Following the example of Christ, who thought of others above Himself (15:3), Paul encouraged believers in Rome to keep others in mind when disagreements arose about secondary issues of the faith. While some beliefs were non-negotiable (like the deity of Jesus and the sufficiency of His death on the cross), other issues left room for grace. It was the responsibility of mature believers to show that grace to those who were not as mature.

The church in Rome included both Jews and Gentiles, which created tension at times. But Paul called for harmony and unity, rooted in Scripture, so that the Jews and Gentiles could glorify God

with one voice (15:6). This resulted in acceptance of one another rather than division among those who disagreed on minor issues (15:7).

But was God's plan always to include Jews and Gentiles together in harmony? Paul was adamant that it was, and he supported this idea by quoting from various Old Testament passages (15:9–12). All of these quotations emphasized God's heart for the Messiah to be known to all people, including the Gentiles. He proved that God's offer of salvation had been universal since the beginning of time.

The verses that precede this session's focal passage culminate in a prayer that God would fill believers with joy and peace. These qualities would take root in Christ followers through faith. Eventually, their lives would overflow with hope by the power of God's Holy Spirit (15:13). His call to the purpose of sharing Christ was preceded with a prayer. A heart immersed in prayer will lead believers to care about others who need to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Read Romans 15:14–21, 30–33. What role did God give Paul in relation to the Gentiles? What specific requests did Paul make of the believers in Rome? (PSG, p. 119)

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 118 of the PSG.

ASK: **Which areas of your life come more naturally when it comes to being intentional, and which areas require more effort or discipline?** (PSG, p. 118)

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 had an intentional goal for his life:

Paul's purpose was to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. He explained his calling to the Romans so that they might join him in fulfilling it. . . . Paul's aim now 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. (PSG, p. 119)

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.*



Group Activity Option

Music

Share the lyrics to “We’ve a Story to Tell” (*Baptist Hymnal*, 2008, No. 356) and lead the group in reading the verses. After the last verse, review the chorus together. Note the verbs: *tell, sung, give, and show*. Explain that these are intentional actions believers take to share the gospel. Explain that in today’s session, we’ll examine how Paul was intentional in his mission to fulfill the Great Commission.

Joint Ministry (Rom. 15:14-16)

14 My brothers and sisters, I myself am convinced about you that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able to instruct one another. **15** Nevertheless, I have written to remind you more boldly on some points because of the grace given me by God **16** to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, serving as a priest of the gospel of God. God's purpose is that the Gentiles may be an acceptable offering, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

(v. 14) Paul began wrapping up his letter with an affirmation for his **brothers and sisters** in Rome. He was **convinced** that they had the qualities needed to partner with his ministry. *Convinced* is a strong verb, expressing confidence in a statement or belief. This was no mere flattery aimed at manipulation or in trying to get the Romans to do something beyond their ability. Paul genuinely wanted these spiritual siblings to join him in his work.

Paul grounded his conviction in three realities. First, he said the Romans were **full of goodness**. Morally, they had moved from a position of being dead *in* their sin (Eph. 2:1) to being dead *to* their sin (Rom. 6:11). This did not produce inherent *goodness* in them, but they did demonstrate the goodness of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22). The gospel had changed them.

Second, the apostle assessed their **knowledge**. They were not only morally sound, but they also understood the gospel intellectually. Their minds had been renewed, and they viewed the world around them through a biblical, Christlike lens (Rom. 12:1-2). Their *knowledge* complemented their *goodness*.

Third, Paul praised their ability **to instruct one another**. This Greek word had the sense of counseling others about avoiding or ceasing an improper course of action. Paul used the word elsewhere to describe the way fathers should train their children (Eph. 6:4) and to encourage the church not to repeat the mistakes of the ancient Israelites (1 Cor. 10:11).

(v. 15) Paul's confidence in the believers at Rome also explains why he had addressed them **more boldly on some points**, especially regarding **the grace** he had received from God. Sometimes his directions may have seemed sharp and direct, but this tone reflected a desire for increased spiritual maturity among his readers. As confident as Paul was in their growth, he still sought to move them toward a deeper faith.

The truths Paul gave them were not new teachings. He simply wrote to **remind** them of the principles of grace. The importance of partnerships in ministry is not really a new truth, but a reminder of something the people of God already know. Likewise, spiritual growth is often the result of repetition and recollection of gospel truths learned at a previous time. These truths were based on grace, as was the salvation that all believers share in Jesus Christ.

(v. 16) Paul had not planted the Roman church, but he was called as the **minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles**. This verse is filled with the language of the temple. As a *minister*, Paul served as a **priest of the gospel**. He saw himself as a *priest*, not presenting animal sacrifices, but sharing the gospel with *Gentiles* across the empire. In the Old Testament, the priest received the sacrifices of God's people, and they offered them on the altar. However, Paul nurtured living sacrifices (Rom. 12:1-2). He clearly saw himself as an apostle to the Gentiles (Rom. 11:13; Gal. 2:8), and this was the work that he was inviting the Romans to join.

Paul recognized that the Gentiles who came to Christ represented an **acceptable offering** to God, as they were **sanctified by the Holy Spirit**. Paul encouraged the Romans' partnership in the gospel, but he also made sure that they understood the importance of the *Holy Spirit* in his ministry. This was not a fleshly pursuit or work that he could attain by himself.

He also needed more than the help of the Jews and Gentiles in Rome. He had to have the Spirit's power and wisdom. The Spirit who had sanctified both Jews and Gentiles was the key to a fruitful missionary endeavor.



APPLICATION POINT: Believers are to join with others in ministry.

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 and discuss how the characteristics would strengthen the church. Use information from Romans 15:14 on page 144 of the Leader Guide to supplement the discussion.

SHARE:

Use this content from page 120 of the PSG to explain how Paul viewed his ministry—and why he believed the Romans might be willing to partner with him:

God had called Paul to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles. He compared his ministry with the Gentiles to the work of a priest. In the Old Testament, priests spoke on behalf of God. Paul saw his responsibility in a similar way. Additionally, priests presented offerings. Paul embraced that metaphor. He wanted 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? (PSG, p. 120)

APPLY:

Encourage adults to examine their lives to see where God might be at work, preparing them for ministry. Also, suggest they identify a believer they can encourage and an unbeliever with whom they can share the gospel this week.



Group Activity Option

Historical Report

Invite a pastor or staff member to provide an explanation of the history and purpose of the Cooperative Program in Southern Baptist churches. Discuss how churches, state conventions, and mission agencies work together to share the gospel. Encourage adults to do more research during the week to discover how they can be involved in praying for missions, giving to missions, and going on missions.

Spirit's Power (Rom. 15:17-21)

17 Therefore I have reason to boast in Christ Jesus regarding what pertains to God. **18** For I would not dare say anything except what Christ has accomplished through me by word and deed for the obedience of the Gentiles, **19** by the power of miraculous signs and wonders, and by the power of God's Spirit. As a result, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum. **20** My aim is to preach the gospel where Christ has not been named, so that I will not build on someone else's foundation, **21** but, as it is written, Those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand.

(v. 17) Paul had **reason to boast**, but not because of anything he had done. God had done incredible things through him. Many in Asia Minor and Greece were saved. Everywhere he had shared the gospel, people came to faith in Christ.

Yet, Paul's boasting was not selfish pride. He only boasted **in Christ Jesus** and in **what pertains to God**. This was the priestly task that God had called him to fulfill (v. 16). As Paul took the gospel to the Gentiles, Jesus was magnified, and people trusted Him for salvation. Paul's boasting was in Jesus and the cross (1 Cor. 1:31; Gal. 6:14).

(vv. 18-19) Paul **would not dare** to speak of his own accomplishments. **Christ has accomplished** everything through him. To **dare** is to show boldness in the face of danger. Paul refused to risk bragging about his own ability and instead deflected everything to the power of Christ. Jesus, not Paul, is the true agent of missionary success.

The **obedience of the Gentiles** refers to their embrace of the gospel for salvation. God used Paul's **word and deed** to open the hearts of Gentiles. Through preaching and acts of service, he shared the gospel with the power of the Spirit.

While Paul offered his **word and deed**, the Spirit supplied the **miraculous signs and wonders**. Throughout Paul's ministry, God did some amazing things. A crippled man was healed in Lystra (Acts 14:8-10). A demon-possessed slave was set free in Philippi (Acts 16:16-18). A dead man was raised to life in Troas (Acts 20:9-12).

While Paul did not expect these events to happen every time he preached, he did see God use them to bring the nations to faith. The phrase **from Jerusalem all the way around to •Illyricum** described the vast expanse of Paul's ministry. Jerusalem was the place that Christianity began, and Illyricum was in modern day Albania on the Adriatic Sea. Paul's passion for the gospel was driving him toward new places for ministry.

(v. 20) Paul had an **aim** that drove him to reach new people. He considered it an honor to **preach the gospel where Christ has not been named**. Though Paul revisited places (Acts 15:36), his main mission was to evangelize unreached people. While he desired to preach in Rome, his goal was to preach in Spain (Rom. 15:24,28).

He focused on unreached people because he did not want to **build on someone else's foundation**. Paul praised those who added to another's work (1 Cor. 3:10), but that was not his calling.

(v. 21) Paul quoted Isaiah 52:15 to emphasize the worldwide impact of the Messiah. This is a prediction of Christ written more than seven hundred years before Jesus's birth. Kings and nations who were **not told** about the Messiah would **see** and follow Him, and those who had **not heard** about Him would **understand**.

Paul saw this as a reference to the salvation of the Gentiles. They did not have the patriarchs or the law. They did not have the Hebrew Scriptures. But they heard the gospel and believed it.

Bible Skill

Create a chart to better understand a Bible passage.

Read the following verses and determine how prayer influences sharing one's faith: Matthew 9:37-38; Acts 4:29-31; Romans 10:1; Ephesians 6:18-20; Colossians 4:2-4; 2 Thessalonians 3:1. *How would you summarize the role of prayer in evangelism? In what ways do these verses motivate you to pray for your sharing of the gospel and those who are taking the gospel to the unreached?*

**READ:**

APPLICATION POINT: Believers can be assured that the Holy Spirit empowers us to share the gospel.

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 we know Paul ministered in the book of Acts. Affirm that God used him to make a huge difference for the kingdom in these regions.

**SHARE:**

Point out Spain (Tarraconensis) on the map. Note that this was Paul's next desired destination. Summarize this content (PSG, p. 122) to explain why Paul longed to serve in unreached areas:

"Paul's aim was to 'preach the gospel where Christ has not been named.' Though Paul sometimes revisited cities where he previously had shared the gospel (Acts 15:36), he understood that his main mission was to take the gospel to unreached people. He wanted to preach in Rome, which had heard of Jesus, but his ultimate goal was to preach in Spain (Rom. 15:24,28). His desire to take the gospel to where it had never been heard was the reason he did not want to 'build on someone else's foundation.' This was not his calling (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? (PSG, p. 123)

Group Activity Option

Object Lesson: Battery

Display a battery. Explain that a battery must be attached to something for its power to be utilized. Say: *In the same way, a believer's connection to Jesus Christ offers access to the Holy Spirit.* Note that believers who rely on the Holy Spirit are strengthened and empowered to share the gospel. Challenge adults to consider their own connection to Jesus and the Spirit, along with what hinders them from sharing the gospel with those who need to hear it.

Focused Prayer (Rom. 15:30-33)

30 Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, through our Lord Jesus Christ and through the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in prayers to God on my behalf. **31** Pray that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea, that my ministry to Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, **32** and that, by God's will, I may come to you with joy and be refreshed together with you. **33** May the God of peace be with all of you. Amen.

(v. 30) Paul pleaded with the Romans to support his work through their prayers. He called them **brothers and sisters**, emphasizing the relationship they shared in Christ. He listed two reasons for his **appeal** to prayer. First, he reminded them of **our Lord Jesus Christ**. Out of loyalty to Jesus, he asked them to pray for him and for the work he was doing for Christ.

Second, he appealed **through the love of the Spirit**. This was not the Spirit's love for them, but the love that the Spirit produced in them for one another (Gal. 5:22-23). Their relationship with each other and the love they shared through the Holy Spirit was enough reason for the Romans to pray for Paul.

The apostle also encouraged the Romans to **strive together** with him. The Greek word used here is related to the English word "agonize," though *together* adds a corporate or shared meaning. Paul was headed to Jerusalem, where people hated him because he extended the gospel to the Gentiles. He knew that he would face stubborn Jewish opposition and coveted the prayers of the Roman Christians. Intercessory prayer is an important way of supporting those who take the gospel to unreached people groups.

(vv. 31-32) Paul listed three specific prayer requests. First, he prayed that he would be **rescued from the unbelievers in Judea**. Jewish leaders did not embrace Christianity and had tried to kill Paul already (Acts 9:29-30). The word *rescued* usually meant physical deliverance, but it also could refer to an ultimate deliverance by God through death (see 2 Tim. 4:18).

Second, Paul asked that his **ministry . . . may be acceptable to the saints**. Paul planned to bring money he had collected for famine relief to Jerusalem (Rom. 15:25-27; 2 Cor. 8:1-9:15). He knew that some Jewish leaders might see this as a bribe and treat believers in Jerusalem more harshly because Gentiles were helping them. He asked the Romans to pray that the gift would be

acceptable. He asked the Romans to pray that the Jewish believers would take the Gentiles' help without disunity or dissension.

Third, Paul asked the Romans to pray that he could **come to you with joy** after presenting the relief offering. He left this visit up to **God's will**, realizing that God had changed his plans before and could do so again (Rom. 15:22).

Once he arrived in the city, Paul would be **refreshed together** with the Romans. This Greek term suggests lying down and resting. Paul had worked hard to deliver an offering to the Jews, and he had asked the Romans to labor with him through prayer. If God allowed it, Paul and the Romans would rest together and prepare for the next stage, evangelizing Spain (15:28).

(v. 33) Paul ended this section of the letter with a blessing of peace. Amid all the dangers, uncertainties, and conflicts he anticipated in Jerusalem, he commended the church to God. The expression **God of peace** occurs elsewhere in Paul's writings (Rom. 16:20; Phil. 4:9; 1 Thess. 5:23). Corresponding to the Hebrew word *shalom*, this *peace* transcends understanding (Phil. 4:7) and can be given only by God. As the Romans prayed for Paul, he also prayed for them. He asked the Lord to give them peace.

Key Doctrine:

Cooperation

Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. (See Philippians 1:5; 4:15-16.)



READ:

APPLICATION POINT: Believers need to pray for the spread of the gospel.

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 Romans 15:31-32 on page 148 of the Leader Guide 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.

Paul's three prayer requests in verses 31-32 focused on his ministry in Jerusalem and his anticipated visit to the church in Rome. But he didn't stop at asking the Roman believers to pray for him. He also offered a benediction—a prayer for their wellbeing. The believers in Rome lived in a dangerous period of the empire's history. At any moment they could be expelled from the city, or worse, arrested simply because they followed Christ. Knowing this, Paul committed them to God's care. Only God could sustain them and enable them to live in peace. (PSG, pp. 124-125)

ASK:

What do believers stand to gain when they unite in prayer for the sharing of the gospel? (PSG, p. 125)

PRAY:

Point out that Romans 15:30 is the memory verse for this session. Emphasize again the important nature 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.

TRANSITION:

Paul closed his letter to the Roman believers with specific greetings and a warning about spiritual predators who might come into their church and cause divisions. Even in times of uncertainty, he wanted peace within the body.

CHALLENGE

SUMMARIZE:

Review these points from Apply the Text on page 126 of the *Personal Study Guide*:

- *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 of their PSG. 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 first set of questions on page 126 of the PSG. 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 second set of questions on page 126 of the PSG 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, directing them to reflect on each session from the book of Romans. Encourage them to share key things they have learned over the past thirteen weeks. Remind 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.

LEADER EXTRAS



For free bonus introduction and application ideas that connect to a current news event, go to **goExploreTheBible.com/LeaderExtras**.

EXPLORE  THE BIBLE.

LEADER PACK **IDEAS**

Pack Item 1

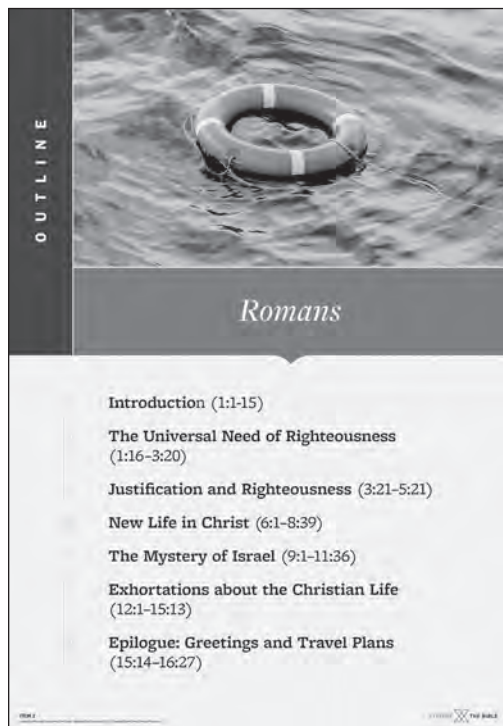
Map: The First-Century Roman Empire
Sessions 1-13

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 PSG 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). The statement covers how humanity fell into sin and how we are all accountable before God. Jesus is the only hope for salvation for every person.

Pack Item 4

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

Create a poster that identifies and defines key terms from the book of Romans. Terms could include the following: 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.

“For just as through one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so also through the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous.”

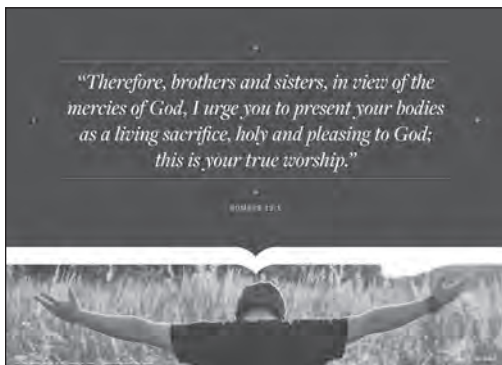
Examples from *Explore the Bible Leader Pack*.
The Pack is available for purchase at goExploreTheBible.com.

Pack Item 6

Poster: Key Verse: Romans 12:1
Session 10

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

“Therefore, brothers and sisters, in view of the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your true worship.”



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. Provide the following prompts:

- Session/Verse
- General thoughts from the passage
- 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?
- Written prayer based on the passage

A handout titled "PRAYING SCRIPTURE IN ROMANS". It includes instructions and a table for recording session/verse, general thoughts, and responses.

SESSION _____ VERSES: _____	SESSION _____ VERSES: _____
General thoughts from the passage:	General thoughts from the passage:
What does this passage teach you about God and His character?	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?	How is God leading you to respond to what He is showing you about Himself?
Written prayer based on the passage:	Written prayer based on the passage:

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. Emphasize how Paul approached the subject in 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. Explain how baptism was used in other cultures and why it is significant in Christianity.

Pack Item 12

Handout: To Do or Not to Do
Session 6

Create an application handout that allows adults to identify things they do that they should not and things they want to do but don't (per Rom. 7:14-23) in their struggle with sin. Provide additional space at the bottom so adults can 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 how adoption was viewed in the first century and how Paul used it as an illustration of a believer's new relationship with God as Father.

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 the Book of 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.

JEWISH AND GENTILE BELIEVERS IN ROME		
*The first-century Roman Empire was a melting pot of different cultures and religions. As the Roman Empire expanded, it brought people from different parts of the world into contact with each other. This led to a mix of different beliefs and practices, including Judaism and Christianity.		
JEWISH BELIEVERS IN ROME	GENTILES AND CHRISTIANITY	KEY PRINCIPLES FROM ROMANS
- In the second century BCE, Rome established diplomatic relations with Judea after the Maccabean Revolt. This meant Jewish religious leaders moved to Rome. - Romans believed that Jews were living in Rome by the will of the gods. - In AD 13, Emperor Tiberius expelled Jews from Rome temporarily due to a financial crisis. A group of Jews who had been in Rome for generations were not allowed to return. - Some time before AD 49, Christianity arrived in Rome. Jewish Christians traveled to Rome to share the gospel with the Jews, just as the apostle Paul did. - Some time between AD 49 and AD 60, Jewish Christians and Gentile believers in Rome began to disagree. Some Jewish Christians felt that Gentile believers should follow Jewish law, while others felt that Gentile believers should not.	- The subject of the letter is the relationship between Jews and Gentiles in the church. Paul explains that both groups are saved by faith in Jesus Christ, not by following the law. - While Jewish Christians naturally want to keep the law, Paul argues that the law is not the basis of salvation. Instead, faith in Christ is what matters. - As a Jewish-Gentile church, Rome is called to live in unity. Paul encourages Jewish Christians to show love and respect for Gentile believers, and vice versa. - While some Jewish Christians may have been used to living in isolation, Paul reminds them that they are now part of a larger community. - In his letter to the Romans, Paul argued that both Jews and Gentiles are saved by faith in Christ, not by following the law.	- Everyone needs salvation (Rom. 1:1-5). This represents a common ground that does not distinguish between Jews and Gentiles. Everyone sins, so everyone needs a Savior. - Paul provided Jews as Romans (Rom. 9:1-5). Paul saw Jews as the perfect example for the rest of the world. He argued that Jews were faithful when it came to following the law, but they were not faithful when it came to following the gospel. - Jesus is the Son of God (Rom. 8:3-4). Paul argued that Jesus died for the sins of the world, not just for the Jews. - All Christians are called to live in unity (Rom. 12:1-5). After providing a theological framework for salvation, Paul highlights the need for practical application. Christian relationships are defined by Christ, not ethnicity, gender, or social status. We maintain a spirit of unity by showing love and respect, even in times of disagreement.

Examples from *Explore the Bible Leader Pack*.
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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

[illegible]

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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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