



Supplies/setup: To be determined by each group leader. For established groups, this most likely will not be necessary. For new groups, you may need to move chairs, tables, provide writing utensils, name tags, and so forth.

(Times are approximate)

Welcome - (~1 min)

- The leader should briefly welcome everyone for coming and how you look forward to doing the lesson with them. Learning from one another is a true blessing.

Sharing time – (~10 min)

- Decide on a single word for people to think about (i.e., snow, winter, being outdoors, etc.) and ask each person to spend no more than about 30 seconds telling what they like about that word. You might have to control the time a bit here as some people might want to get into a long story. Before asking people, you might remind them to try and keep it to 30 seconds or less. Be sure that everyone shares. This is a time for the group to get to know one another better. It is a part of our churches mission called “community.”

Opening prayer – (~1 min)

- As a leader, you have probably prayed audibly in a group before. If not, it is just as simple as talking with God as you would a good friend. If you want to put some structure to your prayer you might do something like this:
 - Begin with praise – praise is met to recognize who He is – for example a good way to do this is to think of one or more of His attributes (i.e., He is: holy, accessible, gracious, just, loving, sovereign, etc.) and then when you praise Him you identify how He demonstrates that/those attributes.
 - Next thank Him for being Him and all He has done (identifying a couple of things related to the Romans study)
 - Petition Him – that is ask Him to help the group today/tonight to better understand Romans, ask that the Holy Spirit reveal new truths and challenges, etc..
- This sound like a lot but with some practice and speaking from the heart, one can say a lot in one minute.

Opening Comments – (~3 min)

- Reflect a bit on the sermon that was given Sunday. Identify a couple of points you found interesting and encouraging.
- Encourage everyone to read the welcome page and the background page.
- As the group leader, you may read the following or paraphrase it, or add your own touch but keep the timing in mind – you are encouraged to read the mission statement of the church and how Romans fits so well with it.
- This study of Romans fits so well with the mission statement of our church which is:
- *Proclaim the power of the gospel to save the lost*

Paul's Letter To The Romans

- *Apply the power of the gospel to free the found*
- *Live the power of the gospel to heal the world*
- Hopefully, you all have read these first 17 verses and answered the questions for each day
- As a result of your study, you can see how Paul's letter to the Romans supports and reinforces the mission of our church
- It is always exciting to see Scripture being put into practice and by going through this study, we will all be encouraged, grow in our spiritual maturity, and see the real power of the gospel!
- These first 17 verses are considered to be Paul's introduction to the Romans
- One reminder is that as you read and study Romans, you need to keep in mind that this was a letter
- It was not written with punctuation, nor verses, nor headings and chapter divisions
- So as we read/study this letter, we will want to reflect occasionally on this fact that we are reading a personal letter, written by one of the greatest leaders in the church to a group of people in Rome.
- Again, be sure you read the background on the back side of the welcome page.
- So let's get started by going over study lesson 1:

Discussion of the Study Lesson – (~40 min)

- You might remind the people that time is very important in order to get through ALL the questions, so you may need to stop a discussion in order to move on. Ensure them if they want to continue the discussion, you will meet with them at the end of the class/meeting.
- Begin at the beginning and pray the Holy Spirit will help you stay on track, using the time wisely. Who knows but what the very last question is the one that someone really needs to hear other peoples answer to.

Begin Discussion Here – (beginning time:)

- **The aim for this week was: Paul's authority and passion to share the *gospel* in Rome.**

- Our first day topic associated with that aim was an overview of this week's passage –
- Your first reading was **Romans 1:1-17** in order to gain an overview of what will be studied this week

Read Romans 1:1 – *“Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God-“*

1. (+1 min) **What do you learn about Paul in verse 1?** (*see underlines*)

2. (+1 min) **Referring to Acts 9:1-19 and Philippians 3:4b-6. What else do you learn about Paul?**

- You might inform them the nomenclature **3:4b-6** means from the second part of verse 4 through 6.
- Listing of things mentioned in verses: *persecutor of the Jews, converted on way to Damascus, Jesus spoke to him, blind for 3 days, Ananias came to him to restore his vision, he was baptized (Acts); he was circumcised at 8 days of age, an Israelite, tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew, a Pharisee, zealously persecuted the church, legalistic righteousness he was faultless (Philippians).*

Read Romans 1:1-4 – *“Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God-- ² the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures ³ regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David, ⁴ and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.”*

3. (+2 min) **Referring to verses 1-4, what does the gospel mean to you?**

- Keep track of who has shared and who has not – try to eventually get everyone to share

Paul's Letter To The Romans

(+4 min) **Application 1:** List one or two items you will apply this week from the sermon you heard?

- These types of questions are to encourage people to listen and take notes on Sunday
- You may want to take notes so you can share some yourself but remember you are primarily the facilitator

(+2 min) (approx. time = 10 min)

• The topic for day 2 was: The person of Paul - Read Romans 1:1-7

1. **Who was Paul writing to in Rome?** (the believers – Gentiles and some Jews)

- We don't know how the church began in Rome – there were many travelers to and from Rome from other parts of the world
- Maybe some of Paul's converts came to Rome and began churches or converts from others, like Peter
- Rome was a wicked city, full of materialism, prostitution, and idolatry (which was evil in its methods)

2. (+1 min) **Identify ways the words "call" and "called" are used by Paul.**

- From Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary – **call, calling** – an important theological idea with several different meanings in the Bible.
- 1. God's call of individuals to SALVATION, made possible by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross (Romans 8:28-30; 1 Thess. 2:12). God's call to salvation also involves the believer in the high calling of living his/her life in service to others (1 Cor. 7:20).
- 2. To call on God for help, or to pray. The Bible contains numerous examples of people who, in their distress, called upon the name of the Lord (Gen. 4:26).
- There is another "call" or "calling" in which God does the calling of an individual as a special agent of His. Such was the case of Paul being "called" by God to be an apostle (Rom. 1:1).

(+1 min) **Application 2:** From a Christian perspective, describe what the words *grace* and *peace* mean to you?

- You may read some or all of these definitions – they are to give you a Christian perspective of what these words mean – (watch your time here)
- Grace definition from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary – favor or kindness shown without regard to the worth or merit of the one who receives it and in spite of what that same person deserves. Grace is one of the key attributes of God. The Lord God is "merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abounding in goodness and truth (Exodus 34:6). The grace of God revealed in Jesus Christ is applied to human beings for their salvation by the Holy Spirit, who is called "the Spirit of grace" (Hebrews 10:29). The law of Moses revealed the righteous will of God in the midst of pagan darkness; it was God's gracious gift to Israel (Deuteronomy 4:8). But His will was made complete when Jesus brought the gospel of grace into the world (John 1:17).
- Peace definition – a word with several different meanings in the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament meaning of peace was completeness, soundness, and well-being of the total person. This peace was considered God-given, obtained by following the Law (Psalm 119:165). Peace sometimes had a physical meaning, suggesting security (Psalm 4:8), contentment (Isaiah 26:3), prosperity (Psalm 122:6-7) and the absence of war (1 Samuel 7:14). The traditional Jewish greeting, *shalom*, was a wish for peace.
In the New Testament, peace often refers to the inner tranquility and poise of the Christian whose trust is in God through Christ. The peace that Jesus spoke of was a combination of hope trust, and quiet in

the mind and soul, brought about by the reconciliation with God. Such peace was proclaimed by the host of angels at Christ's birth (Luke 2:14), and by Jesus Christ Himself in His Sermon On The Mount (Matthew 5:9). The apostle Paul later wrote that such peace and spiritual blessedness was a direct result of faith in Christ (Romans 5:1).

(+4 min) (approx. time = 6 min)

- **Our 3rd day's topic was: Paul's love for the Romans - Read Romans 1:8-10**

Read Romans 1:8-10 *"First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world. ⁹ God, whom I serve with my whole heart in preaching the gospel of his Son, is my witness how constantly I remember you ¹⁰ in my prayers at all times; and I pray that now at last by God's will the way may be opened for me to come to you"*

1. (+1 min) **Whom does Paul thank for the Roman saints and for what is he grateful?** (God and Jesus Christ)
2. (+1 min) **Compare verse 8 with Ephesians 1:15-16; Colossians 1:3-4; and 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3. How are they similar?**
Ephesians 1:15-16 *"For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, ¹⁶ I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers"*
Colossians 1:3-4 *"I thank my God every time I remember you. ⁴ In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy"*
1 Thessalonians 1:1-3 *"Paul, Silas and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace to you. We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. ³ We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ"*
3. (+3 min) **What do you think Paul's attitude was towards prayer and how do you think he related prayer with serving God?** (He prayed for the people he ministered to and others he didn't even know!)
4. (+1 min) **Would you say you are more inclined to service or prayer? Why?** (personal – can skip this one, its for their personal evaluation)

Application 3: Write down ways you might show Christian love to someone today who you do not know well?

- This should be interesting to hear and questions like this often help others too!
(+4 min) (approx. time = 10 min)

- **Day 4's topic is: Paul's eagerness to preach the gospel in Rome - 1:11-15**

Read Romans 1:11-15 *"I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong-- ¹² that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith. ¹³ I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that I planned many times to come to you (but have been prevented from doing so until now) in order that I might have a harvest among you, just as I have had among the other Gentiles. ¹⁴ I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish. ¹⁵ That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are at Rome."*

1. (+1 min) **What did Paul long to do for those in Rome according to verse 11?** (see first underlined text)
 2. (+1 min) **Paul was eager to spiritually renew and revive those in Rome by doing what according to verse 15?** (see the second underlined text)
 3. (+1 min) **How many times does Paul mention the word "gospel" in verses 1-17 verses?** (six times)
- (+1 min) **Application 4: How might you be spiritually renewed and revived by a rediscovery of the gospel?**

- This question should encourage others to think about *rediscovering the gospel!*
(+3 min) (approx. time = 7 min)

Our last day's topic is: The theme of Paul's letter - 1:16-17

Read Romans 1:16-17 *"I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. ¹⁷ For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."*

1. (+1 min) **What are Paul's reasons for NOT being ashamed of the gospel message?** (the text underlined helps answer this question – there may be other responses)

2. (+2 min) **How do these reasons encourage you today?** (should be interesting)

(+2 min) **Application 5:** Memorize verses 16-17 and repeat them as a reminder to you every day as we go through this study.

• **Ask for volunteers to recite verses 16-17.**

• **Be sure to encourage people to memorize verses 16-17 and apply them to their daily experiences**

(+2 min) (approx. time = 7 min)

Closing Comments – (~4 min)

- You are truly encouraged to memorize verses 16-17 and recite them every day
- Paul knew the importance of sharing the gospel with others and we are to do the same
- Nothing will build our confidence more than daily prayer, study, doing the study lesson, and praying some more.
- We have seen that Paul is very methodical in his letters. They are not just thrown together but obviously well thought out
- It should be noted that Paul attributes his writings to the leading of the Holy Spirit and that makes them divine by default
- In this study we saw that he first presented his credentials (vss. 1-7), he followed that by expressing his concern for those in Rome (vss. 8-15), and finally he affirms his confidence in the gospel (vss. 16-17).
- Hopefully we will all come to appreciate the words he scribed to those in Rome and see how they are still applicable to our lives today
- Just to reiterate, Paul's support of the gospel dovetails well with our church's mission statement:
- *Proclaim the power of the gospel to save the lost*
- *Apply the power of the gospel to free the found*
- *Live the power of the gospel to heal the world*
- As we continue our study of Romans, we will see that the theme of Paul's letter is the gospel!
- We will see how the gospel is associated with the righteousness of God and how by the gospel we can *be right with God!*
- We will see the gospel as the power of God for salvation
- We will also see the gospel as the power of God to transform lives today just as it has done for over 2 millennium
- When you sum it all up, the book of Romans is saying to us – *"Trust in the gospel and be right with God!"*
- Be right with God and with others!
- The righteousness of God received by faith makes it possible for us to live right lives.
- Just as those in Rome needed this message, we need it today! *Believe the gospel and be right with God!*

Closing Prayer – (~1 min)

- Again, if you are new to praying in a group, you might want to follow the structure shown above. This prayer is to encourage people to pray daily before doing their study lesson and to ask for the Holy Spirit to help them as they do the lesson as well as other things the Spirit might lay on your heart.