

Cultivate Reflection Guide

When in Rome: Why We Need Romans January 2/3, 2021

If you missed this weekend's messages, watch at cultivate.sc/discussion

NEW series: Following God in a culture that doesn't is easier said than done. The book of Romans is full of foundational gospel truth that will teach us how our faith can influence the world around us, instead of letting others tell us what to believe – especially in the places where Christianity and culture collide.

Use our Weekly Reflection Guide, in community or through personal study, to live out what we're learning on the weekends. *It's not about getting through the content, but getting the content through you.* Choose the questions that are meaningful to you, then be REAL with self, God or others as you reflect, respond and pray.

The Good News: The gospel is the good news that we are saved by grace through faith in Jesus alone. That promise means we are accepted into God's family now and forever. It's that simple and yet we so easily forget how meaningful and valuable that truth is.

²God promised this Good News long ago through his prophets in the holy Scriptures. ³The Good News is about his Son...⁴He is Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 2-3, 4b NLT

- What does the gospel mean to you? You don't need to give a deep, theological answer. Simply pause and ponder what the good news means to you as a child of God.

We need Romans because we need the gospel that says:

1. You have nothing to prove: It's good to pursue personal goals, but the motive that drives self-awareness and self-improvement is different than the voice that convinces us we need to prove we're enough. To truly grow whole and healthy, we need to believe that our identity in Jesus – who He says we are – is enough.

"You are who you are through this gift and call of Jesus Christ!" Romans 1:6 MSG

²³God, I invite your searching gaze into my heart. Examine me through and through; find out everything that may be hidden within me. Put me to the test and sift through all my anxious cares. ²⁴See if there is any path of pain I'm walking on, and lead me back to your glorious, everlasting ways." Psalm 139:23-24 MSG

- Is there anything you've been trying to prove – to yourself, to God or to others? Why is that?
- Pray Psalm 139:23-24 back to God, inviting Him to show you any lies you need to surrender so that you can embrace the truth that you are who Jesus says you are.
- Mark this day and make note of that exchange – lies for truth. Walk forward today purposing to believe that the first step to becoming your best self is accepting that in Jesus, you are enough.

2. The promises of God are reliable: We're living in a culture where promises are easily made and broken. We've grown skeptical and doubtful – even of God. We can't say we believe God's promises, then try to control how and when He delivers them. We need to trust God.

"Such things were written in the Scriptures long ago to teach us. And the Scriptures give us hope and encouragement as we wait patiently for God's promises to be fulfilled." Romans 15:4 NLT

⁵Trust God from the bottom of your heart; don't try to figure out everything on your own. ⁶Listen for God's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; he's the one who will keep you on track." Proverbs 3:5-6 MSG

- How do you want to grow in your reliance on and trust in God this year?
- What is a first step of faith you can take to practice that – with your words, choices, actions or habits?

3. God's love is free and His grace is endless: We are loved by God even when we are at our worst. In response to that unconditional love and endless grace, we should be compelled to follow and obey Him without fear.

- How does this truth encourage your faith?
- How does this truth challenge your obedience?