

WEEK 6 | ROMANS 3:1-20

ROMANS | THE GOSPEL OF GOD'S POWER

PRAY TO OPEN.

Here is a helpful prayer exercise you could use to open your group:

- Give 30 seconds for the group to **silently praise God for his attributes**. Leader close.
- Give 30 seconds for the group to **silently confess personal sin**. Leader close.
- Give 30 seconds for the group to **silently thank God for his blessings**. Leader close.
- Give 30 seconds for the group to **silently ask God to answer their requests**. Leader close.

OTHER HELPFUL PASSAGES.

The following passages may be helpful to you as you consider this text.

- Psalm 51 – Paul quotes this passage in Rom. 3:4. It shows a Godly response to sin.
- Galatians 3:10-14 – Hope in Jesus, not works of the law.

THEMES.

The overarching theme of Romans is the gospel—salvation through Jesus Christ. That is important to remember and keep in front of your group, because the letter is a theological masterpiece. But as with any work of art, each brush stroke's true beauty is best seen when the piece as a whole is realized. To that end, we will deal with many sub-themes, but remember that each one weaves together to give the “fullest, plainest and grandest statement of the gospel in the New Testament.”¹

1. All men and women are born with a sin nature, actively oppose God, and need salvation. (Rom. 3:9; Ps. 51:5; John 3:1-15; Rom. 3:23-24; Rom. 5:12-14; Eph. 2:1-3)
2. Righteousness is not attained by human action or works of the law; it is graciously given to men by God, who shows no partiality. (Rom. 3:19-20; Gen. 15:1-6; Acts 16:30-31; Rom. 5:17-19; Eph. 2:4-9; Phil 3:8-11; Titus 3:4-7)

QUESTIONS.

Feel free use any, all, or none of these questions as you facilitate your group. Their purpose is to be an aid to you as you consider how to teach the implications of the week's Scriptures.

1. Did the Holy Spirit use last week's passage or sermon to convict, challenge, or encourage you in any way? Did he use it to confirm or answer a prayer in any way? If you're willing, share with the group.
2. How have you experienced God's kindness when you didn't deserve it? Have you ever “walked away” from him only to have him draw you back with his faithfulness? (Romans 3:3-4)
3. People are skilled at distorting God's kindness for their own gain. According to vv. 5-8, what two objections did Paul have refute? In your opinion, are those distortions still common today? What are modern objections? Have you ever made similar objections, trying to excuse sinful behavior?

Hint: The two objections are: (1) since “sin is simply giving God the opportunity of showing how righteous he is... he ought not punish the sinner,”² and similarly, (2) my ongoing sin only allows God to show off his character more, so he shouldn't be judged for something that results in his glory.

¹ John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Romans: God's good news for the world*. (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), 19.

² Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press, 1988), 158.

4. Verses 19-20 says that the whole world will be accountable to God for their law-breaking sin. According to Romans 5:18-22, how can you face that day with hope?
5. Vv. 10-18 lay out our helpless state without salvation in Christ, but even after being saved, we still tend to be “lawish” in our approach to as Christianity. Can you recall a time when you tried hard to keep God’s commands in your own strength? In contrast, have you experienced a Spirit-empowered change in your heart and behavior? How would you describe the difference between the two?
6. Sometimes we talk about “seekers” of God. How does Romans 3:18 help you understand what is meant by Romans 3:11?
7. How does a right understanding of Romans 3:1-20 impact your desire to share the hope of Jesus with others? How does it affect your desire to disciple fellow believers?