

hope



romans
part three

Personal Preparation

Week 1 - Romans 5 - Hope

Day 1 - Read Romans 5:1-11

As it's been a while, it might be good to have a quick read of Romans 3:21-26 to remind yourself of what Paul is talking about when he uses the word 'justification'.

Consider

- What are the series of benefits of justification that Paul outlines in the first two verses?
- Why even in suffering can Christians rejoice and have hope? (vv. 3-8)
- How does Paul connect justification, reconciliation and the Christian life/hope? (vv.9-11)

Reflect

- What do you think it means when Paul says that we will be 'saved through/by his life'? (v.10)
- Do you consider your suffering to be a 'good' thing? Why or why not?

Pray

- Give thanks that through being justified we can have complete assurance before God.
- Pray that we might hold on to this hope in both good times and bad.

Day 2 - Read Romans 5:12:21

In this passage Paul expands on why we can be assured of our standing before God - because we are no longer "in" Adam, but "in" Christ.

Consider

- What are the two "patterns" available to people in this passage? What's the fundamental difference in them?
- How did the authors of these two "patterns" bring them about? (vv.18-20)
- How does grace bring assurance? (v.20-21)

Reflect

- Do you think there is a limit to God's grace?
- Does this affect your assurance of where you stand with God?

Pray

- Give thanks that there is another "pattern" than Adam on offer to us.
- Pray that we might understand God's grace through Jesus Christ in it's fullness.

Week 2 - Romans 6:1-14 - Life in Christ & death to sin

While the last section is the conclusion to Paul's argument about the state of mankind, we have here was been described as one of the greatest "but's" ever. If Paul finished his letter at Romans 3:20, we'd be in trouble. But now we see the heart of God, and His desire for the world. (A note - the words 'righteous', 'righteousness', 'justify' and 'just' are all the same word in the original greek.)

Day 1 - Read Romans 6:1-2

Consider

- What's the reason people might give to keep sinning?
- How might grace increase sin?
- What is Paul's response to this?
- What's the relationship of a Christian to sin?

Reflect

- Does that fact that God graciously forgives make you treat sin less seriously?

Pray

- That we might be clear about our attitude to sin and grace.
- That God would help us begin to understand that Grace shouldn't encourage sin.

Day 2 - Read Romans 6:3-11

Consider

- When people become Christians (Paul's shorthand is baptised), what are they joined to?
- What reason are Christians joined, or united, to that for?
- In which 'direction' do Christians now live?

Reflect

- In these verses, who would you describe as the master Christians are now answerable to?

Pray

- That we might realise we are dead to sin
- That God would help us to live to him

Day 3 - Read Romans 6:12-14

Consider

- What do you think it means for sin to 'reign'?
- What is the alternative to sin's reign?
- What makes someone under grace?

Reflect

- Paul is describing Christian's as having a new master in this section. Do you ever feel like sin is your master and what would Paul say about that?

Pray

- That we would see that we live with grace as our master.
- Ask God to help us serve that master and not sin.

Week 3 - Romans 6:15-23 - Christian slavery is freedom

Day 1 - Read Romans 6:15-16

Consider

- What might happen when the law is gone?
- How does someone know when they are a slave to something?
- What are the two types of slavery here?
- What's the outcome of both?

Reflect

- What do you think it means to 'obey' a sin?
- What do you offer yourself too?

Pray

- That God would make clear what we offer ourselves to.
- That we would seek to offer ourselves to obedience to his son.

Day 2 - Read Romans 6:17-18

Consider

- Why is Paul confident in the Roman Christians?
- What do you think is the 'form of teaching'? (See Rom 1:16-17)
- How does this 'form of teaching' change their slavery?

Reflect

- How can Paul use the words 'set free' and 'slaves' in the same sentence?

Pray

- That we would wholeheartedly obey the 'form of teaching' Paul is talking about.
- Thank God for freedom from slavery to sin in Christ.

Day 3 - Read Romans 6:19-23

Consider

- Does Paul think anyone is free from some kind of slavery?
- What is the 'benefit' of slavery to sin?
- What is the 'benefit' of slavery to God?
- What's the difference between those 'benefits'?(23)

Reflect

- How do you see that people are always in slavery to something?
- What makes God good to be a slave to?

Pray

- Thank God that the gospel is a gift bringing good slavery and eternal life.

Study 1 - Romans 5 - Hope

To start: It's been a while, so outline how Paul can start this section with "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith..". What does it mean it mean to be justified through faith?

Read Romans 5

What are the implications of justification for the Christian life in verses 1-11?

Why does Paul feel he can rejoice in both the good and the bad of life?

What underpins Paul's assurance and hope for his ongoing relationship with God?

Follow Paul's logic from suffering to hope in verses 3-4.

How might verses 12-21 provide a basis for understanding our assurance before God?

What are the two "patterns" or "states" people can live in?

How did these patterns come about?

What role does God's grace play?

From Romans 5, what do you learn about God - his character, his nature, his desire?

What do you learn about God in Jesus?

What do you learn about God in the way he treats his enemies?

What do you learn about God in the way he treats his children?

Bringing it home

Is it arrogant to be so confident of our standing before the creator of the universe, and "boasting" in it as Paul seems to do?

Using the description of the Christian life in chapter 5, what should our normal Christian lives look like in view of our justification by Christ? Does yours?

How does this picture of God, what he has done for the world and what he wants for the world compare with your view of God?

Study 2 - Romans 6:1-14 - Life in Christ & death to sin

To start: 'Grace means everything I do is forgiven. It's not much of a motive to stop sinning.' What do you think about that statement?

Read Romans 6:1-14

How does Paul describe Christian's connection to Christ?
(1-5)

What happened at their baptism?

Why did it happen?

What does it mean for the future?

Why does Paul say sin is no longer master? (6-11)

Who was the old slave master?

Why can't that master kill anymore?

Who are we dead to and alive to?

Why doesn't it makes sense for Christians to serve sin?
(12-14)

What can our bodies be instruments of?

What is the reason to offer yourselves to God?

What's the reason for the new master?

Bringing it home

What makes grace the reason to stop sinning? If we're joined to Christ, then we're under grace. How difficult is it to serve grace rather than sin?

We're challenged to live as though Grace is our master. How does this compare to what you think controls you?

Study 3 - Romans 6:15-23 - Christian slavery is freedom

To Start: What kind of ideas come to your mind when you think about slavery?

Read Romans 6:15-23

How does Paul describe the slavery of Christians?(15-18)

What are the two types of slavery?

How do Christian's enter their slavery?

What does it mean to be 'set free from sin'?

What are the downsides of being slaves to sin? (19-21)

What does impurity and wickedness look like?

Who isn't controlled by righteousness?

What does sin slavery mean now and in the future?

Why is slavery to God freedom? (22-23)

What is the benefit?

How would you describe holiness?

What's the main difference between death and life in v23?

Bringing it home

How do average Aussie's show that they are slaves to something?

By being freed from the control of sin & death, God's people can be truly human. How do you feel about the idea that Christian slavery is true freedom?

How should your identity as a freed slave for righteousness affect your attitude to sin?

