

WHAT'S INSIDE...

AN INTRODUCTION

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HOW DO WE GET STARTED?

A great place to start is on the cover! Take off the dust jacket, open it out and make it your own by colouring and doodling all over the front of it.

You should use whiteboard pens or washable felt-tips if you want to wipe off your designs and start again, or use a permanent pen if you want your design to stay there. (You can also draw your own permanent artwork on the hard cover of the Bible if that rocks your boat!)

Maybe you'd like to put the names of your family on the cover somewhere, or write down some things you know about God. As you colour and doodle, you might like to chat about what each of you thinks about the Bible. What do you know about it? What are your favourite or least favourite bits?

YOUR VERY OWN WHITEBOARD!

You'll notice that the inside of the dust jacket is blank. That's so you can use it in any way you like, as you get involved with the interactions provided inside this Bible. Open the jacket out, gather round it, grab some wipeable pens and doodle, draw or write about the things you discuss, questions you want to ask, prayers you want to pray, or anything else that helps you make the most of exploring the Bible together. As long as you don't use permanent pens, the jacket can be wiped and reused, over and over and over and over.

ON PAGES 17-22, YOU'LL FIND A NUMBER OF SUGGESTED JOURNEYS THAT YOU COULD TAKE IN READING THE BIBLE.

But before you delve into one of them, why not have a go at filling in the next page as a family...?

OUR FAMILY

OUR FAMILY SUMMED UP IN ONE SENTENCE:

FAMILY PORTRAIT:

OUR FAVOURITE THINGS TO DO ARE:

IMPORTANT PEOPLE IN OUR LIVES:

TIMELINE OF OUR LIFE TOGETHER AS A FAMILY SO FAR:



HOW DO WE USE THIS BIBLE?

Every family is different, in all sorts of weird and wonderful ways! This means that the way your family interacts with the Bible will be very different from another family's way. There is no 'right way' to read the Bible.

This Bible is designed for people of all ages to gather around and read together. That's why the pages aren't the usual way round! One person can be reading while someone on the other side is colouring the opposite page.

You'll find throughout the Bible that there are lots of ways to interact with what you are reading. Because everyone is different, we've created five different types of interactions:



THINK:

ways to reflect quietly on what you've read



CHAT:

ideas and questions to talk through together



DO:

suggestions for activities and active responses



CREATE:

things to colour, draw or make



WATCH:

links to videos to view together

For a complete list of all of the interactions in each of these categories, head to the indexes at the back. This is a quick way to navigate to your favourite type of interaction.

As you make your way through the Bible as a family, you could choose one reader, or perhaps take turns to read a couple of verses each. Maybe someone in your family might like to draw or doodle as questions are explored, or you might all like to dance around the room as you pray.

You could pick names out of a hat to decide who reads the interactions out. It might be fun to use your favourite toys or craft materials to retell a Bible story.

How about answering some of these questions as you read:

- What does this passage tell us about God?
- What does it ask us to change in our lives?
- Which words really stand out?

Whatever you do and however you do it, the important thing is that you open the Bible up and get exploring - together.

FAMILY BIBLE JOURNEY: HIDDEN HEROES

There's a whole load of amazing people in the Bible who did incredible things in the name of God. Some of these people are really well known, like Moses, Noah or Jesus' mother, Mary. Others, however, are a little less well known but still lived in extraordinary and awe-inspiring ways.

Go on a journey of discovery together to uncover a few of these hidden heroes and heroines of the Bible... Why not tick or colour the circles to track what you've read?

JOSIAH:

KING AT THE AGE OF 8
(2 Chronicles 34.1-3
and 29-33)



RUTH:

LOYAL FRIEND
(Ruth 1.16-17)



MARY MAGDALENE:

FIRST TO SEE THE
RESURRECTED JESUS
(John 20.14-18)



TABITHA:

(ALSO CALLED DORCAS):
ALWAYS DID GOOD AND
HELPED THE POOR
(Acts 9.36-42)



BEZALEL:

GIFTED BY GOD AS
A CRAFTSMAN
(Exodus 31.1-5 and 37.1-9)



BARNABAS:

SPOKE UP FOR PEOPLE WHO
NEEDED SUPPORT
(Acts 9.26-28 and 15.36-39)



MORDECAI:

HELPED ESTHER TO SAVE
THE JEWS FROM DEATH
(Esther 4)



CALEB:

'WE CAN DO IT'
(Numbers 13.25-30)



HANNAH:

DEDICATED HER
SON, SAMUEL, TO
SERVE THE LORD
(1 Samuel 1.22-28)



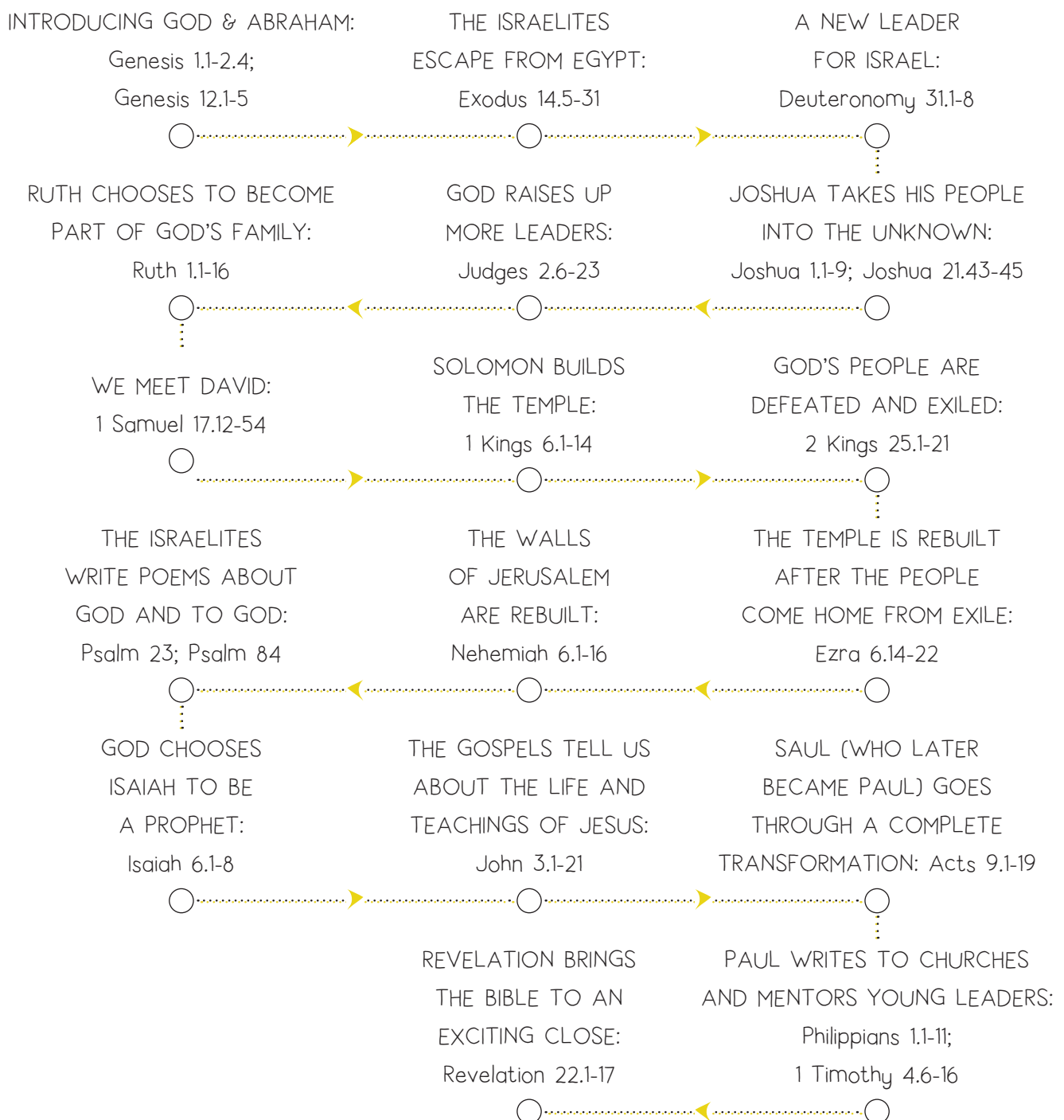
JOCHEBED:

THE MOTHER OF MOSES
(Exodus 2.1-10 and
Numbers 26.59)



FAMILY BIBLE JOURNEY: MILE MARKERS

There are some hugely important, life-changing moments in the story that spans the Bible, and discovering these moments can help us understand what the whole story is all about. So we've highlighted 'mile markers' on the introduction pages to make these special moments easier to follow. Use this guide to go through some of these markers as a family.



THE LETTER TO THE ROMANS

WRITTEN: AROUND AD55-58

Romans is an amazing letter that gives some really detailed explanations of what it means to be a follower of Jesus. Chapter 8 is an exciting part, about how the Spirit of God changes us to live like Jesus - and Paul uses the idea of family to explain what he means. He says that if we are 'led by God's Spirit' and 'live in union with Christ Jesus', we are God's children, with all the rights and privileges of his sons and daughters. We are able to call out to God as our Father, and we can also know Jesus as our eldest brother. Because we are in God's own family, we can never be separated from his love. Every day, we can celebrate the fact that we are his children!



Paul wrote to lots of churches, including the one in Rome.

PAUL CONVERTED
AD30

PAUL WRITES ROMANS
AD53-57

PAUL UNDER ARREST IN ROME
AD62

DRAW SOMETHING ...





CHECK IT OUT:

Rome was the centre of the Roman world and home to Emperor Nero, the most powerful leader of the time. Rome was rich and multicultural, but Christians were not popular there, so it was a dangerous place for the church to be. Paul wrote this letter to the Christians in Rome just before he visited them.



KEY VERSE:

There is nothing in all creation that will ever be able to separate us from the love of God which is ours through Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8.39



FAMILY BLESSING:

Father God, help us to live in the knowledge that we are your children, completely and utterly loved. May we treat others in our family with the respect they deserve as your children too. Amen



BIG QUESTION:

What difference does it make to us, knowing that we are God's children, with God as our father and Jesus as our big brother?

1 From Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus and an apostle chosen and called by God to preach his Good News. ²The Good News was promised long ago by God through his prophets, as written in the Holy Scriptures. ³It is about his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ: as to his humanity, he was born a descendant of David; ⁴as to his divine holiness, he was shown with great power to be the Son of God by being raised from death. ⁵Through him God gave me the privilege of being an apostle for the sake of Christ, in order to lead people of all nations to believe and obey. ⁶This also includes you who are in Rome, whom God has called to belong to Jesus Christ. ⁷And so I write to all of you in Rome whom God loves and has called to be his own people: May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

⁸First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because the whole world is hearing about your faith. ⁹God is my witness that what I say is true — the God whom I serve with all my heart by preaching the Good News about his Son. God knows that I remember you ¹⁰every time I pray. I ask that God in his good will may at last make it possible for me to visit you now. ¹¹For I want very much to see you, in order to share a spiritual blessing with you to make you strong. ¹²What I mean is that both you and I will be helped at the same time, you by my faith and I by yours.

¹³You must remember, my brothers and sisters, that many times I have planned to visit you, but something has always kept me from doing so. I want to win converts among you also, as I have among other Gentiles. ¹⁴For I have an obligation to all peoples, to the civilized and to the savage, to the educated and to the ignorant. ¹⁵So then, I am eager to preach the Good News to you also who live in Rome.

The Power of the Gospel

¹⁶I have complete confidence in the gospel; it is God's power to save all who believe, first the Jews and also the

Gentiles. ¹⁷For the gospel reveals how God puts people right with himself: it is through faith from beginning to end. As the scripture says, "The person who is put right with God through faith shall live."

The Guilt of the Human Race

¹⁸God's anger is revealed from heaven against all the sin and evil of the people whose evil ways prevent the truth from being known. ¹⁹God punishes them, because what can be known about God is plain to them, for God himself made it plain. ²⁰Ever since God created the world, his invisible qualities, both his eternal power and his divine nature, have been clearly seen; they are perceived in the things that God has made. So those people have no excuse at all! ²¹They know God, but they do not give him the honour that belongs to him, nor do they thank him. Instead, their thoughts have become complete nonsense, and their empty minds are filled with darkness. ²²They say they are wise, but they are fools; ²³instead of worshipping the immortal God, they worship images made to look like mortal human beings or birds or animals or reptiles.

²⁴And so God has given those people over to do the filthy things their hearts desire, and they do shameful things with each other. ²⁵They exchange the truth about God for a lie; they worship and serve what God has created instead of the Creator himself, who is to be praised for ever! Amen.

²⁶Because they do this, God has given them over to shameful passions. Even the women pervert the natural use of their sex by unnatural acts. ²⁷In the same way the men give up natural sexual relations with women and burn with passion for each other. Men do shameful things with each other, and as a result they bring upon themselves the punishment they deserve for their wrongdoing.

²⁸Because those people refuse to keep in mind the true knowledge about God, he has given them over to corrupted minds, so that they do the things that they should not do. ²⁹They are filled with all kinds of wickedness, evil, greed, and vice; they are full of jealousy, murder,



Romans 1:20-21

**TALK TOGETHER
ABOUT ALL THE
AMAZING THINGS
THAT GOD HAS MADE
IN HIS CREATION.**

How can these visible things show us what the invisible God is like? Share your ideas with each other.



fighting, deceit, and malice. They gossip ³⁰and speak evil of one another; they are hateful to God, insolent, proud, and boastful; they think of more ways to do evil; they disobey their parents; ³¹they have no conscience; they do not keep their promises, and they show no kindness or pity for others. ³²They know that God's law says that people who live in this way deserve death. Yet, not only do they continue to do these very things, but they even approve of others who do them.

God's Judgement

2 Do you, my friend, pass judgement on others? You have no excuse at all, whoever you are. For when you judge others and then do the same things which they do, you condemn yourself. ²We know that God is right when he judges the people who do such things as these. ³But you, my friend, do those very things for which you pass judgement on others! Do you think you will escape God's judgement? ⁴Or perhaps you despise his great kindness, tolerance, and patience. Surely you know that God is kind, because he is trying to lead you to repent. ⁵But you have a hard and stubborn heart, and so you are making your own punishment even greater on the Day when God's anger and righteous judgements will be revealed. ⁶For God will reward every person according to what each has done. ⁷Some people keep on doing good, and seek glory, honour, and immortal life; to them God will give eternal life. ⁸Other people are selfish and reject what is right, in order to follow what is wrong; on them God will pour out his anger and fury. ⁹There will be suffering and pain for all those who do what is evil, for the Jews first and also for the Gentiles. ¹⁰But God will give glory, honour, and peace to all who do what is good, to the Jews first and also to the Gentiles. ¹¹For God judges everyone by the same standard. ¹²The Gentiles do not have the Law of Moses; they sin and are lost apart from the Law. The Jews have the Law; they sin and are judged by the Law. ¹³For it is not by hearing the Law that people are put right with God, but by doing what the Law commands. ¹⁴The Gentiles

do not have the Law; but whenever they do by instinct what the Law commands, they are their own law, even though they do not have the Law. ¹⁵Their conduct shows that what the Law commands is written in their hearts. Their consciences also show that this is true, since their thoughts sometimes accuse them and sometimes defend them. ¹⁶And so, according to the Good News I preach, this is how it will be on that Day when God through Jesus Christ will judge the secret thoughts of all.

The Jews and the Law

¹⁷What about you? You call yourself a Jew; you depend on the Law and boast about God; ¹⁸you know what God wants you to do, and you have learnt from the Law to choose what is right; ¹⁹you are sure that you are a guide for the blind, a light for those who are in darkness, ²⁰an instructor for the foolish, and a teacher for the ignorant. You are certain that in the Law you have the full content of knowledge and of truth. ²¹You teach others — why don't you teach yourself? You preach, "Do not steal" — but do you yourself steal? ²²You say, "Do not commit adultery" — but do you commit adultery? You detest idols — but do you rob temples? ²³You boast about having God's law — but do you bring shame on God by breaking his law? ²⁴The scripture says, "Because of you Jews, the Gentiles speak evil of God."

²⁵If you obey the Law, your circumcision is of value; but if you disobey the Law, you might as well never have been circumcised. ²⁶If the Gentile, who is not circumcised, obeys the commands of the Law, will God not regard him as though he were circumcised? ²⁷And so you Jews will be condemned by the Gentiles because you break the Law, even though you have it written down and are circumcised; but they obey the Law, even though they are not physically circumcised. ²⁸After all, who is a real Jew, truly circumcised? It is not the man who is a Jew on the outside, whose circumcision is a physical thing. ²⁹Rather, the real Jew is the person who is a Jew on the inside, that is, whose heart has been circumcised, and this is the work

of God's Spirit, not of the written Law. Such a person receives praise from God, not from human beings.

3 Or is there any value in being circumcised? ² Much, indeed, in every way! In the first place, God trusted his message to the Jews. ³ But what if some of them were not faithful? Does this mean that God will not be faithful? ⁴ Certainly not! God must be true, even though every human being is a liar. As the scripture says,

"You must be shown to be right when you speak; you must win your case when you are being tried."

⁵ But what if our doing wrong serves to show up more clearly God's doing right? Can we say that God does wrong when he punishes us? (This would be the natural question to ask.) ⁶ By no means! If God is not just, how can he judge the world?

⁷ But what if my untruth serves God's glory by making his truth stand out more clearly? Why should I still be condemned as a sinner? ⁸ Why not say, then, "Let us do evil so that good may come"? Some people, indeed, have insulted me by accusing me of saying this very thing! They will be condemned, as they should be.

No one is Righteous

⁹ Well then, are we Jews in any better condition than the Gentiles? Not at all! I have already shown that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under the power of sin. ¹⁰ As the Scriptures say:

¹¹ "There is no one who is righteous,
no one who is wise
or who worships God.

¹² All have turned away from God;
they have all gone wrong;

¹³ no one does what is right, not even one.
Their words are full of deadly deceit;
wicked lies roll off their tongues,
and dangerous threats, like snake's poison, from
their lips;

¹⁴ their speech is filled with bitter curses.

¹⁵ They are quick to hurt and kill;

¹⁶ they leave ruin and destruction wherever they go.

¹⁷ They have not known the path of peace,

¹⁸ nor have they learnt reverence for God."

¹⁹ Now we know that everything in the Law applies to those who live under the Law, in order to stop all human excuses and bring the whole world under God's judgment. ²⁰ For no one is put right in God's sight by doing what the Law requires; what the Law does is to make people know that they have sinned.

How We are Put Right with God

²¹ But now God's way of putting people right with himself has been revealed. It has nothing to do with law, even though the Law of Moses and the prophets gave their witness to it. ²² God puts people right through their faith in Jesus Christ. God does this to all who believe in Christ, because there is no difference at all: ²³ everyone has sinned and is far away from God's saving presence. ²⁴ But by the free gift of God's grace all are put right with him through Christ Jesus, who sets them free. ²⁵⁻²⁶ God offered him, so that by his blood he should become the means by which people's sins are forgiven through their faith in him. God did this in order to demonstrate that he is righteous. In the past he was patient and overlooked people's sins; but in the present time he deals with their sins, in order to demonstrate his righteousness. In this way God shows that he himself is righteous and that he puts right everyone who believes in Jesus.

²⁷ What, then, can we boast about? Nothing! And what is the reason for this? Is it that we obey the Law? No, but that we believe. ²⁸ For we conclude that a person is put right with God only through faith, and not by doing what the Law commands. ²⁹ Or is God the God of the Jews only? Is he not the God of the Gentiles also? Of course he is. ³⁰ God is one, and he will put the Jews right with himself on the basis of their faith, and will put the Gentiles right through their faith. ³¹ Does this mean that by this faith we do away with the Law? No, not at all; instead, we uphold the Law.



Romans 3:22-24

Make a pass-the-parcel present.

First wrap up something you can share together that you will all enjoy. Then put a forfeit inside each of the next layers. As you are making the parcel, chat about the things you find yourselves doing to try to impress God. Read verse 24 to remind each other that no one can be saved by anything they can do, only by God's free gift of GRACE. Use your wrapped-up present to play a game of pass-the-parcel and enjoy the treat in the middle.



The Example of Abraham

4 What shall we say, then, of Abraham, the father of our race? What was his experience? ²If he was put right with God by the things he did, he would have something to boast about — but not in God's sight. ³The scripture says, "Abraham believed God, and because of his faith God accepted him as righteous." ⁴Those who work are paid wages, but they are not regarded as a gift; they are something that has been earned. ⁵But those who depend on faith, not on deeds, and who believe in the God who declares the guilty to be innocent, it is this faith that God takes into account in order to put them right with himself. ⁶This is what David meant when he spoke of the happiness of the person whom God accepts as righteous, apart from anything that person does:

⁷"Happy are those whose wrongs are forgiven, whose sins are pardoned!

⁸Happy is the person whose sins the Lord will not keep account of!"

⁹Does this happiness that David spoke of belong only to those who are circumcised? No indeed! It belongs also to those who are not circumcised. For we have quoted the scripture, "Abraham believed God, and because of his faith God accepted him as righteous." ¹⁰When did this take place? Was it before or after Abraham was circumcised? It was before, not after. ¹¹He was circumcised later, and his circumcision was a sign to show that because of his faith God had accepted him as righteous before he had been circumcised. And so Abraham is the spiritual father of all who believe in God and are accepted as righteous by him, even though they are not circumcised. ¹²He is also the father of those who are circumcised, that is, of those who, in addition to being circumcised, also live the same life of faith that our father Abraham lived before he was circumcised.

God's Promise is Received through Faith

¹³When God promised Abraham and his descendants that the world would belong to him, he did so, not because Abraham obeyed the Law, but because he believed and

was accepted as righteous by God. ¹⁴For if what God promises is to be given to those who obey the Law, then faith means nothing and God's promise is worthless. ¹⁵The Law brings down God's anger; but where there is no law, there is no disobeying of the law.

¹⁶And so the promise was based on faith, in order that the promise should be guaranteed as God's free gift to all of Abraham's descendants — not just to those who obey the Law, but also to those who believe as Abraham did. For Abraham is the spiritual father of us all; ¹⁷as the scripture says, "I have made you father of many nations." So the promise is good in the sight of God, in whom Abraham believed — the God who brings the dead to life and whose command brings into being what did not exist. ¹⁸Abraham believed and hoped, even when there was no reason for hoping, and so became "the father of many nations." Just as the scripture says, "Your descendants will be as many as the stars." ¹⁹He was then almost 100 years old; but his faith did not weaken when he thought of his body, which was already practically dead, or of the fact that Sarah could not have children. ²⁰His faith did not leave him, and he did not doubt God's promise; his faith filled him with power, and he gave praise to God. ²¹He was absolutely sure that God would be able to do what he had promised. ²²That is why Abraham, through faith, "was accepted as righteous by God". ²³The words "he was accepted as righteous" were not written for him alone. ²⁴They were written also for us who are to be accepted as righteous, who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from death. ²⁵Because of our sins he was handed over to die, and he was raised to life in order to put us right with God.

Right with God

5 Now that we have been put right with God through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ²He has brought us by faith into this experience of God's grace, in which we now live. And so we boast of the hope we have of sharing God's glory! ³We also boast



Romans 5:12-21

Here Paul is explaining the link between Adam and Jesus.

'Adam was a figure of the one who was to come. But the two are not the same.'

In the two outlines on the next

page, write words from this passage that relate to each one - Adam and

Jesus - so you can see the major differences.

of our troubles, because we know that trouble produces endurance.⁴ Endurance brings God's approval, and his approval creates hope.⁵ This hope does not disappoint us, for God has poured out his love into our hearts by means of the Holy Spirit, who is God's gift to us.

⁶For when we were still helpless, Christ died for the wicked at the time that God chose.⁷ It is a difficult thing for someone to die for a righteous person. It may even be that someone might dare to die for a good person.

⁸But God has shown us how much he loves us — it was while we were still sinners that Christ died for us!⁹ By his blood we are now put right with God; how much more, then, will we be saved by him from God's anger!¹⁰ We were God's enemies, but he made us his friends through the death of his Son. Now that we are God's friends, how much more will we be saved by Christ's life!¹¹ But that is not all; we rejoice because of what God has done through our Lord Jesus Christ, who has now made us God's friends.

Adam and Christ

¹²Sin came into the world through one man, and his sin brought death with it. As a result, death has spread to the whole human race because everyone has sinned.¹³ There was sin in the world before the Law was given; but where there is no law, no account is kept of sins.¹⁴ But from the time of Adam to the time of Moses death ruled over the whole human race, even over those who did not sin in the same way that Adam did when he disobeyed God's command.

Adam was a figure of the one who was to come.¹⁵ But the two are not the same, because God's free gift is not like Adam's sin. It is true that many people died because of the sin of that one man. But God's grace is much greater, and so is his free gift to so many people through the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ.¹⁶ And there is a difference between God's gift and the sin of one man. After the one sin, came the judgement of "Guilty"; but after so many sins, comes the undeserved gift of "Not guilty!"¹⁷ It is true that through the sin of one man death

began to rule because of that one man. But how much greater is the result of what was done by the one man, Jesus Christ! All who receive God's abundant grace and are freely put right with him will rule in life through Christ.

¹⁸So then, as the one sin condemned all people, in the same way the one righteous act sets all people free and gives them life.¹⁹ And just as the mass of people were made sinners as the result of the disobedience of one man, in the same way the mass of people will all be put right with God as the result of the obedience of the one man.

²⁰Law was introduced in order to increase wrongdoing; but where sin increased, God's grace increased much more.²¹ So then, just as sin ruled by means of death, so also God's grace rules by means of righteousness, leading us to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Dead to Sin but Alive in Union with Christ

6 What shall we say, then? Should we continue to live in sin so that God's grace will increase? ²Certainly not! We have died to sin — how then can we go on living in it? ³For surely you know that when we were baptized into union with Christ Jesus, we were baptized into union with his death.⁴ By our baptism, then, we were buried with him and shared his death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from death by the glorious power of the Father, so also we might live a new life.

⁵For since we have become one with him in dying as he did, in the same way we shall be one with him by being raised to life as he was.⁶ And we know that our old being has been put to death with Christ on his cross, in order that the power of the sinful self might be destroyed, so that we should no longer be the slaves of sin.⁷ For when people die, they are set free from the power of sin.⁸ Since we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.⁹ For we know that Christ has been raised from death and will never die again — death will no longer rule over him.¹⁰ And so, because he died, sin has no power over him; and now he lives his life in fellowship with God.¹¹ In the same way you are to think of yourselves as dead, so



far as sin is concerned, but living in fellowship with God through Christ Jesus.

¹²Sin must no longer rule in your mortal bodies, so that you obey the desires of your natural self. ¹³Nor must you surrender any part of yourselves to sin to be used for wicked purposes. Instead, give yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life, and surrender your whole being to him to be used for righteous purposes. ¹⁴Sin must not be your master; for you do not live under law but under God's grace.

Slaves of Righteousness

¹⁵What, then? Shall we sin, because we are not under law but under God's grace? By no means! ¹⁶Surely you know that when you surrender yourselves as slaves to obey someone, you are in fact the slaves of the master you obey — either of sin, which results in death, or of obedience, which results in being put right with God. ¹⁷But thanks be to God! For though at one time you were slaves to sin, you have obeyed with all your heart the truths found in the teaching you received. ¹⁸You were set free from sin and became the slaves of righteousness. ¹⁹(I use everyday language because of the weakness of your natural selves.) At one time you surrendered yourselves entirely as slaves to impurity and wickedness for wicked purposes. In the same way you must now surrender yourselves entirely as slaves of righteousness for holy purposes.

²⁰When you were the slaves of sin, you were free from righteousness. ²¹What did you gain from doing the things that you are now ashamed of? The result of those things is death! ²²But now you have been set free from sin and are the slaves of God. Your gain is a life fully dedicated to him, and the result is eternal life. ²³For sin pays its wage — death; but God's free gift is eternal life in union with Christ Jesus our Lord.

An Illustration from Marriage

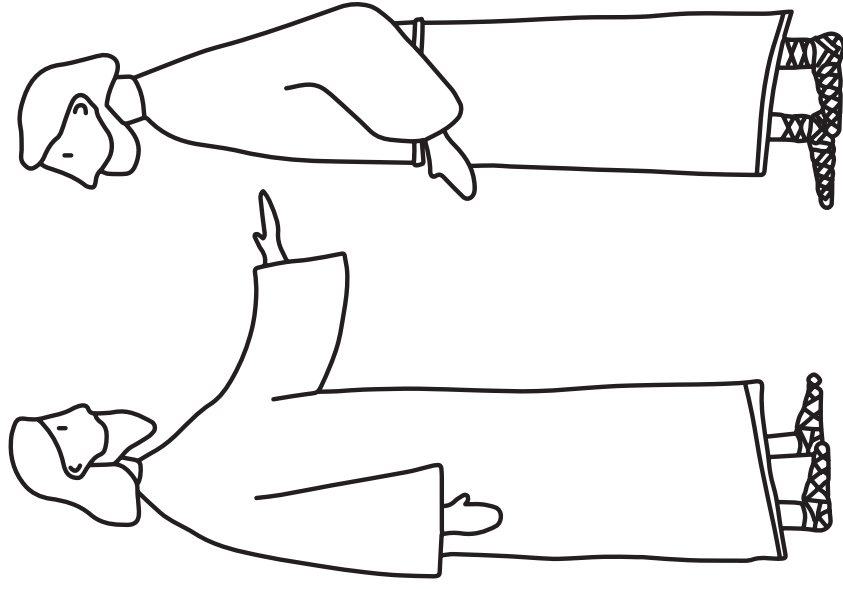
7 Certainly you will understand what I am about to say, my brothers and sisters, because all of you know

about law. The law rules over people only as long as they live. ²A married woman, for example, is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives; but if he dies, then she is free from the law that bound her to him. ³So then, if she lives with another man while her husband is alive, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is legally a free woman and does not commit adultery if she marries another man. ⁴That is how it is with you, my sisters and brothers. As far as the Law is concerned, you also have died because you are part of the body of Christ; and now you belong to him who was raised from death in order that we might be useful in the service of God. ⁵For when we lived according to our human nature, the sinful desires stirred up by the Law were at work in our bodies, and all we did ended in death. ⁶Now, however, we are free from the Law, because we died to that which once held us prisoners. No longer do we serve in the old way of a written law, but in the new way of the Spirit.

Law and Sin

⁷Shall we say, then, that the Law itself is sinful? Of course not! But it was the Law that made me know what sin is. If the Law had not said, "Do not desire what belongs to someone else," I would not have known such a desire. ⁸But by means of that commandment sin found its chance to stir up all kinds of selfish desires in me. Apart from law, sin is a dead thing. ⁹I myself was once alive apart from law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life, ¹⁰and I died. And the commandment which was meant to bring life, in my case brought death. ¹¹Sin found its chance, and by means of the commandment it deceived me and killed me.

¹²So then, the Law itself is holy, and the commandment is holy, right, and good. ¹³But does this mean that what is good caused my death? By no means! It was sin that did it; by using what is good, sin brought death to me, in order that its true nature as sin might be revealed. And so, by means of the commandment sin is shown to be even more terribly sinful.





Romans 7.14-25

THIS IS A REALLY TRICKY BIT OF THE BIBLE TO UNDERSTAND.

Read it slowly a couple of times.

Discuss together: what are some of the things you do, which you don't want to do? What are some of the good things you want to do, but don't do? Why do you think we have this fight going on inside us? What can help us to do good things and avoid the things we hate?

The Conflict within Us

¹⁴We know that the Law is spiritual, but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. ¹⁵I do not understand what I do; for I don't do what I would like to do, but instead I do what I hate. ¹⁶Since what I do is what I don't want to do, this shows that I agree that the Law is right. ¹⁷So I am not really the one who does this thing; rather it is the sin that lives in me. ¹⁸I know that good does not live in me — that is, in my human nature. For even though the desire to do good is in me, I am not able to do it. ¹⁹I don't do the good I want to do; instead, I do the evil that I do not want to do. ²⁰If I do what I don't want to do, this means that I am no longer the one who does it; instead, it is the sin that lives in me.

²¹So I find that this law is at work: when I want to do what is good, what is evil is the only choice I have. ²²My inner being delights in the law of God. ²³But I see a different law at work in my body — a law that fights against the law which my mind approves of. It makes me a prisoner to the law of sin which is at work in my body. ²⁴What an unhappy man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is taking me to death? ²⁵Thanks be to God, who does this through our Lord Jesus Christ!

This, then, is my condition: on my own I can serve God's law only with my mind, while my human nature serves the law of sin.

Life in the Spirit

8 There is no condemnation now for those who live in union with Christ Jesus. ²For the law of the Spirit, which brings us life in union with Christ Jesus, has set me free from the law of sin and death. ³What the Law could not do, because human nature was weak, God did. He condemned sin in human nature by sending his own Son, who came with a nature like sinful human nature, to do away with sin. ⁴God did this so that the righteous demands of the Law might be fully satisfied in us who live according to the Spirit, and not according to human nature. ⁵Those who live as their human nature tells them

to, have their minds controlled by what human nature wants. Those who live as the Spirit tells them to, have their minds controlled by what the Spirit wants. ⁶To be controlled by human nature results in death; to be controlled by the Spirit results in life and peace. ⁷And so people become enemies of God when they are controlled by their human nature; for they do not obey God's law, and in fact they cannot obey it. ⁸Those who obey their human nature cannot please God.

⁹But you do not live as your human nature tells you to; instead, you live as the Spirit tells you to — if, in fact, God's Spirit lives in you. Whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰But if Christ lives in you, the Spirit is life for you because you have been put right with God, even though your bodies are going to die because of sin. ¹¹If the Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from death, lives in you, then he who raised Christ from death will also give life to your mortal bodies by the presence of his Spirit in you.

¹²So then, my brothers and sisters, we have an obligation, but it is not to live as our human nature wants us to. ¹³For if you live according to your human nature, you are going to die; but if by the Spirit you put to death your sinful actions, you will live. ¹⁴Those who are led by God's Spirit are God's children. ¹⁵For the Spirit that God has given you does not make you slaves and cause you to be afraid; instead, the Spirit makes you God's children, and by the Spirit's power we cry out to God, "Father! my Father!" ¹⁶God's Spirit joins himself to our spirits to declare that we are God's children. ¹⁷Since we are his children, we will possess the blessings he keeps for his people, and we will also possess with Christ what God has kept for him; for if we share Christ's suffering, we will also share his glory.

The Future Glory

¹⁸I consider that what we suffer at this present time cannot be compared at all with the glory that is going to be revealed to us. ¹⁹All of creation waits with eager longing for God to reveal his children. ²⁰For creation was condemned to lose its purpose, not of its own will, but



Romans 8:38-39

‘NOTHING CAN SEPARATE US FROM HIS LOVE’

persecution or hunger or poverty or danger or death?

³⁶As the scripture says,

“For your sake we are in danger of death at all times;

we are treated like sheep that are going to be slaughtered.”

³⁷No, in all these things we have complete victory through him who loved us! ³⁸For I am certain that nothing can separate us from his love: neither death nor life, neither angels nor other heavenly rulers or powers, neither the present nor the future, ³⁹neither the world above nor the world below — there is nothing in all creation that will ever be able to separate us from the love of God which is ours through Christ Jesus our Lord.

God and his People

9 I am speaking the truth; I belong to Christ and I do not lie. My conscience, ruled by the Holy Spirit, also assures me that I am not lying ²when I say how great is my sorrow, how endless the pain in my heart ³for my people, my own flesh and blood! For their sake I could wish that I myself were under God’s curse and separated from Christ. ⁴They are God’s people; he made them his children and revealed his glory to them; he made his covenants with them and gave them the Law; they have the true worship; they have received God’s promises; ⁵they are descended from the famous Hebrew ancestors; and Christ, as a human being, belongs to their race. May God, who rules over all, be praised for ever! Amen.

⁶I am not saying that the promise of God has failed; for not all the people of Israel are the people of God. ⁷Nor are all Abraham’s descendants the children of God. God said to Abraham, “It is through Isaac that you will have the descendants I promised you.” ⁸This means that the children born in the usual way are not the children of God; instead, the children born as a result of God’s promise are regarded as the true descendants. ⁹For God’s promise was made in these words: “At the right time I will come back, and Sarah will have a son.”

because God willed it to be so. Yet there was the hope ²¹that creation itself would one day be set free from its slavery to decay and would share the glorious freedom of the children of God. ²²For we know that up to the present time all of creation groans with pain, like the pain of childbirth. ²³But it is not just creation alone which groans; we who have the Spirit as the first of God’s gifts also groan within ourselves, as we wait for God to make us his children and set our whole being free. ²⁴For it was by hope that we were saved; but if we see what we hope for, then it is not really hope. For which of us hopes for something we see? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

²⁶In the same way the Spirit also comes to help us, weak as we are. For we do not know how we ought to pray; the Spirit himself pleads with God for us in groans that words cannot express. ²⁷And God, who sees into our hearts, knows what the thought of the Spirit is; because the Spirit pleads with God on behalf of his people and in accordance with his will.

²⁸We know that in all things God works for good with those who love him, those whom he has called according to his purpose. ²⁹Those whom God had already chosen he also set apart to become like his Son, so that the Son would be the eldest brother in a large family. ³⁰And so those whom God set apart, he called; and those he called, he put right with himself, and he shared his glory with them.

God’s Love in Christ Jesus

³¹In view of all this, what can we say? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³²Certainly not God, who did not even keep back his own Son, but offered him for us all! He gave us his Son — will he not also freely give us all things? ³³Who will accuse God’s chosen people? God himself declares them not guilty! ³⁴Who, then, will condemn them? Not Christ Jesus, who died, or rather, who was raised to life and is at the right-hand side of God, pleading with him for us! ³⁵Who, then, can separate us from the love of Christ? Can trouble do it, or hardship or



¹⁰And this is not all. For Rebecca's two sons had the same father, our ancestor Isaac. ¹¹⁻¹²But in order that the choice of one son might be completely the result of God's own purpose, God said to her, "The elder will serve the younger." He said this before they were born, before they had done anything either good or bad; so God's choice was based on his call, and not on anything they had done. ¹³As the scripture says, "I loved Jacob, but I hated Esau."

¹⁴Shall we say, then, that God is unjust? Not at all. ¹⁵For he said to Moses, "I will have mercy on anyone I wish; I will take pity on anyone I wish." ¹⁶So then, everything depends, not on what human beings want or do, but only on God's mercy. ¹⁷For the scripture says to the king of Egypt, "I made you king in order to use you to show my power and to spread my fame over the whole world." ¹⁸So then, God has mercy on anyone he wishes, and he makes stubborn anyone he wishes.

God's Anger and Mercy

¹⁹But one of you will say to me, "If this is so, how can God find fault with anyone? Who can resist God's will?" ²⁰But who are you, my friend, to answer God back? A clay pot does not ask the man who made it, "Why did you make me like this?" ²¹After all, the man who makes the pots has the right to use the clay as he wishes, and to make two pots from the same lump of clay, one for special occasions and the other for ordinary use.

²²And the same is true of what God has done. He wanted to show his anger and to make his power known. But he was very patient in enduring those who were the objects of his anger, who were doomed to destruction. ²³And he also wanted to reveal his abundant glory, which was poured out on us who are the objects of his mercy, those of us whom he has prepared to receive his glory. ²⁴For we are the people he called, not only from among the Jews but also from among the Gentiles. ²⁵This is what he says in the book of Hosea:

"The people who were not mine
I will call 'My People';
The nation that I did not love
I will call 'My Beloved'."

²⁶And in the very place where they were told, 'You are not my people,'
there they will be called the children of the living
God."

²⁷And Isaiah exclaims about Israel: "Even if the people of Israel are as many as the grains of sand by the sea, yet only a few of them will be saved; ²⁸for the Lord will quickly settle his full account with the world." ²⁹It is as Isaiah had said before, "If the Lord Almighty had not left us some descendants, we would have become like Sodom, we would have been like Gomorrah."

Paul's Prayer for Israel

³⁰So we say that the Gentiles, who were not trying to put themselves right with God, were put right with him through faith; ³¹while God's people, who were seeking a law that would put them right with God, did not find it. ³²And why not? Because they did not depend on faith but on what they did. And so they stumbled over the "stumbling stone" ³³that the scripture speaks of:

"Look, I place in Zion a stone
that will make people stumble,
a rock that will make them fall.
But whoever believes in him will not be
disappointed."

10 My brothers and sisters, how I wish with all my heart that my own people might be saved! How I pray to God for them! ²I can assure you that they are deeply devoted to God; but their devotion is not based on true knowledge. ³They have not known the way in which God puts people right with himself, and instead, they have tried to set up their own way; and so they did not submit themselves to God's way of putting people right. ⁴For Christ has brought the Law to an end, so that everyone who believes is put right with God.

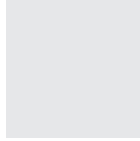


Romans 10:13-17

‘Everyone who calls out to the Lord for help will be saved.’

For people to hear the saving message of Jesus, this good news needs to be PROCLAIMED. You might hear this called EVANGELISM.

Watch this video to explore ways we can share the good news with other people.



Salvation is for All

⁵Moses wrote this about being put right with God by obeying the Law: “Whoever obeys the commands of the Law will live.” ⁶But what the scripture says about being put right with God through faith is this: “You are not to ask yourself, Who will go up into heaven?” (that is, to bring Christ down). ⁷“Nor are you to ask, Who will go down into the world below?” (that is, to bring Christ up from death). ⁸What it says is this: “God’s message is near you, on your lips and in your heart” — that is, the message of faith that we preach. ⁹If you confess that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised him from death, you will be saved. ¹⁰For it is by our faith that we are put right with God; it is by our confession that we are saved. ¹¹The scripture says, “Whoever believes in him will not be disappointed.” ¹²This includes everyone, because there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles; God is the same Lord of all and richly blesses all who call to him. ¹³As the scripture says, “Everyone who calls out to the Lord for help will be saved.”

¹⁴But how can they call to him for help if they have not believed? And how can they believe if they have not heard the message? And how can they hear if the message is not proclaimed? ¹⁵And how can the message be proclaimed if the messengers are not sent out? As the scripture says, “How wonderful is the coming of messengers who bring good news!” ¹⁶But not all have accepted the Good News. Isaiah himself said, “Lord, who believed our message?” ¹⁷So then, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message comes through preaching Christ.

¹⁸But I ask: is it true that they did not hear the message? Of course they did — for as the scripture says: “The sound of their voice went out to all the world; their words reached the ends of the earth.”

¹⁹Again I ask: did the people of Israel not understand? Moses himself is the first one to answer:

“I will use a so-called nation to make my people jealous; and by means of a nation of fools I will make my people angry.”

²⁰And Isaiah is even bolder when he says,

“I was found by those who were not looking for me; I appeared to those who were not asking for me.”

²¹But concerning Israel he says, “All day long I held out my hands to welcome a disobedient and rebellious people.”

God’s Mercy on Israel

11 I ask, then: did God reject his own people? Certainly not! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. ²God has not rejected his people, whom he chose from the beginning. You know what the scripture says in the passage where Elijah pleads with God against Israel: ³“Lord, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars; I am the only one left, and they are trying to kill me.” ⁴“What answer did God give him? “I have kept for myself 7,000 men who have not worshipped the false god Baal.” ⁵It is the same way now: there is a small number left of those whom God has chosen because of his grace. ⁶His choice is based on his grace, not on what they have done. For if God’s choice were based on what people do, then his grace would not be real grace.

⁷What then? The people of Israel did not find what they were looking for. It was only the small group that God chose who found it; the rest grew deaf to God’s call. ⁸As the scripture says, “God made their minds and hearts dull; to this very day they cannot see or hear.” ⁹And David says:

“May they be caught and trapped at their feasts; may they fall, may they be punished! ¹⁰ May their eyes be blinded so that they cannot see; and make them bend under their troubles at all times.”

¹¹I ask, then: when the Jews stumbled, did they fall to their ruin? By no means! Because they sinned, salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make the Jews jealous of them. ¹²The sin of the Jews brought rich blessings to the world, and their spiritual poverty brought rich blessings to the Gentiles. Then, how much greater the blessings will be when the complete number of Jews is included!

