

Holy Week Devotional

We invite you to walk with Jesus remembering His last week on Earth.

Palm Sunday – Jesus’ Triumphal Entry | Read Matthew 21:1-11

Palm Sunday marks the beginning of Holy Week. It is the day we remember and celebrate Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem as Savior and King. Large crowds gathered to welcome Him as he rode in on a donkey. The people laid palm branches out in His honor and claimed Him as the Messiah, shouting “Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest heaven.”

Hosanna is an expression of praise. Spend time honoring Jesus by praising Him as the Savior and King of your life. Reflect on His goodness and kindness toward you. Where do you see these attributes of God on display in your life? Thank Him for all He’s done for you!

Monday – Jesus Cleanses the Temple | Read Matthew 21:12-17

People traveled from far away to visit the temple at Passover. They came to worship God and offer an animal sacrifice for atonement of their sins. The merchants and money changers knew the travelers would need to purchase an animal to sacrifice and took advantage of them by charging high prices. In Matthew we read that Jesus was angry because the temple had been overtaken by commerce and was no longer a place of worship and prayer; so He drove out all the people who were buying and selling and restored the temple for worship.

Pray and ask God to reveal the sin that needs to be cleansed and removed from your heart. Repent and ask Him for forgiveness. Like the children shouting praise in the temple courts, praise God for the gift of forgiveness we receive through His son, Jesus Christ.

Tuesday – Jesus Rebukes the Pharisees | Read Matthew 21:23-27

Jesus knew His authority came from God the Father. He had authority to teach, to clear the temple and to receive worship from the people. Seeing these things led the Pharisees to question Him and ask “Who gave you this authority? By what authority are you doing these things?” The Pharisees questioned Jesus because of their unbelief and fear of losing power and authority over the people.

What area of your life is controlled by unbelief or fear? Pray for God’s help to increase your faith and submit to His authority.

Wednesday – Judas Betrays Jesus | Read Matthew 26:14-16

Judas was one of Jesus’ twelve disciples. He lived alongside Jesus, witnessed Him perform miracles and heard Him teach, yet he still betrayed Jesus. Judas offered to hand Jesus over to the chief priests for a mere 30 pieces of silver. Scripture tells us that Satan had entered Judas.

Think about someone you know who has abandoned their faith or someone that has never had faith in Jesus. Spend time praying for God to change their heart. Consider inviting them to come to an Easter service with you this Sunday!

Thursday – Jesus Washes the Disciples Feet | John 13:1-19

When Jesus washes the disciples' feet, He gives us an example of servant leadership and humility. He models for us that leadership isn't about power and status but much more so about serving others with love and humility. In verse 14 Jesus says, "Now that I your Lord have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet." This call for us to serve one another comes directly from Jesus Christ.

We all lead someone - a spouse, child, friend, co-worker, etc. Consider how you serve the people you lead. How can you better serve like Jesus? Pray for opportunities to love and serve wholeheartedly.

Good Friday – Jesus' Sacrificial Death | Read Matthew 27:11-54

The Romans reserved crucifixion for criminals because it was a brutal and agonizing death. Although not a criminal, Jesus was sentenced by Pilate to crucifixion at the request of the people. But what man meant for harm, God meant for good. His sacrificial death on the cross offers salvation and is the ultimate expression of love towards mankind. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world, He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him may not perish but have eternal life."

Read John 3:16 again and replace the word *gave* with *sacrifice*. Consider the magnitude of what Jesus did for you. How do you give your life as a living sacrifice to Him?

Have you accepted God's free gift of salvation? If not, what is stopping you from placing your faith in Jesus? Romans 10:9-10 tells us, "if you confess with your mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved." If you have placed your faith in Jesus, thank Him for your salvation.

Resurrection Sunday – Jesus Conquers Death | Read Matthew 28:1-20

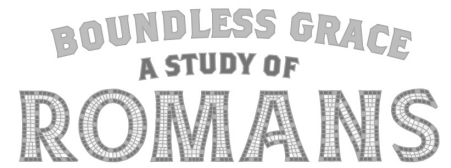
The resurrection is the cornerstone of our faith! On Easter Sunday we celebrate our risen Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ. The tomb was empty and He is alive! Jesus conquered death and confirmed His identity as the Son of God. Without the resurrection our faith would be meaningless.

As you celebrate Easter, will you genuinely celebrate that Jesus Christ is alive? Will you celebrate that death cannot hold you in the grave? Will you celebrate that you have been offered the gift of salvation?

Rejoice in these promises as you celebrate Easter Sunday!

Romans 12

April 3-4, 2024



1. Read Romans 12:1. "Therefore" is a signal to look back at what was previously written. Take time and reflect on Romans 1-11. Write 2-3 mercies or actions of God we have studied.

Considering all God has done for us, what is our proper response to Him?

2. Now read Romans 12:2. How do these two commands help us present ourselves as living sacrifices to God? See also Ephesians 4:22-24.

What entices you to conform to the culture or world around you?

How can you renew your mind to be transformed to God's ways?

What is one benefit of being transformed by the renewal of your mind?

3. Read Romans 12:3-8. In verse 3, Paul tells believers how they should view themselves. Why is your view of yourself important when talking about oneness or unity with others?

Paul calls the church "one body, but many members." Why is remembering this important as part of the body? See 1 Corinthians 12:12-13, 21-26.

4. Look again at Romans 12:6-8. Though we are one body, God gives everyone different gifts that make each of us unique. List the gifts Paul mentions and his intention for each.

Why should a member of the body seek to use her gifts? See also Ephesians 4:7,11-12 and 1 Peter 4:10-11.

5. How we treat others in the body is a good reflection of how well we are being “transformed by the renewal of our minds.” Read Romans 12:9-13. Which of these actions or behaviors is the easiest for you, and why?

Which is hardest for you, and why?

6. Reread Romans 12:9-10. Based on your understanding of these verses, write your definition of genuine love.

How does genuine love allow you to outdo one another in showing honor?

7. Read Romans 12:14-21. These verses are meant to guide our relationships with all people. What should be our goal in relationships according to verses 16-18?

List the ways Paul tells us we can accomplish this goal.

8. We are tempted to avenge ourselves when we are wronged. In contrast, what view does Paul say we are to have according to Romans 12:17-19?

According to verse 20, what should we do instead?

Why is this hard for us?

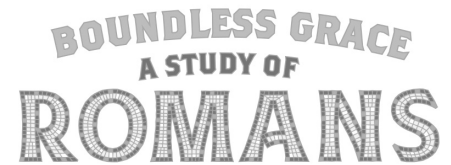
9. Spend time in prayer asking God to show you where you are being conformed to the world.

What are specific ways you can renew your mind so that your life is transformed?

10. Write out a personal prayer request in one or two sentences to share with your small group.

Romans 13-14

April 10-11, 2024



1. Before reading Romans 13, take time to read and review Romans 12. What three direct instructions does Paul give in Romans 12:1-2?

Share a way you practiced one of these instructions in the last week. Is there a specific verse in chapter 12 that God used to prompt you toward obedience?

2. Read Romans 13:1-7. The “governing authorities” in verse 1 refers to civil government. Record how Paul describes these authorities.

Based on these descriptions, summarize God’s intention for the function of civil government.

3. Read Romans 13:1-7 again. According to verse 1, why should we willingly place ourselves under our government’s rule?

Record each responsibility Christ followers have toward their governing authorities.

4. Read Romans 13:8-10 along with Mark 12:28-31. Think about everything you are learning from the book of Romans. In your own words, explain what Paul means when he says “love is the fulfilling of the law.”

5. In the following verses, what do you learn about how to offer the love you owe others?

Romans 12:9-10

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Colossians 3:12-14

Prayerfully consider someone God is prompting you to love well this week. Choose and record one specific way you will actively show your love.

6. Read Romans 13:11-14. Paul urges his readers to be serious about obedience to the Lord. From these verses, what does it mean to “put on the Lord Jesus Christ”?
7. Read Romans 14:1-4. What two directives does Paul give Roman Christians in verse 1?

How does the choice to not quarrel over opinions contribute to unity? Why would this be important to the churches in Rome?

8. Read Romans 14:5-12. Though there are matters of personal conviction in which we differ from one another, what is true of all Christians that outweighs our differences?

Verses 7-8

Verse 11

Verse 12

9. Read Romans 14:13-23. According to verse 13, how do we love brothers and sisters in Christ?

What is a stumbling block, or something that causes others to fall into sin, in your faith journey? Has anyone done or said something that helped you pursue holiness and peace rather than falling down? Please share.

10. Read Romans 14:17-23 again. What does Paul advise to pursue peace and build up one another?

What is one area of your life you will examine carefully before the Lord that may be causing difficulty for Christ followers around you?

11. Write out at personal prayer request in one or two sentences to share with your small group.

Romans 15

April 17-18, 2024

BOUNDLESS GRACE A STUDY OF ROMANS

1. Romans 15 picks up where Romans 14 left off with Paul instructing believers to live together in peace. Begin by reading Romans 15:1-2. Compare and contrast Romans 14:1 with Romans 15:1.

The word “bear” in Romans 15:1 means “to pick up and carry a weight.” In your own words, describe what it means for a believer to carry the burdens of another believer.

2. According to Romans 15:2, what is our purpose for pleasing our neighbor?

What do the following portions of Scripture say about building up others?

Proverbs 27:17

Hebrews 3:13

Hebrews 10:24-25

Make a list of practical ways you can build up others.

3. Read Romans 15:3-13. According to verses 3,7-8, how is Jesus our example for living at peace with others?

Which of these behaviors or actions are hardest for you to do consistently, and why?

4. According to Romans 15:4, how do we benefit from reading Scripture?

Share a time the Scriptures brought hope to a specific situation in your life.

5. In Romans 15:9-12, Paul quotes the Old Testament to reveal God's plan for the Gentiles. According to these verses, what is God's plan for them?

What other truths about this plan are found in Galatians 3:14 and Ephesians 3:6?

6. Continue by reading Romans 15:14-21. Paul was called by God to minister to the Gentiles. What was the main purpose of his ministry?

What reason does Paul give for being proud of his work?

Look at Romans 15:18 along with 1 Corinthians 1:28-31 and describe the attitude of one who boasts in the Lord.

7. According to Romans 15:20-21, with whom was Paul hoping to share the gospel?

What difficulties would Paul have faced when sharing the gospel with the Jews? What difficulties would he have faced with the Gentiles?

What are your greatest challenges when sharing the gospel?

8. Read Romans 15:22-29. In verse 23, what reason does Paul give for finally being able to travel to Rome?

What does Paul know is important about his ministry? Look at Proverbs 16:9.

Recall a time you made careful plans but failed to include God in your planning. What effect did this have on your plans? What effect did your plans have on others?

9. Finish by reading Romans 15:30-33. What is of utmost importance to Paul as he travels and shares the gospel?

What does he ask his brothers and sisters in Christ to include in their prayers for him?

How are you affected by knowing others are praying for you?

Recall a stressful or difficult time when you felt the prayers of fellow believers. How does this encourage you to pray for others?

10. Write out a personal prayer request in one or two sentences to share with your small group.

Romans 16

April 24-25, 2024

BOUNDLESS GRACE A STUDY OF ROMANS

1. Read Romans 16:1-16. List every word or description Paul uses for those in Rome to whom he sends greetings.
2. Why do you think Paul spends so much time sending greetings to various people in the Roman churches?

What is the overall tone of Paul's salutations? What does this tell you about Paul and his relationship to the churches in Rome?

3. Read Romans 16:17-23. What is Paul's final warning to the churches in Rome?

Paul describes deceivers in verse 18. What do they use to lead others astray? Who is it that seems to be most vulnerable to their tactics?

Consider all we have studied in Romans and Paul's original audience. To what divisions and obstacles were the Roman Christians susceptible?

Why do you think Paul gives this warning at the end of his letter?

Reflect on your life and sphere of influence. How does Paul's warning in these verses instruct you as a follower of Christ?

4. In Romans 16:19, what is Paul's encouragement for believers in Rome?

What is his desire for them?

5. As Christians living in a fallen world, evil is not hard to find. What are ways you can guard your own heart and life so that you are "wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil"?
6. Paul reminds Roman Christians of the source of their hope in Romans 16:20. In your own words, explain verse 20. See also Genesis 3:14-15.

How do you imagine this truth would have encouraged Roman Christians living in a culture hostile to their faith?

How do these verses encourage you today?

7. Read Romans 16:25-27. These verses are the final "doxology" of Romans, which is a hymn or verse of praise to God. Record all these verses tell you about God or what He has done.

8. According to Romans 16:25, what are the means by which God strengthens His people?

In your own life, how have you experienced this to be true?

9. In Romans 16:25-26, Paul talks about a mystery once hidden but now revealed. To whom or what do you think he is referring?

To whom has this mystery been revealed?

How did this revelation come about?

What is the result of this revelation?

10. What does Paul ascribe to the Lord alone in Romans 16:27?

11. Take time to look back through your study of Romans and skim your answers. Reflect on and jot down what the Holy Spirit taught you or revealed in your heart. Spend time in prayer confessing, praising, and asking the Lord to continue His work in you.

In 1-2 sentences, write a summary of the book of Romans to share with your group.

12. Write out a personal prayer request in one or two sentences to share with your small group.