

Romans study guide

6 sessions for a small group

Romans is one long argument, not a collection of topics. Each week, try to say what Paul has proved so far before moving on.

Each session lists the reading, who and what appears in it, and questions that send the group back to the text. Nothing here needs to be prepared in advance beyond reading the passage.

Background on every passage, free at protos-app.com/commentary/romans

Romans 1-2

61 verses. Read it aloud together before anyone talks about it.

Who and what appears

Jesus · Gentiles · Rome · David · Paul · Circumcision

Questions

- Try to state the argument in one sentence before anyone reacts to it.
- What does the writer repeat? Repetition is usually the point, not a habit.
- What surprised you, or what did you have to read twice?
- David turns up in this section. What does the passage actually show, as opposed to what you already assumed?
- The word Circumcision is doing real work here. What did you assume it meant, and does the passage agree?
- What problem was this letter written to solve, and does knowing that change how the instruction lands?
- Where does this cut against something you already believe or already do?

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Romans 3-5

77 verses. Read it aloud together before anyone talks about it.

Who and what appears

Jesus · Abraham · Adam · David · Gentiles · Moses

Questions

- What is the writer trying to get these readers to do or stop doing?
- Who is being addressed here, and what do they already know that we do not?
- What is assumed rather than argued? Those assumptions are often the real claim.
- Read this section from where Adam was standing. What changes?
- Define Faith from this passage alone, without reaching for what you already know.
- Is this a command, a description, or an argument? They are not read the same way.
- What would actually be different this week if you took this seriously?

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Romans 6-8

87 verses. Read it aloud together before anyone talks about it.

Who and what appears

Jesus · Sin · Death · Flesh · Dead · Righteousness

Questions

- What has the writer already established that this section is building on?
- Which single verse carries the weight of this section?
- What is left unsaid that you expected to be said?
- What does the writer tell us about Jesus, and what is deliberately left out?
- Where else have you heard Sin used, and is it being used that way here?
- What did the first readers face that we do not, and what does that change?
- Who do you know who needs to hear this, and what stops you saying it?

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Romans 9-10

54 verses. Read it aloud together before anyone talks about it.

Who and what appears

Isaiah · Moses · Gentiles · Isaac · Abraham · Esau

Questions

- Where does the writer expect pushback, and how do you know?
- Where does the tone shift, and what causes it?
- What question does this section answer that you had not thought to ask?
- What would this section sound like if Isaac were telling it?
- The word Righteousness is doing real work here. What did you assume it meant, and does the passage agree?
- Where does the writer move from what God has done to what we should do?
- What is the hardest thing in this passage to accept, and why that one?

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Romans 11-13

71 verses. Read it aloud together before anyone talks about it.

Who and what appears

Gentiles · Abraham · Baal · David · Elijah · Jesus

Questions

- If you disagreed with this, where would you push first?
- What does the writer repeat? Repetition is usually the point, not a habit.
- What surprised you, or what did you have to read twice?
- Elijah turns up in this section. What does the passage actually show, as opposed to what you already assumed?
- Define Grace from this passage alone, without reaching for what you already know.
- What problem was this letter written to solve, and does knowing that change how the instruction lands?
- If this is true, what have you been getting wrong?

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Romans 14-16

82 verses. Read it aloud together before anyone talks about it.

Who and what appears

Jesus · Gentiles · Jerusalem · Achaia · Aquila · Asia

Questions

- What would be missing from the letter if this section were cut?
- Who is being addressed here, and what do they already know that we do not?
- What is assumed rather than argued? Those assumptions are often the real claim.
- Read this section from where Aquila was standing. What changes?
- Where else have you heard Brother used, and is it being used that way here?
- Is this a command, a description, or an argument? They are not read the same way.
- What would you want to be reminded of from this section in six months?

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Where this came from

This guide was put together by Protos, a free Bible study site. The background for Romans came from the Jamieson-Fausset-Brown commentary, which is public domain, and the people and terms in each session come from a verse index we compiled by hand.

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