



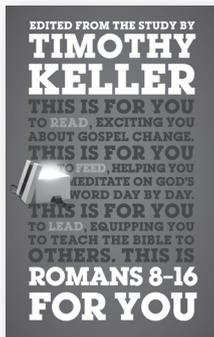
In view of God's mercy

ROMANS 8 – 16

by Timothy Keller

Editor: Carl Laferton


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COMPANY



Romans 8-16 For You

If you are reading *Romans For You* (see page 92)) alongside this Good Book Guide, here is how the studies in this booklet link to the chapters of Romans 8-16 For You:

Study One → Ch 1	Study Five → Ch 7-9
Study Two → Ch 2-3	Study Six → Ch 10
Study Three → Ch 4-5	Study Seven → Ch
Study Four → Ch 5-6	11-12

In view of God's mercy

The good book guide to Romans 8 – 16

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Series Consultants: Tim Chester, Tim Thornborough,
Anne Woodcock, Carl Laferton

The Good Book Company

Tel: (US): 866 244 2165

Tel (UK): 0333 123 0880

Email (US): info@thegoodbook.com

Email (UK): info@thegoodbook.co.uk

Websites

North America: www.thegoodbook.com

UK: www.thegoodbook.co.uk

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introduction: good book guides

Every Bible-study group is different—yours may take place in a church building, in a home or in a cafe, on a train, over a leisurely mid-morning coffee or squashed into a 30-minute lunch break. Your group may include new Christians, mature Christians, non-Christians, moms and tots, students, businessmen or teens. That's why we've designed these *Good Book Guides* to be flexible for use in many different situations.

Our aim in each session is to uncover the meaning of a passage, and see how it fits into the “big picture” of the Bible. But that can never be the end. We also need to appropriately apply what we have discovered to our lives. Let's take a look at what is included:

- ↔ **Talkabout:** Most groups need to “break the ice” at the beginning of a session, and here's the question that will do that. It's designed to get people talking around a subject that will be covered in the course of the Bible study.
- ↓ **Investigate:** The Bible text for each session is broken up into manageable chunks, with questions that aim to help you understand what the passage is about. **The Leader's Guide** contains **guidance for questions**, and sometimes ☑ additional “follow-up” questions.
- 🗉 **Explore more (optional):** These questions will help you connect what you have learned to other parts of the Bible, so you can begin to fit it all together like a jig-saw; or occasionally look at a part of the passage that's not dealt with in detail in the main study.
- **Apply:** As you go through a Bible study, you'll keep coming across **apply** sections. These are questions to get the group discussing what the Bible teaching means in practice for you and your church. 🗉 **Getting personal** is an opportunity for you to think, plan and pray about the changes that you personally may need to make as a result of what you have learned.
- ↑ **Pray:** We want to encourage prayer that is rooted in God's word—in line with his concerns, purposes and promises. So each session ends with an opportunity to review the truths and challenges highlighted by the Bible study, and turn them into prayers of request and thanksgiving.

The **Leader's Guide** and introduction provide historical background information, explanations of the Bible texts for each session, ideas for **optional extra** activities, and guidance on how best to help people uncover the truths of God's word.

why study Romans 8 – 16?

How does faith in the gospel of Christ actually lead to change in real life?

In view of God's mercy, how will we think, speak and act?

Those are the questions Paul addresses in the second half of the book of Romans. At the heart of chapters 8 to 16 lies a key verse:

"Therefore, I urge you brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God" (12 v 1).

The Christian life is lived with our gaze on God's mercy to us. Our eyes are fixed on the cross, where Christ died so that we need never fear condemnation by or separation from God.

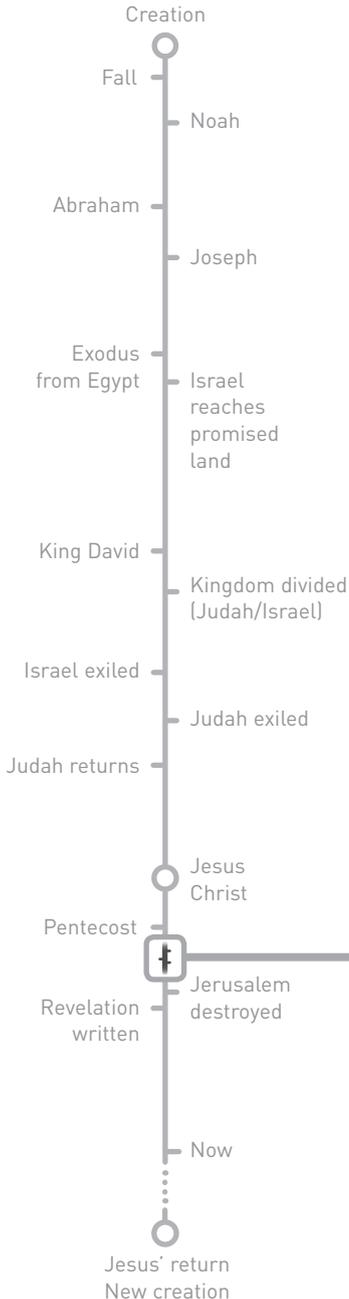
And this, Paul says as he writes to the church in Rome in the middle of the first century, is to shape everything we are and do. The Christian life is a life of gratitude to our merciful Father. We live to please him by obeying him, even at cost or inconvenience.

How can we do this? In chapter 8, Paul will show us that it is by setting our mind on what the Spirit desires, as children of the Father.

How do we do this? In chapters 12 – 16, Paul will take us on a tour of our lives, showing how we live as grateful sacrifices in every facet of life.

The gospel makes a difference, not only to our eternal future but to our present perspectives and priorities, attitudes and actions. These seven studies in the second half of this wonderful letter will show you why to, and how to, live in view of God's mercy.

Carl Laferton, Editor



BIBLE TIMELINE

Where does the book of Romans fit into the whole story of God's word?

ROMANS c. AD57

- AD53 Paul begins his third missionary journey, through modern-day Syria, Turkey and Greece
- AD55 Paul writes 1 & 2 Corinthians
- AD57 Paul writes his letter to the church in Rome, possibly from Corinth
- AD59-61 Paul reaches Rome to stand trial, is put under house arrest, and (probably) later released
- AD67 Paul dies (possibly executed in Rome)

1

Romans 8 v 1-13

THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT



talkabout

1. What do you think about when you have nothing much to do?

- What do you think this says about you?



investigate



Read Romans 8 v 1

The first word of 8 v 1 is "Therefore." This reminds us that we are starting halfway through Paul's letter to the Romans.

2. Read the following verses to understand what Paul is saying in 8 v 1:

- 1 v 18-21

- 2 v 1-3, 5

- 3 v 9-11

- 3 v 21-26

- 5 v 1-2

- 6 v 5-7

- 7 v 21-25

3. What does the phrase “no condemnation” mean? Put Romans 8 v 1 into your own words.



- Paul is saying there is “no condemnation” at all—not only no condemnation of our past, but of our present and our future, too. Why is this important?



getting personal

If we forget that there can never be any condemnation for us if we are in Christ, what happens? We feel more guilt, unworthiness and pain than we should. We're defensive when criticized; have a lack of confidence in prayer; and obey out of fear. But if we remember, we know we are accepted; we can handle disappointment and criticism; we pray confidently; we obey out of gratitude and love.

When do you find it easiest to live as though you are, or could be, condemned?

How will you remember that “there is now no condemnation”?

▶ Read Romans 8 v 1-4

4. What has the “Spirit of life” done for Paul, and for all Christians (v 2)?

DICTIONARY

The law (v 2): here, meaning “rule.”

The law (v 3, 4): here, Paul is referring to God's law in the Old Testament.

Sinful nature (v 3): our natural selves, which desire to disobey God.

Sin offering (v 3): a sacrifice that pays the debt for people's sin.

5. What could the law (ie: trying to obey God's commands) not do, and why (v 3)?



- How did God do it?

➔ **apply**

Verse 4 tells us that everything that Jesus went through—his incarnation, his death and his resurrection—was all in order for us to live according to the righteous requirements of God’s law, in the power of his Spirit.

6. How will this motivate us to live God’s way?

⬇ **investigate**

▶ **Read Romans 8 v 5-13**

7. What do verses 5-8 tell us about people who:
- “live according to the sinful nature”?

- “live in accordance with the Spirit”?

8. What do verses 9-11 tell us about Christians?

DICTIONARY

Righteousness
(v 10): right standing before God.



9. How do people “die,” and what is the way to “live” (v 13)? What does this look like in reality?

➔ **apply**

10. How can we make sure we have our “minds set on what the Spirit desires”?



explore more

optional

▶ **Read Colossians 3 v 1-14**

How do Paul's words here help us to know how to set our minds on spiritual things?

How will doing so show itself in our thoughts and lives?

11. What motivations throughout the passage have there been to “put to death the misdeeds of the body”?

- How can we motivate ourselves to do this?



- How can we encourage each other to do this?



getting personal

The 20th-century Archbishop of Canterbury William Temple once said: "Your religion is what you do with your solitude." Wherever your mind goes most naturally and freely when there is nothing else to distract it—that is what you really live for. Your life is shaped by whatever preoccupies your mind.

Where does your mind go most naturally? What does this say about you?

What truths from this passage will you consciously think about in your solitude this week?



pray

Spend time **praising God** for the great truth that, in Christ, "there is now no condemnation."

Thank God for the gift of the Spirit in your life. Speak to him now about ways in which you find it difficult to "live in accordance with what the Spirit desires."

Finish your time of prayer by each reading a verse of your choice from this passage and **praising God** for the truths it contains.