



A LETTER
THAT

**CHANGES
EVERYTHING**

ROMANS 6-11

ev / youth

A LETTER THAT

TERM 2 – 2026

WEEK	PASSAGE	TITLE
Week 1	Romans 6:1-14	Alive in Christ
Week 2	Romans 6:15-23	Servants of Christ
Week 3	Romans 7:1-6	Christ and the Law
Week 4	Romans 7:7-25	Christ and the Law
Week 5	Romans 8:1-13	Transformed in Christ
Week 6	Romans 8:12-17	Adopted in Christ
Week 7	Romans 8:18-30	Suffering in Christ
Week 8	Romans 8:31-39	Assurance in Christ
Week 9	Romans 9:1-29	Mercy in Christ
Week 10	Romans 9:30-10:21	Salvation in Christ
Week 11	Romans 11:1-36	Humility in Christ

CHANGES EVERYTHING

ROMANS 6-11

World-Changing News

It's been said that no piece of writing has shaped the world like Paul's letter to the church in Rome. When we started Romans last year, we heard the paradigm-changing, counterintuitive news that we are made right with God as a gift. By grace. Being right with God is not a status that can be earned or achieved. Not something inherited by ethnic or cultural association, not secured by religious performance. We are declared righteous on the basis of faith in Christ. With this comes the radical implication: if we are declared righteous (or "justified") by faith, then anyone can be saved—regardless of their moral performance to date, or their cultural background. Anyone can have assurance that they are right with God if they repent and believe in the Lord Jesus.

This is world-changing news because it redefines the boundary lines of the people of God. The line between God's people and those who aren't God's people no longer lies between "good guys" and "bad guys", "religious people" and "non-religious people", or "this culture" and "that culture". Rather, the line is between those "in Christ" and those "in Adam". Regardless of morality, culture or religion, anyone who repents and believes in Jesus is part of God's people.

In fact, Paul's argument (in Romans 1-4) has been that no one, in themselves, can be good enough to be called righteous before God (3:10). Although all people are able to discern from creation that God is real and deserving of honour they don't respond to him rightly (1:18-32). The Jews, who have the law, fail to keep it and look down on others, and are condemned (2:1-4). The nations, though they don't have the law, fail to adhere to what they know intuitively to be right and wrong, and so they are also condemned (2:5-16). So, Paul says, all humanity stands under the just judgement of God (3:19).

INTRODUCTION:

Then comes the “But”. Romans 3:21-26 has been hailed as the most influential paragraph of the most influential document ever written. Why? Because it is here that Paul explains the implications of Christ’s death for how we are made right with God in a way that is both just and merciful. We can be “justified freely by his grace” only because God “presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement” to turn aside God’s wrath over sin (3:24-25).

The rest of Romans 3 and 4 demonstrated the continuity of this gospel with the logic and development of the Old Testament. We turned a corner in Romans 5 as Paul began to outline some of the implications of this world-changing idea: “since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God...” and confidence that all things are used by God to produce character in us (5:1-3). These truths have literally changed the world. And it’s our prayer that, as we continue in Paul’s letter, they will be changing us as well.

Romans 6-8 will continue to expand on the life-changing implications of being in Christ. While Romans 9-11 addresses the consistency of this gospel with God’s promises to his people, Israel. We’ll then be coming back to Romans 12-16 later this year.

The Context and Purpose of Romans

But a little more about the context of Paul’s letter. We can understand the moment of Paul’s writing in terms of four locations. Paul is writing from Corinth (as best we can understand). He is on his way to Jerusalem, where he will deliver donations from Gentile churches to help Jewish Christians (15:25). From there, he intends to travel to Rome, and, with the support of the Romans, go on to Spain (15:24,28).

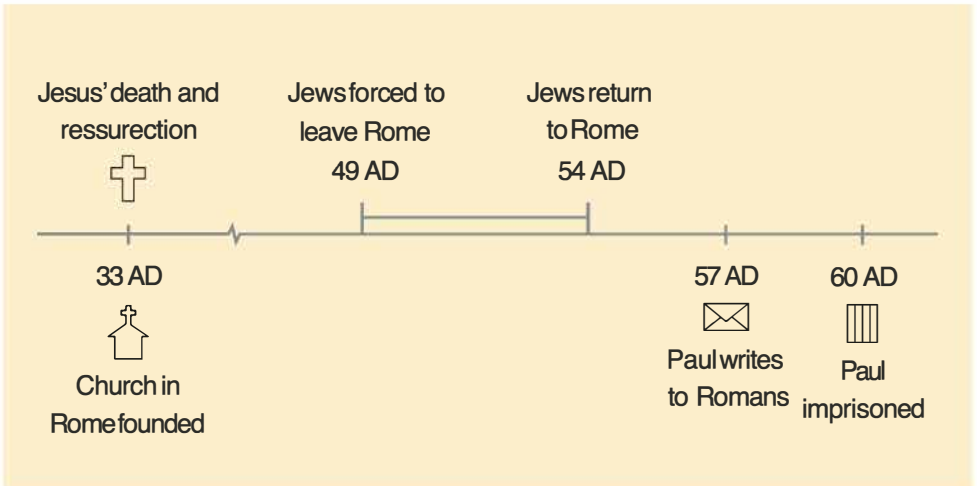
While Paul has not yet visited the church in Rome, he has heard of its struggles and division. All Jews were expelled from the city of Rome by the Emperor for the period 49-54 AD. As a result, the pre-existing cultural and religious differences between Jew and Gentile were exacerbated: the church to which Roman Jews returned had become a Gentile church. Paul hopes to visit this divided church to support and encourage them through these challenges. But his horizon is greater. He is conscious of the world that does not know Christ. In particular, the western Mediterranean and the region of Spain.

A LETTER THAT CHANGES EVERYTHING

Map



Approximate timeline



Therefore, Paul's letter has layers of purpose. He wants to unite a divided church – so he expounds the one gospel that is God's power to save all people. He hopes to defend his reputation against Jewish opponents – so he demonstrates the continuity and coherence of God's ancient plans fulfilled in Christ. He hopes to garner the support of the Roman Christians to send him on in partnership to Spain so he expounds the urgency of salvation in Christ.

But in all this he is conscious that he may never even make it to Rome. He knows that he has many enemies among the Jews in Jerusalem and so asks for prayer for his safety there (15:31). So, he also sends this account of his gospel with all its urgency, truth and power, ahead of him, in case he doesn't make it. What we have in Roman then, is the most systematic, comprehensive written statement of Paul's gospel. God's gospel. It is rich, it is world changing. It is life changing.

So, as we enter again into this part of the Bible this term, please be praying that this letter, which has had such a profound impact on lives and communities down the centuries, would be transforming us. May it lead people to be saved, may it unite us around this gospel of salvation, and may it spur us on to partner together to make Christ known.

“READING WIDER”

Our Daily Reading Notes have played a pivotal part in our aim to let God speak to us and to be in the Scriptures as a church together. We wanted to provide an option to read wider than just the weekly preaching passages so that we might hear the voice of our heavenly Father in the whole of his word to us.

READING WIDER: These "Reading Wider" coloured box sections allow us to read through the Bible roughly every three years in a way that draws some connections to the part of Scripture we are dwelling on together. You will find “Reading Wider” at the bottom of most days of these Daily Reading Notes.



ALIVE IN CHRIST

DAY 2: We Will Rise!

Read Romans 6:1-7

1. Verses 2-4 reframe how we think about life and death.
 - a. How is our death connected to Jesus' death?
 - b. How is our life (now) connected to Jesus' life?
 - c. How is our life (after physical death) connected to Jesus' life?
2. Verse 5 contains a wonderful promise. See if you can rewrite this promise in your own words. (You may want to re-read verse 4 as well to catch the logic).

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 7 and 8.

Prayer: Give thanks to God for the promise of being raised with Jesus. Ask for his help to live the new life in Christ today.

ALIVE IN CHRIST

PRAYER POINTS AND NOTES

WEEK 2: ROMANS 6:15-23

DAY 3: Those Things Lead to Death

Read Romans 6:19-23

1. How does Paul describe the pre-Christian life?
2. What does the pre-Christian life lead to?
3. How does he describe the Christian life?
4. What does it lead to?
5. Are there things that you are “now ashamed of?” (vs20) How is living for Jesus better?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 19 and 20.

Prayer: Give thanks for God's grace that takes away all our shame at the cross. Ask for God's help to see the emptiness and damage of sin, and to see the goodness and beauty of holiness and righteousness.

SERVANTS OF CHRIST

DAY 4: Reaping a Harvest

Read Romans 6:19-23

1. Are there times when you resent the “control of righteousness”? (vs20)
2. How are these verses helpful to see the goodness of righteousness and the emptiness of sin?
3. What would you want to remind yourself of when you are resentful of the call to righteousness?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 21 and 22.

Prayer: Give thanks that God has freed us from sin and the destructiveness of impurity. Ask for his help to desire holiness, to rejoice in righteousness, and to want to obey him.

SERVANTS OF CHRIST

PRAYER POINTS AND NOTES

WEEK 3: ROMANS 7:1-6

DAY 1: Released From the Law

Read Romans 7:1-6

1. What point is Paul making in verse 1?
2. Paul uses marriage as an example for how our relationship with the Law works. Write down any similarities or differences you can find between marriage and our relationship with the Law
3. Clearly Paul is making a point about the law, but this may be a hard example for people that you may know or yourself. How can you be thinking and praying more about this topic?
4. In light of this hard topic, what can we learn from these passages about other truths we can find in God's Word? (e.g. see Romans 8:1-2; Romans 8:28)

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 25 and 26.

Prayer: Take some time to pray through your response to question 3, and pray for our church family as we hear this word together this week.

WEEK 3: ROMANS 7:1-6

DAY 3: Letter or Spirit?

Read Romans 7:1-6

1. Paul writes to those who “know the law” yet he needs to instruct them on the gospel, and describes them as having been “in the realm of the flesh”. What danger does this suggest for those who are close to religious things or merely have intellectual knowledge of the Bible?
2. How does Paul describe life under the law (verse 5)? How does this compare with the life of a Christian?
3. In verse 7, Paul anticipates being accused of criticising the law. If you read verse 5 carefully, where do the sinful passions come from?
4. Paul often talks about dying to sin (e.g. Romans 6), but here he speaks of dying to the law. This indicates a need to not only be done with sin, but also be done with law and obedience as a means to be right with God—self-righteousness or works-based religion. A dependence on works tends to lead us either to despair or pride. Where do you find yourself looking to your own merits and either despairing or being moved to pride, rather than trusting in Jesus?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 28.

Prayer: Give thanks for the freedom of the Spirit. Ask for his help to renounce self-reliance, to embrace the assurance of the gospel, and to serve him by the strength the Spirit gives.

CHRIST AND THE LAW

DAY 4: Curse or Blessing?

Read Galatians 3:7-14

In this part of Galatians, Paul is addressing a similar concern as in Romans 7:1-6; that is, what is the relationship of the Christian to the Old Testament Law?

1. What do verses 7-10 say about people “who rely on faith”?
2. What do verses 10-12 say about people who rely on works of the Law?
3. What do verses 13-14 say is achieved in Christ?
4. What does all this suggest about the wisdom of relying on the Law now that Christ has come?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 29.

Prayer: Give thanks that Christ has borne the curse of the Law. Ask for the Spirit’s help to rely entirely on Christ and what he has achieved for us.

WEEK 3: ROMANS 7:1-6

DAY 5: Faith and Love

Read Galatians 5:1-6, 13-14

Here, as with yesterday's reading, Paul continues to address a similar concern to Romans 7:1-6: what is the relationship of the Christian to the Old Testament Law? In particular, he discusses circumcision as an example of Old Testament law-keeping.

1. What is Paul describing as a "yoke of slavery"? How is being in Christ described by comparison?
2. What happens to our salvation if we rely on our own obedience for our standing before God (see verses 2-4)?
3. What do we do with the freedom we now have in Christ? (See verses 13-14.)

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 30.

Prayer: Give thanks that we are free in Christ. Ask that he protects us from falling back into self-reliance. Ask that he gives us love and devotion to serve others in love.

CHRIST AND THE LAW

PRAYER POINTS AND NOTES

WEEK 4: ROMANS 7:7-25

DAY 1: The Law so Far

In this section, Paul continues to address a question raised by the gospel he has been explaining: If we are justified by faith and not by works of the law (3:21-5:11), what about the law? What was its purpose? What do we do with it now?

- 1 Look back over the following verses to see what Paul has already said about the law:
 - a. Romans 2:12-13
 - b. 3:20
 - c. 3:28
 - d. 3:31
 - e. 5:20
 - f. 6:14
 - g. 7:1
 - h. 7:5

2. Can you summarise what Paul has said about the law so far?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 31-32.

Prayer: Give thanks that God has given his good law so that we can see the depth of sin and the rightness of his judgement. Give thanks that he has provided a way of salvation apart from the law. Ask that more and more people on the Coast and beyond might know this salvation.

CHRIST AND THE LAW

DAY 2: Is the Law Sinful?

Read Romans 7:7-25

1. Use the printed text of today's passage below to mark:
 - a. Any repeated words
 - b. Actions within this passage
2. What stands out to you? What questions do you have?

7:7 What shall we say, then? Is the law sinful? Certainly not! Nevertheless, I would not have known what sin was had it not been for the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, "You shall not covet."⁸ But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of coveting. For apart from the law, sin was dead.⁹ Once I was alive apart from the law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died.¹⁰ I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death.¹¹ For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death.¹² So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good.¹³ Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! Nevertheless, in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it used what is good to bring about my death, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.¹⁴ We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin.¹⁵ I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.¹⁶ And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good.¹⁷ As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me.¹⁸ For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing.²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.²¹ So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me.²² For in my inner being I delight in God's law;²³ but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me.²⁴ What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death?²⁵ Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in my sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

Prayer: Give thanks that Christ has rescued us and will deliver us through Jesus! Ask for his help in the battle against sin.

WEEK 4: ROMANS 7:7-25

DAY 3: The Good

Read Romans 7:7-13

1. What might lead Paul to anticipate the question in verse 1?
2. What critical function does the law play (see verses 1 and 13)?
3. What does the example of coveting reveal about the way the law interacts with our sin?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 33-34.

Prayer: Give thanks that God has rescued us from sin. Give thanks for his good and holy law that reveals our state before him. Ask for humility to walk in dependence on him this week knowing our constant need for forgiveness.

CHRIST AND THE LAW

DAY 4: Who Will Rescue Me?

Read Romans 7:14-25

1. It is common for people to downplay their responsibility for sin or wrongdoing. Where does Paul see the blame for sinful actions lying here?
2. It is also common today for people to see humanity as being basically good. What evidence in this passage stands against this claim? How would you engage with someone who held this position based on Paul's example here drawn from his own experience?
3. What hope is there for the person wrestling with sin? (See verses 25. You may also want to read forward to 8:1-4.)

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, catch up on any missed readings, or, read Isaiah 1-5.

Prayer: Give thanks that God has created us with the ability to be moral beings, made in his image. Take some time to reflect on, and confess, your own failures to do what is right and good this week. Bring these things to God and give thanks for the confidence we can have in Christ.

WEEK 4: ROMANS 7:7-25

DAY 5: What I Hate, I Do!

Read Romans 7:14-25

Understanding this passage presents some challenges. There is some disagreement and uncertainty regarding who the “I” in this passage refers to. Here are some of the options:

- a. Paul is describing his experience as a Christian wrestling with sin
 - b. Paul is describing his experience as a Jew under the law, who is yet to be liberated by the gospel
 - c. Paul is giving voice to the universal experience of Israel
 - d. Paul is giving voice to the universal experience of Christians
 - e. Paul is giving voice to the universal experience of humanity
1. Read back over 7:7-13. What evidence is there for and against these different positions? (Note the implicit references to time in these verses.)

 2. Now re-read verses 14-25. Are there things in the text that make you lean towards or away from one of the above options? (It will also be helpful to read on to 8:1-4.)

 3. Despite some ambiguities here, what things are clear about the nature of sin, and our need for Jesus?

If you still have questions, make sure that you write them down to ask your leader tonight!

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 35.

Prayer: Give thanks for God's word and the way it connects with our human experience. Give thanks for the provision of rescue in Jesus. Ask for God's help to delight in God's law and to do what is good.

CHRIST AND THE LAW

PRAYER POINTS AND NOTES

WEEK 5: ROMANS 8:1-13

DAY 1: No Condemnation

Read Romans 8:1-4

1. Skim back over Romans 7:14-25. What do you think we're meant to feel as we arrive at 8:1 after the despair of those verses?
2. How is our status of "no condemnation" achieved? (See verses 1 and 2.)
3. What further insights does Paul give about the nature of the law in verses 1 and 4?
4. What is the goal of the work of Christ in verse 4?
5. How are these verses a comfort to you as you wrestle with sin in your life? How are they a challenge?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 36.

Prayer: Give thanks that we don't need to fear condemnation if we are in Christ. Give thanks for the gift of the Spirit that gives life, and for his enabling to live in accordance with the Spirit.

TRANSFORMED IN CHRIST

DAY 2: Hostile

Read Romans 8:1-8

1. Verses 5-8 contrast people who are governed by the “flesh” with those governed by the “Spirit”. List all the things that are said of the flesh and the Spirit in these verses.

Flesh	Spirit

2. Verses 7 and 8 give a bleak assessment of people’s standing without the Spirit. What does it say, in your own words?
3. In light of verses 7 and 8, how would you respond to someone who holds that all faiths are equally valid, or that people can know God by other avenues than Christ?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 37.

Prayer: Give thanks for the gift of the Spirit. Ask that he would continue to transform you so that you would be pleasing to God as one justified in Christ, walking in the Spirit.

WEEK 5: ROMANS 8:1-13

DAY 3: Life in the Spirit

Read Romans 8:5-11

Paul is both very affirming of his readers as well as...a little doubtful.

1. What does Paul say about the Romans in verses 9-11?
2. What does he say about the need for the Spirit?
3. In verses 9-11, Paul switches from speaking of the Spirit living in believers (verse 9), to Christ being in believers (10), to “the Spirit of him who raised Christ” being in them (11). How do we make sense of this? What does it suggest about the nature of the Father, the Son and the Spirit? (See also John 14:15-8,23.)
4. How would you know if you have the Spirit? (See verses 4-6, and verses 15-16.)

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 38-39.

Prayer: Give thanks that the triune God has come to make his home in us so that we can believe in Christ and be transformed by his Spirit. Pray in light of your response to question 4. Depending on where you're at with Jesus, you may want to give thanks for his work in your life bringing you confidence in being one of his children, or you may want to ask for his help to trust in Jesus' death and resurrection as a sacrifice for you and so have confidence of your salvation.

WEEK 5: ROMANS 8:1-13

DAY 5: Obligation to the Spirit

Read Romans 8:1-13

1. What do you think it means to have an obligation – either to the flesh or to the Spirit? (See verse 12, and 5-11.)
2. What are the two futures described in verses 12-13?
3. On the basis of verse 13 alone, how can you be confident of eternal life? How does this square with Romans 8:1, 5:1, and 3:21-23?
4. How do we put sin to death (see verse 13, verse 4, and also 6:13)?
5. As you think about putting sin to death, what areas of your life do you feel convicted of the need to change? What steps can you take to grow in this area? (E.g. talking to someone about it, managing exposure to temptation etc., taking action on forgiveness or relational repair.)

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 42.

Prayer: Give thanks for the promise of life in Christ through the Spirit and the promise of transformation by the Spirit. Ask for God's help in putting sin to death, to work with the Spirit, to grow in desire to please the Father and obey the Spirit; and to take action as described in your answer to question 5 above.

TRANSFORMED IN CHRIST

PRAYER POINTS AND NOTES

WEEK 6: ROMANS 8:12-17

DAY 1: Sons

Read Romans 8:9-17

1. What new ideas about our life in the Spirit does Paul introduce in verses 14-15?

2. The idea of being called a child of God (literally “sons of God” in verse 14, 19)¹ is a rich and profound one in Scripture. In the following passages, who is a Son of God, and what is significant about this status?
 - a. 2 Samuel 7:12-15

 - b. Psalm 2:4-8

 - c. Hosea 11:1-4

3. How do these verses help us see the privilege of being called God’s sons (or children) in Christ?

¹On the terms “son” and “child”: In the original language, Paul uses both masculine terms (“sons”/“sonship” verses 14, 15), as well as gender inclusive terms (“child”/“children” verses 16, 17). Yet there is a theological significance to the status of sonship. In the ancient world it is the son who inherits. And, because we are adopted by our union with Christ, we share in the status of Christ as the son! So the term “sonship” can rightly be applied to men and women in Christ, regardless of gender, because it points to the one we’re reunited to: the Son.

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 43-44.

Prayer: Give thanks for the wonderful privilege of being called God’s sons in Christ. Ask for his help to live out this dignified status that we have in the confidence of his love for us.

ADOPTED IN CHRIST

DAY 2: Fear

Read Romans 8:12-17

1. Why do you think Paul needs to point out in verse 15 that we aren't slaves and don't need to live in fear? What might move people to be fearful? (Notice the "again" – see also 8:1, 13.)

2. In Romans 6, Paul said that we are now slaves to righteousness. What does this slavery bring about? How does that cancel out our fear? (Note in the ESV and CSB the phrase is translated "the spirit of slavery" rather than "the spirit...does not make you slaves".)

3. In what ways are you prone to feel fearful in your life as a Christian (either fear before God, or other fears)? How might knowing you are a child of God change each of these fears?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 45-46.

Prayer: Give thanks that as God's children we are loved by him. Bring to God your fears described in answer to question 3 above, and ask for his help to trust him as your loving Heavenly Father.

WEEK 6: ROMANS 8:12-17

DAY 3: “Abba”

Read Romans 8:14-17

1. How does the Spirit move us to address God (verse 15)? What might this mean?²
2. Have a look at how Jesus prays in Mark 14:36. Note both, how he addresses God, but also the content and context of his prayer.
 - a. What similarities do you notice to what Paul is saying in both verses 15 and 17?
 - b. What does this suggest about our relationship with the Father compared to Jesus' relationship with the Father now that we are his children?
3. What might it mean to cry out “father!”? How is the language of crying out used in these passages:
 - a. Psalm 39:12
 - b. Psalm 28:1-2
 - c. Psalm 34:17
 - d. Psalm 66:17
 - e. Psalm 142:5

²Note the words translated “abba” and “father” are the word for father in Aramaic “abba” and Greek “pater”. The term “abba” is understood to be a more affectionate, familiar term.

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 47-48.

Prayer: Give thanks to God the Father that through Christ we can come to him with the same openness and intimacy as does Jesus, the Son. Ask for the Spirit's help to remember that we are his loved children. Spend some time crying out to God—casting your burdens on him, and praising him for his goodness.

ADOPTED IN CHRIST

DAY 4: Led

Read Romans 8:5-17

1. Romans gives us a comprehensive picture of the gospel and Christian life, with chapter 8 providing one of the most comprehensive discussions on the Holy Spirit. How would you summarise the key roles of the Holy Spirit in this chapter?
2. Taking note of the context, what does it mean to be “led by the Spirit” (see especially verses 13-14)?
3. Sometimes people speak today of churches that are more spiritual than others, or where the Spirit is more present. Based on this chapter so far, what would you expect a church to look like if the Spirit is at work?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 49-50.

Prayer: Ask that you would be led by the Spirit by continually putting sin to death and being joyfully confident of your status as a child of God. Pray that our church would be characterised by these things.

WEEK 6: ROMANS 8:12-17

DAY 5: Glory

Read Romans 8:14-17

1. What does it mean to be a co-heir with Christ? Why is this remarkable?
2. In verse 17, what is the path to glory? How do you think the logic of this works? (See also 1 Peter 1:11.)
3. What is the evidence that we will share Christ's glory? (See also Romans 5:3-5, 1 Peter 1:4-9.) How is this an encouragement when things are hard?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 51:1-52:12.

Prayer: Give thanks to God for the ministry of his Spirit in you, and ask that his Spirit will cause you to persevere in the battle with sin and suffering.

ADOPTED IN CHRIST

PRAYER POINTS AND NOTES

WEEK 7: ROMANS 8:18-30

DAY 1: Glory and Suffering

Read Romans 8:14-25

1. What continuity do you see from last week's passage into this week's passage (particularly verses 14-17)?
2. If we are sons/children of God and therefore co-heirs with Christ, what can we expect now and in the future? See verse 17.
3. What is the comparison Paul makes (or, in fact, doesn't make!) in verse 18? What does this mean for how we are to think about suffering?
4. Think back on some of the most difficult seasons of your life. Given the way Paul has described suffering and glory, what must this mean for the glory we will experience in heaven?
5. How are these things a comfort to you when life is hard?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 52:13-53:12.

Prayer: Give thanks for the hope of heaven. Give thanks that the Bible allows us to call our suffering what it is, but at the same time gives us a hope so great that it makes our suffering small by comparison. Ask for God to sustain you and your brothers and sisters in all seasons with the knowledge of this hope.

SUFFERING IN CHRIST

DAY 2: Frustration

Read Romans 8:18-22

1. What event do you think is being described in verse 20?
2. What new insight do we have here into the purpose or intent of that event?
3. What insight do we have here into God's control over the current state of the world?
4. How do these verses clarify our hope for the prospect of the world improving?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 54-55.

Prayer: Give thanks for the hope of a restored creation, no longer subject to futility and decay. Ask for God's help to enable you to see frustration, decay and futility around us as reminders of the state of our world, longing to be restored.

WEEK 7: ROMANS 8:18-30

DAY 3: Freedom

Read Romans 8:18-25

1. What is creation waiting for in verses 19 and 21?
2. What are we waiting for in verse 23? What tension exists between verse 15 and verse 23? How do you make sense of this tension? (See also verse 19.)
3. How does the metaphor in verse 22 work? How is this a picture of hope?
4. What is the role of the Spirit in verse 23? How does it work with the metaphor in verse 22?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 56-57.

Prayer: Give thanks for the glorious future that God has promised us: the full experience of the sonship we have now spiritually. Ask for the Spirit's help as you long for that time to keep your hope fixed on that future.

SUFFERING IN CHRIST

DAY 4: Groaning

Read Romans 8:18-30

1. The word “groaning” is used three times in this section. Find each one and note, for each: what/who is groaning and why?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
2. For each, what is the future hope the groaning anticipates?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
3. What is the logic of verses 24-25? Can you rephrase it in your own words?
4. What might it look like for you to wait patiently this week?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 58.

Prayer: Give thanks for all that God has promised. Give thanks for the Spirit’s work to intercede for us. Take some time to lift up to him those things that are causing you to “groan” at the moment. Ask for God’s help with regard to your answer to question 4.

WEEK 7: ROMANS 8:18-30

DAY 5: Foreknown

Read Romans 8:28-30

1. What comfort is found in verse 28?
2. What is the “good” that God is working towards those who love him? What is the goal (see verse 29)?
3. Given this goal, what ought to be your goal “in all things”? What might it look like to pursue that this week?
4. What is the logic of verse 30? How does that give you comfort and confidence about the future?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 59.

Prayer: Give thanks for the hope that God is working for our good in all things. Ask for his help to value what he values: our growing in Christ. Give thanks for the assurance that he who called us will also glorify us.

SUFFERING IN CHRIST

PRAYER POINTS AND NOTES

ASSURANCE IN CHRIST

DAY 2: For Us

Read Romans 8:31-39

1. What are “these things” Paul is referring to (verse 31)? Skim over verses 22-30 to refresh your memory.
2. What do you think it means that God is “for” us?
3. Whom might the Roman Christians have felt was “against” them? What difference might it have made to know that God is “for” them?
4. Who do you feel is against you? What difference does it make to know that God is “for” you?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 61.

Prayer: Give thanks that because we are in Christ, we are on God's side and don't need to fear others or be swayed by their opinions. Ask for God's help to keep this perspective and to be committed to living in light of him and his opinion.

ASSURANCE IN CHRIST

DAY 4: Justified

Read Psalm 44:4-9, and 13-23

Psalm 44:22 is quoted in this week's passage in Romans 8. Let's take some time to understand the verse in its context.

1. What is the present experience of the psalmist (and his people) – verses 13-16?
2. Why is this a surprise to the psalmist? (See verses 17-22, and 4-9.)
3. What is the sense of “for your sake we face death all day long” in this verse? (See also verse 9.)
4. What is the psalmist's response to the suffering described in this psalm? (See verses 8, 23, 26.)

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 63.

Prayer: Ask that God would give you confidence in his unfailing love, and that whatever experience he is sending our way, that we can trust him, praise him and grow through it.

WEEK 8: ROMANS 8:31-39

DAY 5: Confident

Read Romans 8:31-39

1. Read over your thoughts from Psalm 44 yesterday. How does Psalm 44:22 land in Romans 8? Why do you think that Paul is quoting this verse at this point in the passage?
2. What would you say is the main point of Romans 8:37-39?
3. What do you see as the biggest threat to God's love of you? How do these verses address that fear?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 64.

Prayer: Father in heaven, thank you that we can be confident of your love for us. Thank you that you showed your love by sending your son to suffer and die for us. Help us to look to the cross, be confident that you are “for us”, that we are chosen, justified in Jesus, and therefore able to be confident about the future. Please help us be confident of your love for us today and live in the freedom that it brings.

ASSURANCE IN CHRIST

PRAYER POINTS AND NOTES

WEEK 9: ROMANS 9:1-29

DAY 1: Unceasing Anguish

Read Romans 9:1-8

Verse 1 feels like an abrupt change of topic from the verses just before. The coming three chapters (Romans 9-11) make up a coherent, sustained argument addressing a potential objection to Paul's gospel. The problem relates to God's promises to the nation of Israel.

1. Use the following verses to go back over the letter so far. What has Paul said about Israel and his gospel?
 - a. 1:2-3, 16
 - b. 2:12-14
 - c. 2:17-24
 - d. 3:1-3
 - e. 3:21-24
 - f. 4:16
2. What is Paul's longing in 9:2-3? What might it look like to share the same kind of longing for people whom we love who don't know Christ?

Prayer: Give thanks to God that his gospel is for all people and that the blessings of being his people are now available to every culture and class through faith in Christ. Pray that we could share the depth of concern that he has for "his people" and that more and more people on the Coast and beyond would know the blessing of the gospel.

MERCY IN CHRIST

DAY 2: Chosen

Read Romans 9:1-14

1. What might lead someone to think that “the word of God has failed” (verses 6, 30-31)?
2. What is the first piece of the answer that Paul provides (verses 6b-8a)? How does this answer the question?
3. How do the following verses support the answer given in verses 6-8? What new ideas do they add?
 - a. 9:9
 - b. 9:10-13
 - c. 9:14-16
 - d. 9:18
4. What is the picture of God and salvation that emerges in these verses? What is challenging about this? What is liberating?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 65.

Prayer: Ask for God’s help as we wrestle together with the big-ness of God. Give thanks that God is the author of salvation, that his word of election stands, and that he saves those whom he chooses to save. Ask that you might be one of those he saves and that he would preserve you all your days.

WEEK 9: ROMANS 9:1-29

DAY 3: Unjust?

Read Romans 9:14-22

1. What might cause someone to ask the questions Paul is anticipating in verses 14 and 19?
2. How does Paul answer the following concerns:
 - a. “Is God unjust?” (verses 14-18)
 - b. “Why does he still blame us?” (verses 18-24)
3. How do you feel about the justice of God described in these verses? How do Paul’s answers help you? How do they challenge you?
4. For some, this concept of God’s choice of whom he saves is a great comfort, for others it is troubling or offensive. How might you sympathise with someone who feels the opposite to you?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Isaiah 65.

Prayer: Pray the words of Romans 11:33-36. Give thanks for God’s gracious character, and ask for his help to adopt this posture of reverent humility before him.

MERCY IN CHRIST

PRAYER POINTS AND NOTES

WEEK 10: ROMANS 9:30-10:21

DAY 1: Faith

Read Romans 9:30-10:4

1. What has been the error of Israel according to Paul in 9:30-33?
2. What are humans responsible for in their salvation on the basis of these verses?
3. Note that Paul does not make any reference to God's electing grace in this passage; rather, he outlines what Israel did wrong. What is significant about this?
4. In what ways are you at risk of making the same error as Israel here?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Proverbs 19-20.

Prayer: Give thanks for the gift of righteousness, received by faith. Confess the ways you are prone to self-reliance, legalism or pride. Ask for God's help to rest and rely on his grace (not works), and to grow and persevere in faith.

SALVATION IN CHRIST

DAY 2: Zeal

Read Romans 10:1-4

1. What is the error of Israel in these verses? There are a few aspects:
 - a. Verse 2
 - b. Verse 3a
 - c. Verse 3b
2. What is the problem with having zeal without knowledge?
3. What is the problem with having knowledge without zeal?
4. Which of the above do you think you are most at risk of? How might you address this risk?
5. How does verses 2 and 3 critique the modern view that all people of genuine faith are saved regardless of their religion?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Proverbs 21-22.

Prayer: Join with Paul in praying for those who don't know Jesus and don't have salvation. Ask that he would grow both your understanding and your zeal. Ask that he would enlarge your view of Christ and your dependence on him.

SALVATION IN CHRIST

DAY 4: Near

Read Romans 10:1-13

In verses 5-9, Paul continues to justify and expand on the difference between righteousness by law and righteousness by faith. He appeals to Moses (the giver of the law) to demonstrate the limits of legal-obedience, on the one hand, and the way of faith on the other.

1. In verse 5, what is the standard of gaining life by the law? How attainable is this?
2. By contrast, how attainable is the righteousness that comes by faith? (See verses 6-9.)
3. Have a look in Deuteronomy 30:11-16. What is the thrust of these verses? What is the benefit of the “nearness” of God’s words?
4. If the word that calls for faith is near, it is all the more attainable! What implications are drawn from this in verses 9-13?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Proverbs 25-26.

Prayer: Give thanks that in every age God has made himself known. Give thanks that Christ has come, and that we have access to the gospel that saves, and that we neither have to work to earn salvation, nor live in fear and uncertainty that we have done enough. Ask that more and more people would come to know the liberating truth of this message and be saved!

WEEK 10: ROMANS 9:30-10:21

DAY 5: Faith Comes Through Hearing

Read Romans 10:5-15

1. In verses 9-13, what are the different phrases that give assurance to believers?
2. But in order for someone to believe, what are the “steps” required for others to do? (See verses 14-15.)
3. Paul has given his life to preaching Christ. Part of the reason he wrote this letter was to garner support from the Christians in Rome for his ministry in Spain (15:23-33). This shows that it's not just “the preacher” who's involved in sharing the gospel. What parts are there to play in sharing the gospel from 10:14-15?
4. What are some ways that you'd like to be more involved in sharing the gospel? (You could include ways that aren't described in this passage.)

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Proverbs 27.

Prayer: Give thanks for those that God used to bring the gospel to your ears. Ask God to give you eyes to see opportunities to be involved in sharing the gospel in different ways and that he might bless those efforts. Ask that God would give our church family a heart to participate in making Christ known.

SALVATION IN CHRIST

PRAYER POINTS AND NOTES

WEEK 11: ROMANS 11:1-36

DAY 1: The People of God

Read Romans 11:1-10

1. What might lead someone to ask the question Paul anticipates in verse 1? (See 9:1-3, 6, 14-18, 31; 10:1-3, 16.)
2. The answer to Paul's question, "Did God reject his people?" seems to rely heavily on defining who the people of God are. How has Paul already refined the idea of who God's people are in 9:6-8?
3. How is Paul's own faith an answer to the objection in verse 1?
4. In verse 2a, who is it that God has not rejected? What does this suggest about how Paul will resolve the question? (See also verse 5.)

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Proverbs 28.

Prayer: Give thanks that God is faithful to his promises and his people. Ask that God might call all those he has chosen to salvation and use us in the process.

HUMILITY IN CHRIST

DAY 2: Chosen by Grace

Read Romans 11:1-10

1. What is Elijah's cry to God? What is God's response?
2. What is the purpose of Paul's appeal to the Elijah narrative? (You can read the narrative in full in 1 Kings 19.) How does it add to his argument?
3. How has God chosen the present remnant? What is encouraging about this?
4. In verse 7, what determines who finds righteousness? What's comforting and challenging about this?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Proverbs 29.

Prayer: Give thanks that God chooses to save and chooses, not on the basis of works, but by his sovereign, electing grace. Ask for God's help to see the comfort, beauty and goodness in these truths.

WEEK 11: ROMANS 11:1-36

DAY 3: Tremble

Read Romans 11:11-24

Paul continues his explanation of how his gospel fits with the promises to Israel and the Jews' large-scale rejection of Jesus.

1. In what sense has Israel stumbled? (See 9:32-33.)
2. How has Israel's failure benefited the Gentiles?
3. How does Paul see his ministry to the Gentiles benefiting the Jews? (See verses 13-15.)
4. Summarise the components of the olive tree metaphor. What message does it communicate:
 - a. To the Jews?
 - b. To the Gentiles?
5. How do you think God wants us to feel towards Jewish people today?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Proverbs 30.

Prayer: Ask that God in his kindness would bring to salvation the full number of his people, Jew and Gentile alike. Ask that he would give us great humility as Gentiles, knowing that we are those who have no right to the promises of God's people, but stand only by faith in his grace.

HUMILITY IN CHRIST

DAY 4: All Israel Saved

Read Romans 11:25-32

1. What does Paul say is the purpose of these verses? Why might this be necessary? (See 11:25 and 11:18.)

2. What are the possible ways you could understand the phrase “all Israel will be saved” (there are a few!)?

3. How has Paul defined the “Israel” who will be saved in the following verses?
 - a. 9:6-7

 - b. 11:5

 - c. 11:7

What interpretation of “all Israel” does this suggest?

4. What does Paul anticipate happening in the future in verses 28-32?

5. In what ways do you find yourself becoming conceited?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, read Proverbs 31.

Prayer: Give thanks that God will save his people, Jew and Gentile. Give thanks for his mercy on Gentiles and pray for his mercy on Jews that they might trust in Jesus and be saved among the people of God.

WEEK 11: ROMANS 11:1-36

DAY 5: Unsearchable

Read Romans 11:33-36

1. Take some time looking back over the last couple of weeks' reading notes as we've wrestled with this question of God's justice and sovereignty in saving those he chooses.
 - a. Where have you shifted in your thinking?
 - b. Where have you been encouraged or challenged?
 - c. What are you still wrestling with?
2. Re-read 11:33-36. Put in your own words what these verses say about God.
3. What is most striking, convicting, or comforting about these things in light of your answers in question 1 above?

READING WIDER: To keep up with our three-year reading plan, today, you're done! Catch up on any missed readings from Isaiah 6-66, or Proverbs 19-31, or choose a psalm.

Prayer: Take some time praising God in light of his character expressed here in these verses. Take some time to pray over your responses to today's questions.

HUMILITY IN CHRIST

PRAYER POINTS AND NOTES

