

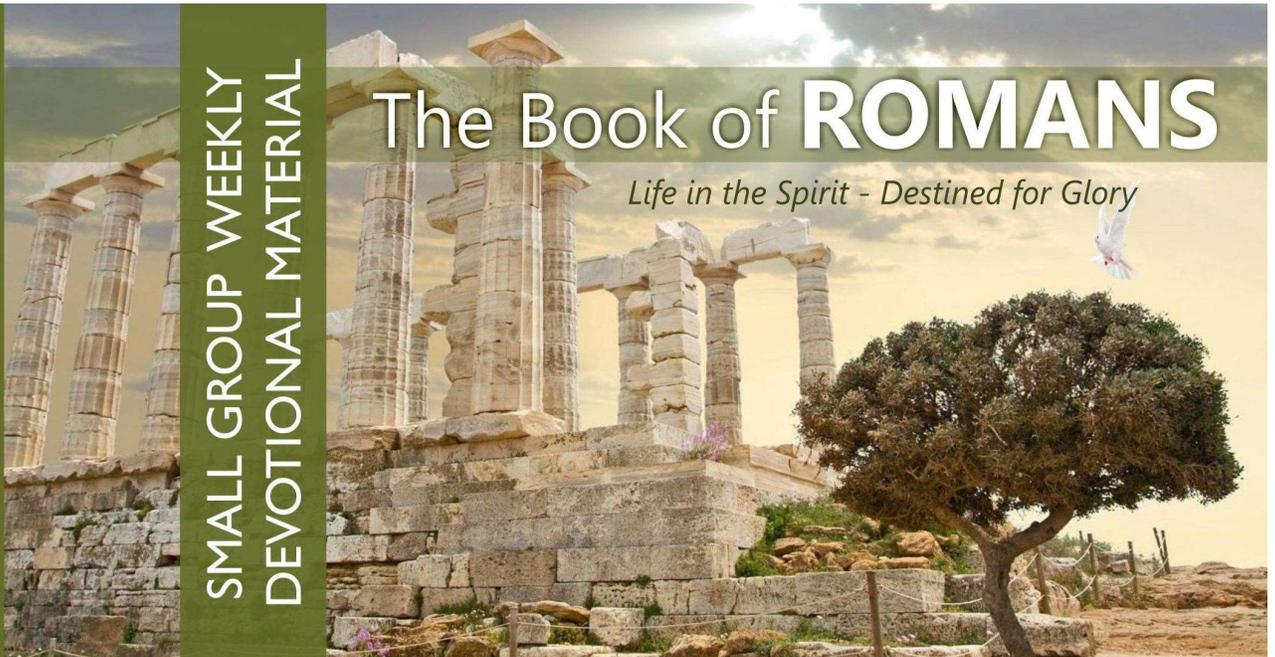


Week 7
31 July - 6 August 2022

**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 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, and carrying each other's burden.

Week 7: SUNDAY 31 JULY



Praise and Worship: See A Victory by Jonathan Traylor
<https://youtu.be/hp8HS7OIWjE>

TOPIC OF THE WEEK: THE SPIRIT ENHANCES CHURCHES MISSIONAL WORK

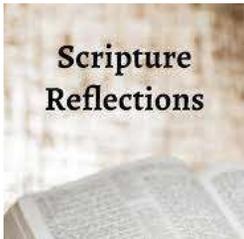


Bible Reading:
Romans 15: 23-33
Gospel: John 16:5-15
Psalms: Psalm 137: 1-9

Romans 15:23-33

New International Version – UK

Paul's plan to visit Rome ²³ But now that there is no more place for me to work in these regions, and since I have been longing for many years to visit you, ²⁴ I plan to do so when I go to Spain. I hope to see you while passing through and that you will assist me on my journey there, after I have enjoyed your company for a while. ²⁵ Now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem in the service of the Lord's people there. ²⁶ For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the Lord's people in Jerusalem. ²⁷ They were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in the Jews' spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings. ²⁸ So after I have completed this task and have made sure that they have received this contribution, I will go to Spain and visit you on the way. ²⁹ I know that when I come to you, I will come in the full measure of the blessing of Christ. ³⁰ I urge you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. ³¹ Pray that I may be kept safe from the unbelievers in Judea and that the contribution I take to Jerusalem may be favourably received by the Lord's people there, ³² so that I may come to you with joy, by God's will, and in your company be refreshed. ³³ The God of peace be with you all. Amen.



WRITTEN BY: KHANYISO NJWABULE

In our everyday life, there are times when we get this strong desire in our hearts to help someone or assist in a worthy cause. We do not know how this help will manifest, as the circumstances we are in do not yet allow us to see. St. Paul in this passage is clear in his heart and mind that the Lord's will is for him to visit the Christians in Rome as he states, "he has been longing for many years to visit" (verse 23) but due to missionary work he was busy with in Corinth at the time (AD 57) he could not visit Rome (Romans 1:13-15). One might say, well since I am not a minister or a preacher or a person holding a leadership position within the church this conundrum St. Paul has does not apply to me, but actually missionary work applies to all the members of the body of Christ. We may have a desire in our hearts to be of assistance in the Kingdom of God in a grand scale, however the circumstances of our lives may not yet allow it. In the meantime, it means we must look closer to home: by reaching to the family member struggling with depression, the neighbor who is struggling with an alcohol addiction and the work colleague who's not coping with a toxic work environment.

We learn in this passage that missionary work requires us to have humility in understanding that we cannot do God's will alone. We therefore need to involve the whole church community in enhancing the Kingdom of God whenever the spirit prompts us to do so. In this instance, St. Paul invites the church in Rome to pray for him as he heads to Jerusalem (in verses 30 & 31) for his missionary work. He knows and has experienced, that the prayer of a community of believers has power. At this stage of his journey he had not met or seen the believers in Rome, but he knew and believed this fact to be true for all believers in Christ. This challenges us to refrain from only requesting prayer intercessions from believers we deem to be worthy in our own human eyes but rather follow the firm belief that John Wesley had of the "Priesthood of all believers". It is in working together, that the will of God comes to manifest on earth, through the spirit, as our different God given gifts gel together beautifully in one accord.

We now know that when St. Paul got to Rome it is where he wrote the four prison epistles (Ephesians, Philippians Colossians and Philemon) that continue to bless us in our walk with God. Rome is also a place where St. Paul was executed by the Roman soldiers (AD 64). He was released from his human body on earth and was fully with the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:6) and the spirit, which had put the prophetic words in his heart to write for us of his victorious death as we see in verse 29b 'I will come in the full measure of the blessing of Christ'. When our Lord gives us a desire to carry out his will, I pray that we may be content in not knowing how His divine plan will play out in our lives, and continue to trust Him in our missionary journeys no matter how small or insignificant we may deem them to be. May we continue to remain humble enough to allow space for God to direct our every step through the power of the spirit for our victory is guaranteed in Christ.

Small Group Questions:

1. Have you had a deep desire in your heart to help someone else or a community that you do not belong in? How did this desire manifest itself?
2. Did you involve other believers? Who in your life would you be able to rely on to assist you?
3. What challenges did you encounter when you involved other believers? What did you learn from them?

Daily Bible Reading, Memory Verse and Prayer:



Monday,

MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 16:18 “And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock, I will build my **church**, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.”

PRAYER: Heavenly father, may you grant us the strength we need to obey your sacred word fully so that we too may become the living rocks that your church is built upon no matter how small those rocks maybe, in Jesus’ name **Amen**.

Tuesday,

MEMORY VERSE: 1 Corinthians 7:17 “Nevertheless, each person should live as a believer in whatever situation the Lord has assigned to them, just as God has called them. This is the rule I lay down in all the churches.”

PRAYER: Loving father, we sometimes find ourselves in difficult life circumstances that perplex us. May you pour your abundant grace on our lives to remain committed and faithful to whatever circumstances we find ourselves in, in Jesus’ name **Amen**.

Wednesday,

MEMORY VERSE: 2 Thessalonians 1:4 “Therefore, among God’s churches we boast about your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring.”

PRAYER: Wonderful father, may we remember that when we are under the persecutions and trials of life you are rooting for us and empowering us to endure, for there is always a sacred reward at the end of them, in Jesus’ name **Amen**.

Thursday,

MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 28:16-20 “**The great commission** ¹⁶ Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.’”

PRAYER: Heavenly father, may you grant me the faith I need to trust you fully by following the promptings of the holy spirit when you instruct me to do your will on earth, in Jesus’ name. **Amen**

Friday,

MEMORY VERSE: Proverbs 15:8 “The LORD detests the sacrifice of the wicked, but the prayer of the upright pleases him.”

PRAYER: Gracious father, may you search our hearts and remove any wickedness that is in us so that we may come to you with confidence in earnest prayers that please you, in Jesus’ name. **Amen**

Saturday,

MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 21:22 “If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.”

PRAYER: Heavenly father, we want to believe in your ways and will fully, but within our deepest parts of our soul we have some unbelief. Father, may you help us with aspects of our faith where there is still unbelief because nothing is impossible to you and those who believe fully in you are full of testimony of your good works in their lives, 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 31 July

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: : [Matthew 16:18](#)

Activity/Family Moment

Play:

You can use this video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QBhiBMb8KwM>

Try figure out what the picture is before it comes to full size

Or

“Guess Who?” It’s always a classic game...make your own version with note cards and Bible characters!

Discussion:

- Who is Jesus? Come up with a list of as many describing words for Jesus as you can think of and write them down on a large sheet of paper.

Read Matthew 16:13-15.

As a family answer verse 15 “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”

- If we want to really know Jesus, we need to have a relationship with him. DO you have a relationship with Jesus?
- When we get to know Jesus, we build our trust with him, can you trust someone you don’t know?
- Jesus wants you to be bold and curious and ask him questions, Jesus wants you to be real with him.
- If you have not yet asked Jesus to be in your life, why not take the time to invite Him now. If you, have you can tell you family about it. Do you have a significant or special memory that you would like to share?