



ONLINE GROUP PLAN

Spring 2020 // Romans // Session 14: Reach

Suggested Use Date: 5/31/2020

For use with Explore the Bible Leader Guide, Personal Study Guide, and Daily Discipleship Guide



PREPARATION

Best Practices for Leading an Online Group



PRAY for your group members and for God to grant you insight as you study and prepare your Bible study session. Do this throughout the week.



SCHEDULE your group's online Bible study using the online meeting tool you prefer. Invite group members and guests to participate using a meeting ID if required by your online meeting tool. [Click here](#) to view a Best Practices document for online groups.



SEND digital copies of the next session to group members who do not have a print copy. If using the *Personal Study Guide*, encourage group members to read the passage and comments for the next session. If you are using the *Daily Discipleship Guide*, encourage your group members to follow up your session by engaging with the five daily Bible readings.



CONNECT with your group via email or text messaging early in the week.

Create your own message:

- Briefly tell the group the title of your next Bible study, why it is important, and what they will learn.
- Challenge group members to study before the group session if your group uses a *Personal Study Guide*; remind group members to follow up your online study with their daily readings if your group uses the *Daily Discipleship Guide*.
- Remind group members when your group will meet online.

Or copy and paste this suggested wording into the email or text message to your group:

Why might a believer take a lone ranger approach to sharing the gospel with others? What are the dangers of failing to invite others to be part of sharing the gospel? The sharing of the gospel requires a team effort, and Paul reminded the Roman believers of this in the closing section of the letter. Read Romans 15:14-21 and 30-33 in your Bible and the comments for Session 14 in your Explore the Bible *Personal Study Guide* or *Daily Discipleship Guide*. Compare your prayers to the prayer offered by Paul in this passage. How can you adjust your prayers to reflect a priority in sharing Jesus with others?

We will meet at (add time) using (name of online tool). Here is the link to our meeting: (add meeting ID if your online tool doesn't do that automatically)



PREPARE to lead your group's Bible study.

- **Study** Romans 15:14-21,30-33, counting the number of times Paul pointed to Christ.
- **Listen** to the Explore the Bible Adult Leader Podcast. Go to goExploreTheBible.com/Adults-Training for an overview of the main points and key ideas from each session.
- **Visit** the Explore the Bible blog for additional leader helps at goExploreTheBible.com/Leader-Helps
- **Create** your teaching plan for guiding your group's online Bible study experience. Use the Online Group Plan on the next pages as a starting point, modifying it for your group as needed. Consult the *Adult Commentary*, *QuickSource*, and *Leader Pack* for additional ideas and resources.



REMIND your group members to study and prepare via another email or text message closer to the day your group meets.

- Include a quote from the *Personal Study Guide*, a question, or an insight you plan to discuss with the group when you meet online.



HELPFUL LINKS

- Explore the Bible main landing page: goExploreTheBible.com
- Digital version of Explore the Bible: curriculum.lifeway.com
- Explore the Bible leader helps: goExploreTheBible.com/Leader-Helps
- Explore the Bible Podcast: goExploreTheBible.com/Adults-Training
- Free Coronavirus links and leader helps: lifeway.com/coronavirus



ONLINE GROUP PLAN

Explore the Bible // Spring 2020 // Romans // Session 14: Reach

NOTES

GREET people as they join and ask them to share about tasks that work better when we work alone and tasks that work better when we work with a team.

DISCUSS: Why might a believer take a lone ranger approach to sharing the gospel with others? What are the dangers of failing to invite others to be part of sharing the gospel? (PSG, p. 122; DDG, p. 113)

TRANSITION: Paul's mission required him to depend on others and to invite them to be part of the work. The sharing of the gospel requires a team effort, and Paul reminded the Roman believers of this as he closed out his letter to them. *Option:* Use the *Extra!* idea. See goExploreTheBible.com/LeaderExtras

READ: Paul revealed his confidence in the Roman Christians. Read **Romans 15:14-16**, highlighting characteristics of a spiritually-healthy Christian [maintains close personal relationships (brothers and sisters), understands the difference between right and wrong and selects what is right (full of goodness), taught well and holds firmly to those teachings (filled with all knowledge), encourages one another and holds each other accountable (instruct one another), and open to instruction (remind you more boldly of some points)].

CONSIDER: Paul had a heart and passion to be a minister to the Gentiles. Paul also saw himself as a priest of the gospel. Define these two words (minister and priest) in terms of what actions each would require.

DISCUSS: How did Paul's understanding of his ministry follow Jesus' commission in **Matthew 28:18-20** and **Acts 1:8**? (PSG, p. 125; DDG, p. 115)

READ Romans 15:17-19 and identify the three ways God accomplished His work through Paul (word and deed, miraculous signs and wonders, God's Holy Spirit).

EMPHASIZE: *Highlight from the PSG (p. 126) or DDG (p. 117, Day 2): Paul demonstrated incredible humility and a keen understanding of what the Christian life is all about. He knew it would be foolish to dare say anything about his own achievements. Paul realized that Christ alone accomplished this work through him. Encourage the group to reflect on how they can demonstrate this same attitude.*

READ Romans 15:20-21, *emphasizing the passion expressed in Paul's words about his mission to share Jesus with people who have never heard about Him.*

DISCUSS: **What are the dangers of preaching the gospel only to the people who have already heard it? What are the dangers of going only to places where people have never heard Jesus' name? Where is the balance?**
(PSG, p. 127; DDG, p. 115)

READ Romans 15:30-33, *highlighting the specific areas for which Paul requested prayer (protection from Jews in Judea who considered him a traitor to their faith, reception of the financial gift from Gentile believers for hurting Christians in Judea, and opportunity to personally visit the church in Rome).*

DISCUSS: **What do Paul's prayer requests reveal about his priorities? How are his requests consistent with the rest of the letter to the Romans?** *(PSG, p. 129)*

REFLECT: *Guide the group to the summary statement for today's session (PSG, p. 122; DDG, p. 112): Believers must make every effort to share the gospel with everyone. Ask the group to consider: **Who has God placed in your life who needs to hear the gospel? What do you need to do to make sure they hear it?***
(PSG, p. 130; DDG, p. 116)

KEY DOCTRINE: *Call attention to the Key Doctrine (Cooperation) on page 129 of the PSG or page 115 in the DDG and read the doctrine: Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom (1 Cor. 1:10-17).*

DISCUSS: Along with prayers, what are some other ways you and the members of your Bible study can partner with other believers? What steps do you need to take to build those partnerships? (PSG, p. 130; DDG, p. 116)

RELATE: Invite the group to share prayer requests. Close the session in prayer by reading Romans 15:13 as a benediction, followed by a prayer of thanksgiving for Paul in recording God's Word. Conclude the prayer with a commitment to grow in faithfulness to God to become the Christ follower presented in Romans. (If using the Daily Discipleship Guide, remind the group to complete the Daily Explorations this week.)

RESPONSE: Ask them to share through the week (using a group text or an app) the initials of people with whom they are seeking to share the gospel. (If using the Daily Discipleship Guide, let them know that you will be sending the Talk It Out questions through the week to the group for response.)

NEXT STEPS



- Contact group members and offer to pray for family members, friends, and neighbors who do not know Jesus.
- Send digital copies of the next session to group members who do not have a print copy. If using the Personal Study Guide, encourage group members to read the passage and comments for the next session.
- Repeat the process outlined in the Preparation section of this document.