

Renew

How the Gospel Changes Us from the Inside Out



Community Group Study Guide
March – April 2010
Romans, Chapters 15--16

Holy Trinity Church, Chicago
Downtown and North Side Congregations

Romans 15:8-13

Week of March 8th

Community Group calendar: **Study**

Texts: **Romans 15:8-13**

Ways in which you will interact with these texts:

- Personal study (we recommend three separate readings)
- Listen to sermon preached on March 7th
- Group discussion during week of March 8th

Romans 15:8-13 *English Standard Version (ESV)*

Christ the Hope of Jews and Gentiles

⁸ For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, ⁹ and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles,
and sing to your name.”

¹⁰ And again it is said,

“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people.”

¹¹ And again,

“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,
and let all the peoples extol him.”

¹² And again Isaiah says,

“The root of Jesse will come,
even he who arises to rule the Gentiles;
in him will the Gentiles hope.”

¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

First Reading – *What does this passage tell you about God?*

1. In this passage, Paul again reflects upon God's salvation plan throughout history, as he does elsewhere in Romans. Why does Paul consider God so praiseworthy here in his salvation plan?

2. List God's activities in this passage.

 3. How do the promises of God's plan help us abound in hope (v.13)?
- Write out any prayer requests that come to mind as you read this text and interact with these questions.

Second Reading – *What does this passage tell you about yourself?*

1. Which of the two people groups listed in this passage do you identify with? Can you trace the connection between God's larger plan of initially working through Israel, and then how the Gospel subsequently came to all peoples, including to you?

 2. How is your "joy and peace" (15:13)? How might the power of the Holy Spirit bring hope you're your life right now? Explain your answers.
- Write out any prayer requests that come to mind as you read this text and interact with these questions.

Third Reading – *What does this passage tell you about how you should live?*

1. What are appropriate/expected responses to God from this passage?

2. How could you better practice the exhortations in this passage?

3. How does this passage help you see your faith corporately, and across races? Explain your answer.

4. Explain how this passage should affect the following aspects of your life in Chicago: (i) Sharing the Gospel, (ii) Engagement with the City, and (iii) Your cultural lenses?
 - Write out any prayer requests that come to mind as you read this text and interact with these questions.

Summarize the passage:

What is the **theme** of the passage (i.e., a sentence that captures the timeless essence of the passage)?

What is the **aim** of the passage (i.e., how should you respond to this passage in thought and behavior)?

Romans 15:14-33

Week of March 15th

Community Group calendar: **Study**

Texts: **Romans 15:14-44**

Ways in which you will interact with these texts:

- Personal study (we recommend three separate readings)
- Listen to sermon preached on March 14th
- Group discussion during week of March 15th

Romans 15:14-33 *English Standard Version (ESV)*

Paul the Minister to the Gentiles

¹⁴ I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another. ¹⁵ But on some points I have written to you very boldly by way of reminder, because of the grace given me by God ¹⁶ to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. ¹⁷ In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to be proud of my work for God. ¹⁸ For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed, ¹⁹ by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ; ²⁰ and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else’s foundation, ²¹ but as it is written,

“Those who have never been told of him will see,
and those who have never heard will understand.”

Paul’s Plan to Visit Rome

²² This is the reason why I have so often been hindered from coming to you. ²³ But now, since I no longer have any room for work in these regions, and since I have longed for many years to come to you, ²⁴ I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain, and to be helped on my journey there by you, once I have enjoyed your company for a while. ²⁵ At present, however, I am going to Jerusalem bringing aid to the saints. ²⁶ For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem. ²⁷ For they were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material blessings. ²⁸ When therefore I have completed this and have delivered to them what has been collected, I will leave for Spain by way of you. ²⁹ I know that when I come to you I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.

³⁰ I appeal to you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf, ³¹ that I may be delivered from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, ³² so that by God’s will I may come to you with joy and be refreshed in your company. ³³ May the God of

peace be with you all. Amen.

First Reading – *What does this passage tell you about God?*

1. List out the references in this passage to the Trinitarian God (that God is one, but three persons - Father, Son and Holy Spirit).
 2. How is God at work in spreading the Gospel from this passage?
- Write out any prayer requests that come to mind as you read this text and interact with these questions.

Second Reading – *What does this passage tell you about yourself?*

1. In verse 14, Paul agrees that the church is “able to instruct one another.” The word infers in context practical living in the Gospel. How might you “instruct” others in this community of faith?
 2. We can have a tendency to accomplish God’s mission in our own strength. How might we learn here from Paul’s reliance upon God’s power for his mission?
- Write out any prayer requests that come to mind as you read this text and interact with these questions.

Third Reading – *What does this passage tell you about how you should live?*

1. Paul mentions the means through which he has ministered Christ to others – “by word and deed” (14:18). How can you better minister Christ to others by these same means?

 2. Paul displays great concern for bringing the Gospel to those in other places. Reflect on your own life and consider some ways in which you could better live out such a concern for the spread of the Gospel. From the passage, how does Paul develop his ability to have such a concern, and to be able to follow through in spreading the Gospel?
-
- Write out any prayer requests that come to mind as you read this text and interact with these questions.

Summarize the passage:

What is the **theme** of the passage (i.e., a sentence that captures the timeless essence of the passage)?

What is the **aim** of the passage (i.e., how should you respond to this passage in thought and behavior)?

Romans 16

Week of March 22nd

Community Group calendar: **Study**

Texts: **Romans 16**

Ways in which you will interact with these texts:

- Personal study (we recommend three separate readings)
- Listen to sermon preached on March 21st
- Group discussion during week of March 22nd

Romans 16 *English Standard Version (ESV)*

Personal Greetings

16 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchreae, ² that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well.

³ Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, ⁴ who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well. ⁵ Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia. ⁶ Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you. ⁷ Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me. ⁸ Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. ⁹ Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys. ¹⁰ Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus. ¹¹ Greet my kinsman Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus. ¹² Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord. ¹³ Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well. ¹⁴ Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers who are with them. ¹⁵ Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them. ¹⁶ Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

Final Instructions and Greetings

¹⁷ I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. ¹⁸ For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive. ¹⁹ For your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil. ²⁰ The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

²¹ Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you; so do Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen.

²² I Tertius, who wrote this letter, greet you in the Lord.

²³ Gaius, who is host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer, and our brother Quartus, greet you.

Doxology

²⁵ Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶ but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— ²⁷ to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

First Reading – *What does this passage tell you about God?*

1. As we've approached the epilogue of this great theological letter, what does Paul's list of names say about one of the ways God works?
 2. List God's activities from this passage.
- Write out any prayer requests that come to mind as you read this text and interact with these questions.

Second Reading – *What does this passage tell you about yourself?*

1. Reflecting on our months in Romans, what have you learned about yourself? Cite specific passages in Romans.
 2. How has our time in Romans informed/encouraged/challenged you on your own "obedience of faith" (16:26). Where and how you can find the power to be characterized as a person who has this "obedience of faith"? Explain your answers with references to passages in Romans.
- Write out any prayer requests that come to mind as you read this text and interact with these questions.

Third Reading – *What does this passage tell you about how you should live?*

1. Reflect on your involvement with HTC and any prior churches you have been a part of. Could you write a similar letter as Paul writes in 16:1-16 substituting for the people that you have been in church with? What would it take to write a letter more like Paul's one year from now?

 2. What does the closing chapter of Romans tell you about how you should live in light of the grand theological nature of the letter? Explain your answer.
-
- Write out any prayer requests that come to mind as you read this text and interact with these questions.

Summarize the passage:

What is the **theme** of the passage (i.e., a sentence that captures the timeless essence of the passage)?

What is the **aim** of the passage (i.e., how should you respond to this passage in thought and behavior)?