

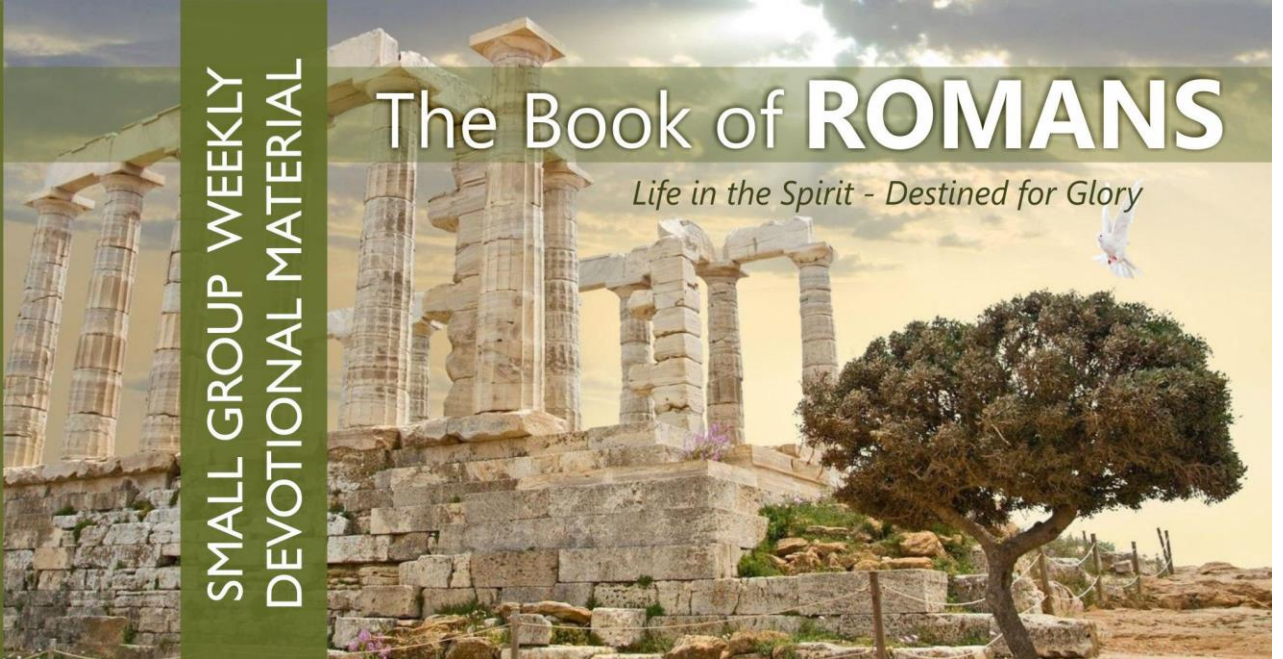


Week 2
26 June - 2 July 2022

**SMALL GROUP WEEKLY
DEVOTIONAL MATERIAL**

The Book of ROMANS

Life in the Spirit - Destined for Glory



CONTENT:

Weekly Sunday Sermon Bible readings, worship song, reflection, small group questions and family time
Daily Bible readings, a memory verse and a prayer for individual contemplation

Coming out of the season of Pentecost which is contextually articulated as the season of the birth of the church. God who calls us to his kingdom and to participate in her mission is aware and has full knowledge that Christians cannot in their own strength and power pursue the work without the assistance of the Spirit. The Spirit is generally understood as the embodied power that enables us to do things we cannot do on our own. Followers of Christ will face many difficulties, challenges, conflicts, and trials. On their own they cannot overcome these without the empowerment of the Spirit. To transcend the inner conflicts, the struggles, weaknesses we need the power of the Spirit to empower us.

Week 2: The purpose of spiritual law is to sharpen our awareness of God and ourselves

The law in itself is not an end, but the means through which we should allow the spirit to lead us into the depth of freedom. The law emphasis being good, but spirit teach us to trust in faith.

Week 3: The Spirit set us free from fleshly desires

The continuous struggle of obeying the law and the spirit at the same time is an ongoing one, we struggle with living in an imperfect world and still do good. Sometimes the desires of the flesh are heavy on us.

Week 4: The Spirit intercedes for us in our weaknesses

It is a common thing in faith journey that weaknesses we possess tend to overpower the strengths we embody, as a result many people live with deep sense of guilt and regrets. Notably, we cannot overcome the struggles caused by our weaknesses on our own but through the capacitation of the spirit.

Week 5: The Spirit bestows upon us gifts for the edification of the kingdom

God bless the community of faith with gifts necessary for her work and the growth of the kingdom, such gifts are not for personal glorification but for God's glory. We ought to embrace each gift of the spirit given to each member of the Christ.

Week 6: Transforming power of the spirit

Communities of faith embody giftings, values, and principles that drive how things are done. Any culture that promotes evil of violence, hatred, racism, injustice and does not permit the community to edify and glorify God deserves transformation.

Week 7: The Spirit enhances churches missional work

The main purpose of the church's existence is to make Christ known to the world and participate in God's mission. Sharing Christ with others, creating work opportunities for others, carrying each other's burden.



Week 2: SUNDAY 26 JUNE



Praise and Worship: No Longer Slaves (Official Lyric Video) - Jonathan David and Melissa Helsers – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f8TkUMJtK5k>

TOPIC OF THE WEEK: THE PURPOSE OF SPIRITUAL LAW IS TO SHARPEN OUR AWARENESS OF GOD AND OURSELVES



Bible Reading:

Romans 7: 7-25

Gospel: Matthew 5: 17-20

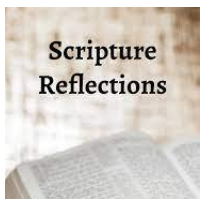
Psalms: Psalm 15:1-5,

Romans 7:7-25

New International Version - UK

The law and sin

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 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 recognised 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] a slave to the law of sin.



WRITTEN BY: THABANG JANUARY

The Apostle Paul says that as a Christian, redeemed by the grace of God, there is now something within him that wants to do good, that agrees with the Law (because the Law describes God's holy nature), that says that the Law is right. There is something within that says what the Law tells me to do is always right, and I want to do it. But also, there is something else in me that rises and says No!

Even though I try not to do what is bad, I suddenly find myself in circumstances where my determination melts away, my resolve is gone, and I end up doing what I had sworn I would not do.

So, what has gone wrong? Paul's explanation is that it is no longer I who do it; it is sin living in me. Isn't that strange? There is a division within our own humanity. There is the part of us that wants to do what God wants, but there is also the sin which dwells in us. Human beings are complicated creatures. We have within us a spirit, a soul, and a body. These are distinct. Paul is suggesting here that the redeemed spirit never wants to do what God has prohibited. It agrees with the Law that it is good. And yet there is an alien power, a force that he calls sin, a great beast that is lying still within us until touched by the commandment of the Law. Then it springs to life, and we do what we do not want to do.

This is what we all struggle with. The cry of the heart at that moment is: What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? (Romans 7:24) Right here you arrive at where the Lord Jesus began the Sermon on the Mount: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:3). Blessed is the man who comes to the end of himself. Blessed is the man who understands his own spiritual bankruptcy. Because this is the point — the only point — where God's help is given.

If we think that we have got something in ourselves that will save us that we can work out our problems ourselves or if we think that our wills are strong enough, that we can control evil in our lives by simply determining to do so, then we have not come to the end of ourselves yet. The Spirit of God simply folds his arms to wait and lets us go ahead and try it ourselves. And we fail, and fail miserably — until, at last, out of our failures, we cry, O wretched man that I am! Sin has deceived us, and the Law, as our friend, has come in and exposed sin for what it is. When we see how wretched it makes us, then we are ready for the answer, which comes immediately in verse 25: Thanks be to God — through Jesus Christ our Lord!

A Message of Hope:

- God's law is not the problem. We are the problem. God's laws are holy and good. We are not.
- God's law is effective. It shows us that we are sinful and there is nothing we can do through the law to rectify our sinfulness. We need deliverance.
- In Christ we have a conflict between the law of God and the law of sin. Before coming to Jesus, we just did what we wanted to do and there was no conflict. But in Christ we become aware of the conflict. We want to serve God, but the flesh with its passions, vices, and addictions is strong. We fall into sin even though we do not want to sin.
- But Jesus can save us from this body of sin and death that condemns us so that there is no condemnation when we are united in Christ.

Shalom



Small Group Questions:

1. Define sin in your own words.
2. According to Paul, in verses 7 & 13; What is the purpose of the Law?
3. Paul talks about his own struggles in verse 18-20, have you had moments where you wanted to do good and what is right but ended up doing the opposite? Elaborate further.
4. In verse 24 & 25, Paul appeals for deliverance, who is his deliverer? And who is our deliverer from the bondage of Sin?

Daily Bible Reading, Memory Verse and Prayer:



Monday,

MEMORY VERSE | John 4:1

Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

PRAYER: Dear Heavenly Father, grant us the spirit of discernment in our time, so that we can test the spirit and only be guided by your Holy Spirit. This we ask in Jesus' name. Amen

Tuesday,

MEMORY VERSE: Psalms 19:7

The law of the LORD is perfect, refreshing the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple.

PRAYER: Our Father in heaven, may you guide us into receiving your perfect law which is refreshing to the soul and your trustworthy statutes that make us wise, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Wednesday,

MEMORY VERSE: Psalms 40:8

I desire to do your will, my God; your law is within my heart.'

PRAYER: Gracious and loving God, create in us the burning desire to do your will every day of our lives, in every way possible. Help us dear Lord to keep your law within our hearts, this we ask in Jesus' name, Amen.

Thursday,

MEMORY VERSE: Joshua 1:7

'Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go.

PRAYER: Wonderful and loving God, you who never leave nor forsake us, guide us into obeying all law you put before us, so that we succeed in everything we do. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Friday,

MEMORY VERSE: Galatians 2:16

Know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified.

PRAYER: Gracious and wonderful God, thank you for what you have done for us through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, and Savior. We are now justified by our faith and not by our works. May we remain in you forever. Amen.

Saturday,

MEMORY VERSE: Titus 3:9

But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the law, because these are unprofitable and useless.

PRAYER: Heavenly Father, please help us avoid conversations and arguments that do not help us grow and may your Holy Spirit guide into the right paths and growth. In Jesus' name, Amen.



It is important for parents to take time to lead the conversations of family time and to be honest with their children in these conversations.

BY JENNY BLAKE – CHILDREN'S PASTOR
jennyb@bmc.org.za

Sunday 26 June

Pray daily: Set up family time for prayer and devotions and stick to this arrangement. All devotions should always begin by with a prayer. Ask a family member to pray or one of the children.

Scripture Reading: Galatians 2:16 ICB *"Yet we know that a person is not made right with God by following the law. No! It is trusting in Jesus Christ that makes a person right with God. So, we too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus, that we might be made right with God. And we are right with God because we trusted in Christ—not because we followed the law. For no one can be made right with God by following the law."*

Activity/Family Moment:

- What comes to mind when you hear the word trust?

We trust in lots of things all day! Like we trust that when we open the fridge there will be food in there that mom and dad have put in. We trust the chair we are sitting on to not break under us. We trust that when we go to school our teacher will teach us something.

- What kind of things can you think of?

Have you ever been at school waiting to be picked up by mom or dad, but they running a bit late, and you don't know where they are? It's a little scary, right? You know why you get scared? It's because the trust you had in your parents to pick you up, has disappeared. Now you are worried IF they will pick you up at all. All of us know in the back of our minds, that our parents will eventually pick us up, but there are moments where the trust you had in them gets a little shaky.

- So, do you trust your parents?

The reason you trust them is because of what they have done for you in the past.

When you were a baby, they kept you alive! They fed you when you couldn't feed yourself. When you tried to play in the road, they stopped you before you got hurt. When you tried to eat bugs, they told you that probably wasn't a good idea.

You trust your parents to take care of you because they have been doing it for a long time, already, right?

This is the same for God. God has been with you every moment of your life! We can follow God and trust God because God won't lead us in the wrong direction and hurt us. God is good and wants good things for you, just like mom and dad.

