

LARGE GROUP WORSHIP *Session* 3



THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Romans 8

Building on his prior teaching, Paul assured the Romans that once they were reconciled to God, they would choose a new way of life. That new life comes through the Spirit, who guides believers and warns of sin. Following the sacrifice of Christ and His resurrection, God sent the Holy Spirit to indwell people. The Holy Spirit provides victory over the old sin nature and leads to a new nature that desires the things of God.

Paul began this chapter by offering the dichotomy of our flesh versus the Spirit. Paul shared that the flesh is that part of a human that desires things that are contrary to God's desires and wishes. The Spirit expresses characteristics that line up with the will of God and seek to do His will. Paul told the Romans that God sent His own Son in human form. The difference in Jesus and other humans, as Paul had already addressed, was that Jesus lived a sinless life and fulfilled the law.

The law was something the people were very familiar with. The *law* referred to the rules set down by God, through Moses, of how people should act in their relationship between God and others. Paul said that because of Jesus' sacrifice, the people were now free from the burden of the law. Obviously Paul did not mean that because of Jesus' death and resurrection, people could now live any way they wanted. Paul meant that believers now don't measure their righteousness to the standard of keeping the law but to the standard of faith in Christ.

While believers are still tempted by the flesh, the Spirit provides release and guidance to submit to God's will instead. God provided the Holy Spirit to help believers know when their choices and actions do not line up with God's will. Sensitivity to the Spirit enables believers to grow closer to God and to seek His will above their own. God is always with us, and God has a great plan. All of God's plans are good, and God works His plans for good to those who live according to His will.

SESSION FOCUS

BIBLE PASSAGE: Romans 8

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE: Ephesians 2:4-5

BONUS BIBLE VERSE: Romans 8:14

TEXT TRUTH: The Holy Spirit lives in Christians and helps them to live more like Jesus.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT: The book of Romans illuminates the gospel of Jesus Christ. Sin entered the world through one man—Adam—and spread to all people. The good news is that salvation also entered the world through one man—Jesus. This is how God showed His great love to us: God sent Jesus—while we were sinners—to die for our sin. Through faith in Jesus, we can receive His righteousness and be reconciled to God.

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

BIBLE STORY PASSAGES: Romans 8

In his letter to the Romans, Paul also wrote about the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is a special gift from God to those who have repented of their sin and trusted Jesus as Lord and Savior. Paul wrote, “There is no judgment of sin for those who follow Jesus. God sent His own Son as a sin offering to pay the price for sin. Believers can resist sin because believers now follow the Holy Spirit. When you follow the Holy Spirit, you think about the things that are important to God like life, peace, and what is good and right.”

Paul continued, “Those who believe in Jesus are led by God’s Spirit. God has adopted you, and the Spirit tells you that you are children of God. The Holy Spirit helps you not to fear because you can always call out to God, your Father. If you face tough times because of your faith in Jesus, you can remember that one day Jesus will return and you will be with Him for eternity. All of creation eagerly is waiting for Jesus to come again.”

Paul also explained to the believers that the Holy Spirit helps them when they are weak. The Spirit will pray for them when they do not know what to pray.

Finally, Paul said, “All things work together for the good of those who love God, to those who are called for His purpose. Remember during tough times that God is for you. Jesus died and was raised. He is sitting at the right hand of God praying for you. Who can separate God’s people from God’s love? Not death. Not life. Not angels. Not rulers. Not height. Not depth. Nothing created can separate God’s people from His love that was given through Jesus’ death and resurrection.”

WELCOME

- Whisper: “Hello everyone!”
- Ask: “Can anyone guess why I am whispering?” (*Give the children a chance to guess.*)
- Say: “I am whispering because today we are going to talk about Someone who speaks quietly to us. He is gentle and reminds us of what is right. He comes to live inside of us when we accept Christ as our Savior.”
- Ask: “Can anyone guess who I am talking about?” (*the Holy Spirit*)
- Say: “Today we are going to learn about the Holy Spirit when we read from the epistle of Romans!”

WORSHIP

- Display the Text Truth.
- Instruct the group to stand and read the Text Truth aloud with you: **the Holy Spirit lives in Christians and helps them to live more like Jesus.**
- Say: “God is so good to us! He has sent Jesus to rescue us from sin, and He has given us His Spirit so that we can grow to live more like Jesus. Let’s praise God for the many gifts that He has given us.”
- Stand and sing “In Christ I Am.”
- Pray, then collect and offering while singing “Trust.”

INTRODUCE THE SESSION

- Display the “Stone” object slide.
- Ask: “What do you see carved into this stone?” (*a dove*) “What is a dove like?” (*soft, white, gentle, swift*)
- Say: “Doves are very gentle creatures. They do not squawk. They softly coo. A dove flies swiftly and quietly through the air. The dove is a symbol of purity and peace.”
- Ask: “How is the Holy Spirit like a dove? (*He is gentle; He works swiftly and quietly.*)
- Say: “The Bible compares the Holy Spirit to a dove for a reason. He speaks softly and tenderly to our hearts. The Holy Spirit is always pure and always has our good in mind. We may not be able to see Him, but we can feel His gentle presence. We can see Him at work around us. We can see that the Holy Spirit is working in our hearts.”
- Option: Show the Explore the Bible on Location video.

DIG DEEPER

- Read Romans 8:1-2.
- Say: “People who are not in Christ are trapped in sin. But when we turn

TOOL BOX

- Worship: “Text Truth 3” (slide), offering basket
- Introduce the Session: “Stone” (slide), Option: Explore the Bible on Location video
- Dig Deeper: Bible
- Practice Bible Skills: “Gospel Objects” (Music & Print Extras), scissors, Bible, option: magnets and dry erase board
- Missions: “Adoniram Judson Photo” (Music & Print Extras)
- Review: index cards, permanent marker
- Closing: “Christ in Context: Romans” (slide), music videos (Video & Media Extras)

***GOSPEL CONNECTING POINT**

- This would be a natural time to pause and further expound on the gospel with your kids.

NOTE:

- When talking about adoption, use language that is healthy and affirming to all parties involved in the adoption process, and avoid making children feel singled out or pressured to share a story they may not be willing or able to share.
- To talk about adoption with a gospel-centered perspective, use phrases like:
 - “God makes families in different shapes, colors, and sizes, and sometimes He builds families through adoption;”
 - “Family differences are just one way God shows off His creativity;” and
 - “Through Jesus, we can all be adopted as sons and daughters of the King, welcomed into God’s family forever.

away from our sin and receive the gospel of Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes to live in us! God’s Holy Spirit helps us know how to love and follow God. This is what it means to ‘walk in the Spirit.’”*

- Read Romans 8:5-6.
- Ask: “What is the flesh?” (*our nature, what we want to do, our sinful hearts*)
- Say: “The flesh is the selfishness of our sinful hearts. The flesh says, ‘Me first!’ The flesh says, ‘I am going to do what feels right to me!’ The flesh is focused on things of this world.”
- Ask: “Who is the Holy Spirit?” (*God*)
- Say: “The Holy Spirit is God! When we live according to the Spirit, we are living through the power of God. The Spirit leads Christians to put others first, and He leads us to live our lives in a way that shows love and honor to God. The flesh brings death, but the Spirit brings life and peace.”
- Read Romans 8:15.
- Invite: “Raise your hand if you have heard the word *adopted* or if someone you love has experienced adoption.”
- Say: “To be adopted is a wonderful thing! Did you know that if you are saved, God has adopted you into His family?”
- Continue: “When life gets hard, we may wonder if God truly loves us. The Holy Spirit within us declares, ‘You are a child of God!’ Jesus Christ paid the price for our sin so that we could be co-heirs with Him as sons and daughters of God and so that we could be part of God’s family forever.”
- Read Romans 8:18 and 26.
- Say: “Jesus does not promise to take all of our problems away when we become a Christian. But He does promise that the Holy Spirit will be with us and will be speaking up for us.”
- Invite one of the children to read Romans 8:28 aloud.
- Say: “We are God’s chosen people. That means that we are no longer prisoners to the penalty and the power of sin. And God promises us that in the new heaven and earth, there will be no more sin or sadness—and God always keeps His promises!
- Read Romans 8:38-39.
- Guide the children through a series of questions to which the answer is an emphatic, “No!”
- Ask: “Can anyone accuse God’s chosen people?” (*No!*) “Can anyone condemn us since Christ has already paid the price?” (*No!*) “Can death or life separate us from the love of God?” (*No!*) “Can anyone or anything separate us from the love of Christ?” (*No!*)
- In closing, read Romans 8:37 with conviction and confidence.

PRACTICE BIBLE SKILLS

- Before the session, print and cut apart the “Gospel Objects” print item. (*Option: glue a magnet to the back of each object and place the objects on a dry erase board instead of allowing the children to hold them.*)

- Display The Gospel slide or reference the poster.
- Talk about the five main points of The Gospel: God’s Plan for Me.
- Choose five children and give each of them one of the Gospel Objects.
- Challenge the five children to look at the objects, recall The Gospel: God’s Plan for Me, then put themselves in order. (*God rules; We sinned; God provided; Jesus gives; We respond*)
- Invite each child to explain the point their object represents. Allow them to ask a friend for help if they need it.
- Mix the children up and instruct them to get into the correct order again. This time, call volunteers to shout out each point in order. (*God rules; We sinned; God provided; Jesus gives; We respond*)
- Open your Bible and model how to use the table of contents page to find the book of John. Locate John 3:16. Read it aloud.
- Close your Bible.
- Invite a child to use your Bible to find John 3:16. As time allows, give everyone who wants an opportunity the time to locate John 3:16 in your Bible.
- Ask: “Why did I ask you to put the “Gospel Objects” in order?” (*so that they could share it with others*) “Why did I show you how to find John 3:16?” (*so that they could share it with others*) “Why is it important to share the gospel with others?” (*People need Jesus; God commands us to go into all the world and preach the gospel.*)

BIBLE SKILLS SPOTLIGHT

- Know how to use the Bible to tell someone about God and Jesus.
- Know the Bible teaches that Jesus died on a cross, was buried, and was raised from the dead.

MISSIONS

- Display the “Adoniram Judson Photo.”
- Say: “Adoniram and Ann Judson worked diligently in Burma to tell people about Jesus, translate the Scriptures, and start a Christian zayat.”
- Explain: “A zayat is a small shelter on the side of the road for travelers. In the Burmese culture, zayats also served as an assembly place for Buddhist teachers to talk to the people about Buddhist beliefs. The Judsons thought it would be a good idea to start a zayat to tell people about Jesus, instead.”
- Continue: “The first Christian assembly that met in a zayat was held April 4, 1819, with about 15 adults and some children present. Six years after the Judsons’ arrival in Rangoon, the Judsons saw the first Burmese person become a Christian. In the next year, they had a church of about 10 Burmese Christians!”
- Ask: “Was it a short amount of time or a long amount of time before the Judsons saw the first Burmese person become a Christian?” (*long*)
- Say: “It took time for people to believe what the Judsons were telling them about Jesus. During this time, the Judsons experienced grief for people who died, severe illnesses, harsh weather conditions, and disappointment because it took a while for people to believe. Adoniram was even placed in jail for 18 months after a war broke out in Burma!

He was falsely accused of being a spy. Ann died before Adoniram was released from prison, and their two-year-old daughter died soon after her mother.”

- Conclude: “Remember—God works everything for our good and for His glory. Even though the Judsons had many difficult years in Burma, God worked through them. And one year, Adoniram Judson got to see more than 200 people trust Jesus and be baptized! Praise God!”
- Close in prayer, thanking God for people like the Judsons and for current missionaries who continue to tell the good news about Jesus all over the world. Pray for God to provide for them and for God to call many new people to trust in Him.

REVIEW

- Write the following words or phrases on index cards using the permanent marker: *Holy Spirit, faith, the gospel, Rome, dove, the Roman Forum, Abraham, righteousness, Paul, Ephesians 2:4-5*.
- Tape the word cards on the wall or board. Make sure to leave ample space between each card.
- Invite the children to shout out the first thing that comes to mind when you shine your flashlight on each index card. An example would be the word *dove*. Children might shout out the words *gentle* or *Holy Spirit*.
- Shine your light on each index card. When you shine your light on the Memory Verse, challenge the children to stand and recite the verse with you.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

- The monthly Memory Verse is Ephesians 2:4-5.

BONUS BIBLE VERSE

- This week’s Bonus Bible Verse is Romans 8:14. If your group is already familiar with the Monthly Memory Verse, include the Bonus Bible Verse in this activity, challenging kids to look up and read it, instead.

CLOSING

- Refer to the “Christ in Context: Romans” statement and read it aloud: “The book of Romans illuminates the gospel of Jesus Christ. Sin entered the world through one man—Adam—and spread to all people. The good news is that salvation also entered the world through one man—Jesus. This is how God showed His great love to us: God sent Jesus—while we were sinners—to die for our sin. Through faith in Jesus, we can receive His righteousness and be reconciled to God.”
- Ask: “What does the word *illuminate* mean?” (*to shine on or reveal*) “What are some objects that illuminate things?” (*flashlight, sun, moon, light bulb*)
- Say: “The book of Romans is like a giant flashlight! It illuminates the gospel! It reveals the power of God and the good news of Jesus.”
- Pray, thanking God for the inspiration of Scripture and for the book of Romans.
- Play “In Christ I am” in the background as the children exit.