

Family • Faith • Holy Spirit • Mission

# Small Group Preview

Jesus community where God's kingdom is realized on this earth

2025. 9. 7. Bothell Main Campus 2pm



시애틀형제교회  
COMMUNITY CHURCH OF SEATTLE

To the Small Group Leaders

## New Season, New Space, New Beginning

In Seattle, the cool and refreshing autumn breeze begins to blow in the mornings and evenings. Autumn always reminds us of maturity and new beginnings. Our children start a new school year, and parents also become a bit busier along with them. Even in the busyness, just as nature bears fruit, we pray that our faith also moves toward maturity that bears fruit as we begin this month.

Our church, too, is taking steps toward a new beginning. For the remodeling of Building 2, which God has granted us, we are moving beyond the planning stage and entering into full construction. This will not simply be about renewing an old environment, but a process of preparing for our worship and ministries to become richer and grow healthier. In this space that God has given us as a gift, from the adult generation to the next generation of children, all will experience spiritual nourishment and growth.

As we move toward the dream God has given us, there is something we must not forget: it is not only the building that needs remodeling, but also our souls. The change that truly delights God is when our souls are newly remodeled upon the foundation of His Word and bear fruit by following the Holy Spirit. The time to long for and entrust ourselves so that God may work within us is right now.

I pray that through the small groups, the renewing grace of the Holy Spirit will overflow in every community. This fall, may each and every member experience the joy of spiritual growth and, together with the church, bear the beautiful fruit of God's kingdom.

With love and blessings, **James Kwon**



Embracing the members with a shepherd's heart

# Small Group Preview

Small Group Usage

| Living Life Weekly Bible Study 1, September 2nd Scripture, P172 |

## Ice Breakers

What do you think is the most important element in receiving salvation?

## Examine God's Word

Read Romans 1:8–17 together. Circle or underline the words and expressions that are repeated or carry important meaning.

## Understand Setting

Even though the Apostle Paul had not personally visited, the church of Christ was established in Rome. It is thought to have begun through Jews who had visited Rome during the Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came (Acts 2:10). Around A.D. 49, by the decree of Emperor Claudius that all Jews must leave, the Jews departed from Rome for a time. But during the reign of Emperor Nero, who took the throne in A.D. 54, they returned to Rome. In the church, Gentiles and returning Jews coexisted, but conflicts arose due to doctrinal differences. In the midst of this situation, good reports about the Roman church spread to others. The Apostle Paul, wanting to proclaim the true gospel of God recorded in Scripture, wrote the book of Romans. We now take a look together at Romans, a letter Paul sent around A.D. 57 from the region of Corinth, near the end of his third missionary journey.

## Meditate the Text

**1-1 Observation** Why does Paul give thanks to God for the believers in Rome, and why does he desire to meet them? (verses 8, 11–12)

**1-2 Application** Share how a faith community (or a certain person) has helped your faith to grow and become firm.

**2-1** **Observation** What reason does Paul give for not being ashamed of the gospel, and what does he say is revealed in the gospel? (verses 16–17)

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**2-2** **Application** What are the reasons I hesitate to share the gospel? In those situations, what comfort and assurance does God give me? Share together.

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## Review the Text

The Apostle Paul strongly desired to visit the Roman church to clearly proclaim the gospel. However, since he could not go, he wrote and sent the book of Romans to record the true gospel and faith. The gospel Paul wanted to proclaim was the righteousness of God revealed through Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, solved the problem of sin by dying on the cross, and everyone who believes in His resurrection receives God's declaration of righteousness and salvation. The Apostle Paul powerfully proclaimed that this gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes. Paul expressed his desire that, according to God's calling, the gospel would be preached to all people. Today, we too must diligently proclaim the gospel, the power of God, in the name of Jesus Christ.

## Pray through the Text

- 1 May the small group of our church become communities centered on the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- 2 May we boldly proclaim to our neighbors the gospel that contains the power of salvation.



## Ice Breakers

What do you think is the most important element in receiving salvation?

## Examine God's Word

Read Romans 1:8–17 together. Circle or underline the words and expressions that are repeated or carry important meaning.

NIV	GOD'S WORD	ESV
<p>8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world.</p> <p>9 God, whom I serve in my spirit in preaching the gospel of his Son, is my witness how constantly I remember you</p> <p>10 in my prayers at all times; and I pray that now at last by God's will the way may be opened for me to come to you.</p> <p>11 I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong—</p> <p>12 that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith.</p> <p>13 I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, [a] that I planned many times to come to you (but have been prevented from doing so until now) in order that I might have a harvest among you, just as I have had among the other Gentiles.</p>	<p>8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for every one of you because the news of your faith is spreading throughout the whole world.</p> <p>9 I serve God by spreading the Good News about his Son. God is my witness that I always mention you</p> <p>10 every time I pray. I ask that somehow God will now at last make it possible for me to visit you.</p> <p>11 I long to see you to share a spiritual blessing with you so that you will be strengthened.</p> <p>12 What I mean is that we may be encouraged by each other's faith.</p> <p>13 I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that I often planned to visit you. However, until now I have been kept from doing so. What I want is to enjoy some of the results of working among you as I have also enjoyed the results of working among the rest of the nations.</p>	<p>8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world.</p> <p>9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention you</p> <p>10 always in my prayers, asking that somehow by God's will I may now at last succeed in coming to you.</p> <p>11 For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you—</p> <p>12 that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine.</p> <p>13 I do not want you to be unaware, brothers,[a] that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented), in order that I may reap some harvest among you as well as among the rest of the Gentiles.</p>

14 I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish.

15 That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are in Rome.

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.

17 For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last,[b] just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

14 I have an obligation to those who are civilized and those who aren't, to those who are wise and those who aren't.

15 That's why I'm eager to tell you who live in Rome the Good News also.

16 I'm not ashamed of the Good News. It is God's power to save everyone who believes, Jews first and Greeks as well.

17 God's approval is revealed in this Good News. This approval begins and ends with faith as Scripture says, “The person who has God's approval will live by faith.”

14 I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians,[b] both to the wise and to the foolish.

15 So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith,[c] as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”

## Understand Setting

Even though the Apostle Paul had not personally visited, the church of Christ was established in Rome. It is thought to have begun through Jews who had visited Rome during the Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came (Acts 2:10). Around A.D. 49, by the decree of Emperor Claudius that all Jews must leave, the Jews departed from Rome for a time. But during the reign of Emperor Nero, who took the throne in A.D. 54, they returned to Rome. In the church, Gentiles and returning Jews coexisted, but conflicts arose due to doctrinal differences. In the midst of this situation, good reports about the Roman church spread to others. The Apostle Paul, wanting to proclaim the true gospel of God recorded in Scripture, wrote the book of Romans. We now take a look together at Romans, a letter Paul sent around A.D. 57 from the region of Corinth, near the end of his third missionary journey.

## Meditate the Text

**1-1** **Observation** Why does Paul give thanks to God for the believers in Rome, and why does he desire to meet them? (verses 8, 11–12)

Because the faith of the believers in Rome was being spread throughout the whole world, and so that Paul could share spiritual gifts to strengthen them and receive mutual encouragement.

**Explanation** The church in Rome was not founded or taught directly by the Apostle Paul. Nevertheless, the exemplary faith of the believers was spread to many. Hearing this, Paul gave thanks and desired to share spiritual gifts so that the church could be more firmly established. Here, “spiritual gifts” refers not to special abilities but to the abundant grace given through the complete gospel. By sharing the gospel with the believers in Rome, Paul aimed to strengthen their faith. The more people proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, the more clearly the gospel is revealed within us. A community where more people proclaim the gospel becomes a community that demonstrates the power of the gospel.

**1-2 Application** Share how a faith community (or a certain person) has helped your faith grow and become firm.

**Explanation** In today’s passage, the Apostle Paul mentions that by sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with one another, the community will be more firmly established (Romans 1:12). The Bible emphasizes the importance of community. Alone, we may stumble or fail, but with others, we can endure and overcome. God has given us community so that we can persevere and triumph through difficult experiences. Jesus also spent the most time during His earthly ministry to establish a community of disciples. Later, this community of disciples changed the world through the gospel. Faith is not a journey walked alone, but a journey of belief walked together.

**2-1 Observation** What reason does Paul give for not being ashamed of the gospel, and what does he say is revealed in the gospel? (verses 16–17)

Paul is not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, and he says that God’s righteousness is revealed in the gospel.

**Explanation** Paul confesses that he is not ashamed of the gospel. Not being ashamed means that even when speaking publicly before many people, he does not find the gospel lacking, and he is not afraid of the suffering that may come as a result of the gospel. Through the gospel, God grants salvation. The gospel is the righteousness accomplished by God and is an amazing power.

**2-2 Application** What are the reasons I hesitate to share the gospel? In those situations, what comfort and assurance does God give me?

**Explanation** The Apostle Paul was not ashamed of the excellent gospel. He also was not afraid of the suffering that might come from proclaiming the gospel. Because God gives salvation through the gospel, Paul boldly proclaims it. We too should remember God’s righteousness and amazing power in the gospel and boldly share it with those who must hear it.

## Review the Text

The Apostle Paul strongly desired to visit the Roman church to clearly proclaim the gospel. However, since he could not go, he wrote and sent the book of Romans to record the true gospel and faith. The gospel Paul wanted to proclaim was the righteousness of God revealed through Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, solved the problem of sin by dying on the cross, and everyone who believes in His resurrection receives God's declaration of righteousness and salvation. The Apostle Paul powerfully proclaimed that this gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes. Paul expressed his desire that, according to God's calling, the gospel would be preached to all people. Today, we too must diligently proclaim the gospel, the power of God, in the name of Jesus Christ.

## Pray through the Text

- 1 May the small group of our church become communities centered on the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- 2 May we boldly proclaim to our neighbors the gospel that contains the power of salvation.

## Word Studies

**Verse 8** **Your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world** Paul specifically expresses gratitude for the faith of the believers in Rome being reported in the surrounding regions. He likely also heard news of the Roman church through Aquila and Priscilla. As an apostle called for the Gentiles, Paul rejoiced greatly. "The Pauline thanksgiving and prayer in verses 8–15 are an expression of this apostolic commission with reference to the church at Rome..." \_Thomas R. Schreiner, Romans (Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament), 36.

**Verse 9** **In the gospel of His Son ... I always mention you in my prayers without ceasing** Here Paul continues to use the expression "the gospel of His Son," which refers to the confession of faith regarding Jesus Christ recorded in Romans 1:1–4, encompassing the Old Testament covenant, the incarnation, the crucifixion, and the resurrection. "What should be highlighted, though, is the sphere of Paul's service, for he serves 'in the gospel of his Son' (ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ, en tō euangelīō tou huiou autou). The mention of the gospel draws us back into the orbit of verses 1–4, where Paul unfolded briefly the message of the gospel." \_Schreiner, Romans, 36.

**Verse 10** **According to God's will I hope to come to you** Paul earnestly desired to visit the Roman church. His reason was that, just as he had visited other Gentile regions to proclaim the gospel and establish churches, he wanted to do the same in Rome. For some unknown reason, the path was



blocked, which he expresses with regret. Nevertheless, he acknowledges that God's will is present in all these circumstances.

**Verse 11** **That I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you** The expression "spiritual gift" refers to a gift of the Spirit, a spiritual gift, or spiritual grace. Considering the context, it can be understood as faith through the gospel. Paul desired to strengthen the church community's faith through gospel proclamation. \_Editorial, Life of Faith PLUS, 18.

**Verse 12** **That we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith** Paul recognized that the Roman church was already established on a confession of faith in Christ. Yet he expresses his desire to visit, fully explain the gospel, and be mutually encouraged and grow together in the gospel. When believers witness and share the gospel with one another, its power is clearly revealed within the community. "The Roman church was a vital one, and thus Paul affirmed that the encouragement and edification would be mutual." \_Schreiner, Romans, 37.

**Verse 13** **That I may reap some harvest among you, even as I have among the other Gentiles** As an apostle called for the Gentiles, Paul visited many regions to proclaim the gospel, resulting in the establishment of believers and churches. He desired to bear the same fruit in Rome. In this context, "fruit" refers to believers who trust the gospel or churches established on the gospel. "His service is in the gospel (v. 9), the reason he wants to visit is to impart a spiritual gift so that they would be strengthened (v. 11), he desires to preach the gospel (v. 15) in Rome in order to bear fruit as he had elsewhere among the Gentiles (v. 13)." \_Schreiner, Romans, 37.

**Verse 14** **To Greeks and non-Greeks ... I am obligated** Paul uses this expression to suggest the composition of the Roman church, which included Greeks, non-Greeks, the wise, and the foolish. As an apostle called for the Gentiles, Paul guided both Gentiles and Jews in other regions to bear fruit in unity in the Lord. Because Paul considered his calling to the Gentiles very important, he expresses that he is "obligated" to them. "Verse 14 emphasizes one of the major themes of the opening, indicating that Paul aspired to proclaim the gospel in Rome because of his apostolic vocation to the Gentiles." \_Schreiner, Romans, 39. "The Roman church was a vital one, and thus Paul affirmed that the encouragement and edification would be mutual." \_Schreiner, Romans, 37.

**Verse 15** **So, as much as in me is, I am eager to preach the gospel** Paul desired to strengthen the faith of the believers already in the church and bear fruit by proclaiming Christ's gospel in Rome, leading to the establishment of more believers. "One of Paul's aims, then, was to strengthen the church of Rome in faith, for P. Bowers (1987) is surely correct that this was part of Paul's role as the apostle of the Gentiles. But Paul also desired to visit Rome in order to win more converts." \_Schreiner, Romans, 39.

**Verse 16a** **For I am not ashamed of the gospel** In the cultural context of the time, being ashamed of the gospel could mean two things: first, being ashamed of Jesus and denying Him (Mark 8:34-38), and second, fearing the suffering that comes when proclaiming the gospel (2 Timothy 1:8, 12). Therefore, Paul's statement that he is not ashamed of the gospel indicates that he is not only willing to confess Jesus publicly but also to endure any suffering. "The assertion that Paul is not ashamed in Rom. 1:16, therefore, refers both to his willingness to confess the gospel in public and the overcoming of fear. These are not empty words in Paul's case since he had already endured much suffering (2 Cor. 11:23-27)." \_Schreiner, Romans, 41.

**Verse 16b For it is the power of God** Paul elsewhere refers to the gospel as “the word of the cross,” meaning that Jesus paid for our sins on the cross, granting believers salvation and freedom. The gospel is the power of God that transforms unbelievers effectively and completely. “The gospel is the power of God that ‘results in’ (εἰς, eis) salvation. The δύνανμις θεοῦ (dynamis theou, power of God) in the gospel signifies the effective and transforming power that accompanies the preaching of the gospel. Elsewhere Paul describes the gospel as ‘the word of the cross’ (ὁ λόγος ὁ τοῦ σταυροῦ, ho logos ho tou staurou) that is ‘the power of God (δύνανμις θεοῦ) to us who are being saved’ (1 Cor. 1:18).” \_Schreiner, Romans, 41.

**Verse 16c First to the Jew, then to the Greek** Paul uses this expression emphasizing the universal reach of the gospel. Throughout Romans, he continually highlights that the gospel is meant to be spread worldwide. “Paul wants to emphasize the universal reach of the gospel, that it extends to both Jews and Gentiles. Indeed, the universality of the gospel is a theme that resounds throughout Romans (2:5–11; 3:9, 22–23, 29–30; 4:9–12, 16–17; 9:24; 10:11–13; 11:32; 15:8–12).” \_Schreiner, Romans, 41.

**Verse 17a For in it the righteousness of God is revealed** Verse 17 begins with “for,” explaining why the gospel is the power of God. Paul explains God’s righteousness in two ways: first, as a legal righteousness given as a gift to sinners, since they cannot be righteous on their own, and through Jesus Christ they are declared righteous. Second, God’s righteousness is a transforming power in the gospel, giving believers faith and resulting in life. “Referring to this righteousness as ‘alien’ also accords with the Pauline gospel since righteousness is ‘a gift of God.’ It is not intrinsic to human beings by nature but is a divine gift. Nor is it the case that human beings are righteous by virtue of any works that they have done. Nonetheless, many scholars maintain that God’s righteousness also is a divine activity that transforms the lives of believers. Significant arguments also support the view that Paul is speaking of righteousness as God’s saving power.” \_Schreiner, Romans, 44.

**Verse 17b From faith to faith** Paul emphasizes that God’s righteousness in the gospel is applied solely through faith. The repetition of “faith” underscores that from beginning to end, justification (“God’s righteousness”) is experienced only through faith. “Thus God’s righteousness is experienced by faith from first to last (17c).” \_Schreiner, Romans, 49.

**Verse 17c The righteous shall live by faith** Paul quotes Habakkuk 2:4, where the prophet foretells the judgment of Jerusalem through the Babylonian empire but states that those who trust God will live. Paul uses “shall live” not only in a present sense but also eschatologically. Therefore, those who believe in God’s righteousness obtain eternal salvation. “In Paul \_\_\_\_\_ is often eschatological (e.g., Rom. 6:10, 11, 13; 8:13; 10:5; Gal. 2:19–20), and it bears such a meaning here. Those who believe will obtain life eschatologically. ‘To be righteous by faith’ and ‘to live by faith’ are alternate ways of communicating the same reality.” \_Schreiner, Romans, 48.



Embracing the members with a shepherd's heart

# Small Group Preview

Small Group Usage

| Living Life Weekly Bible Study 4, September 22nd Scripture, P178 |

## Ice Breakers

If you have ever experienced persecution because of your faith, please share.

## Examine God's Word

Read Romans 8:31–39 together. Circle or underline words and expressions that are repeated or carry important meaning.

## Understand Setting

In the Roman era, emperors were worshiped as gods. The emperor was exalted like the gods in Greco-Roman mythology and regarded as one of the gods. In this context, Christians confessed only Jesus as the Lord. The expression “the Lord” was normally used for the emperor, so confessing Jesus as Lord was a declaration that He is greater and higher than the emperor. Romans criticized these Christians and gradually regarded them as a problematic group within the empire.

Additionally, Roman society worshiped many gods from Greco-Roman mythology, while Christians worshiped the one true God, creating social tension. Lastly, expressions used in the Lord's Supper—such as sharing bread and wine as Jesus' body and blood—were misunderstood as cannibalistic rituals. Because of these factors, Christians were seen as a group to be watched closely in Roman society, and during Emperor Nero's reign, they faced large-scale persecution.

## Meditate the Text

**1-1** **Observation** How does Paul explain that we are neither accused nor condemned? (verses 33–34)

**1-2** **Application** How does the fact that Jesus is still interceding for me, despite my many faults, bring me comfort and hope?

**2-1** **Observation** What does Paul mention as the things that cannot separate us from God's love? (verses 35, 38–39)

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**2-2** **Application** In what situations do I think God does not love me? When I doubt God's love for me, what should I do?

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### Review the Text

Christians were accused and condemned in the Roman Empire. Yet God declares believers righteous in Jesus Christ. Jesus sits at God's right hand, interceding and even defending believers. Therefore, no matter what harm is done to Christians in the Roman Empire, nothing can separate believers from God's love. Through Paul's encouragement, we too can walk in faith without being shaken even amid great suffering.

### Pray through the Text

- 1 Protect us in situations where we face difficulties because of our faith.
- 2 Let us dwell in the peace given by Your inseparable love.



## Ice Breakers

If you have ever experienced persecution because of your faith, please share.

## Examine God's Word

Read Romans 8:31–39 together. Circle or underline words and expressions that are repeated or carry important meaning.

NIV	GOD'S WORD	ESV
<p>31 What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?</p> <p>32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?</p> <p>33 Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.</p> <p>34 Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.</p> <p>35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?</p> <p>36 As it is written: “For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”[a]</p>	<p>31 What can we say about all of this? If God is for us, who can be against us?</p> <p>32 God didn't spare his own Son but handed him over [ to death ] for all of us. So he will also give us everything along with him.</p> <p>33 Who will accuse those whom God has chosen? God has approved of them.</p> <p>34 Who will condemn them? Christ has died, and more importantly, he was brought back to life. Christ is in the honored position—the one next to God the Father on the heavenly throne. Christ also intercedes for us.</p> <p>35 What will separate us from the love Christ has for us? Can trouble, distress, persecution, hunger, nakedness, danger, or violent death separate us from his love?</p> <p>36 As Scripture says: “We are being killed all day long because of you. We are thought of as sheep to be slaughtered.”</p>	<p>31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be[a] against us?</p> <p>32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?</p> <p>33 Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.</p> <p>34 Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.[b]</p> <p>35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?</p> <p>36 As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”</p>

37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,[b] neither the present nor the future, nor any powers,

39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

37 The one who loves us gives us an overwhelming victory in all these difficulties.

38 I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love which Christ Jesus our Lord shows us.[a] We can't be separated by death or life, by angels or rulers, by anything in the present or anything in the future, by forces

39 or powers in the world above or in the world below, or by anything else in creation.

37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

38 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers,

39 nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## Understand Setting

In the Roman era, emperors were worshiped as gods. The emperor was exalted like the gods in Greco-Roman mythology and regarded as one of the gods. In this context, Christians confessed only Jesus as the Lord. The expression "the Lord" was normally used for the emperor, so confessing Jesus as Lord was a declaration that He is greater and higher than the emperor. Romans criticized these Christians and gradually regarded them as a problematic group within the empire.

Additionally, Roman society worshiped many gods from Greco-Roman mythology, while Christians worshiped the one true God, creating social tension. Lastly, expressions used in the Lord's Supper—such as sharing bread and wine as Jesus' body and blood—were misunderstood as cannibalistic rituals. Because of these factors, Christians were seen as a group to be watched closely in Roman society, and during Emperor Nero's reign, they faced large-scale persecution.

## Meditate the Text

**1-1** **Observation** How does Paul explain that we are neither accused nor condemned? (verses 33–34)

We are neither accused nor condemned because of Jesus' death and resurrection. Jesus sits at God's right hand and intercedes for us.

**Explanation** Those who have sinned would normally face death. However, Jesus Christ died on the cross and rose again. Those who rely on Him are not condemned because God declares

those in Christ as righteous. Additionally, Jesus intercedes for us. The verb “intercede” in the text is a legal term: Satan accuses sinners in God’s court, but Jesus acts as our advocate, defending us at God’s right hand. Since Jesus has already paid the price for sin, those in Christ are not condemned but set free.

**1-2 Application** How does the fact that Jesus is still interceding for me, despite my many faults, bring me comfort and hope?

**Explanation** Sometimes we may feel no one prays for us. Romans 8 tells us there are two praying for us: the Spirit (v. 26) and Jesus (v. 34). This truth helps us rise from sorrow and discouragement with renewed strength. We should overcome fear and share this precious prayer with fellow believers facing difficulties.

**2-1 Observation** What does Paul mention as the things that cannot separate us from God’s love? (verses 35, 38–39)

Trouble, hardship, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, sword, death, life, angels, powers, things present, things to come, height, depth, or any other created thing.

**Explanation** From Romans 8:35–39, Paul lists all forces that threaten us on earth. Yet none can block or sever God’s love. This shows that the saving relationship between God and His children in Christ is unshakable. Therefore, believers are safe and secure in Christ.

**2-2 Application** In what situations do I think God does not love me? When I doubt God’s love for me, what should I do?

**Explanation** In times of deep sorrow or suffering, we may feel God’s Word is silent and our prayer life falters. Still, God’s love never wavers or fails. We need to hold this belief and read Scripture. This passage also underpins the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, showing that God never gives up on us but brings us to sanctification and glory. We must remain in prayer and attend worship even when it feels difficult. In God’s timing, doubts vanish, and His love becomes certain again.

## Review the Text

Christians were accused and condemned in the Roman Empire. Yet God declares believers righteous in Jesus Christ. Jesus sits at God's right hand, interceding and defending believers. Therefore, no matter what harm comes, nothing can separate believers from God's love. Through Paul's encouragement, we too can walk in faith without being shaken, even amid great suffering.

## Pray through the Text

- 1 Protect us in situations where we face difficulties because of our faith.
- 2 Let us dwell in the peace given by Your inseparable love.

## Word Studies

**Verse 31** **If God is for us, who can be against us?** After verse 30, Paul uses a comparative approach. Because God has done the greatest act—giving His precious Son—He will certainly protect us from smaller adversaries.

*"Since he has done the greatest thing imaginable—sacrificing his Son to death for their sake—then it surely follows that the Father in his grace will grant them everything along with his Son."* – Schreiner, *Romans in Baker Commentary*, 294.

**Verse 33** **Who shall bring any charge against God's elect?** This verse assumes an eschatological courtroom scenario. Because God gave His Son Jesus and paid the penalty for sin, His chosen ones experience God's righteousness even when accused. Believers enjoy the grace of justification, being declared righteous by God.

*"Believers can face the day of judgment with confidence, for those whom God has chosen as his own will certainly not be accused on the day of judgment. God has declared them to be right in his sight, and thus those who would accuse believers will not successfully establish their case."* – Schreiner, 296.

**Verse 34** **Who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us** After His death and resurrection, Jesus ascended and now sits at God's right hand, sharing authority with God and interceding for believers. This intercession provides great comfort and strength to those experiencing suffering and persecution.

*"The resurrection of Jesus was inevitably accompanied by his exaltation. Thus in fulfillment of Ps. 110:1 he reigns at the right hand of God. Finally, he intercedes on behalf of the saints. This intercession should not be separated from his death on behalf of his people; rather, his intercession on behalf of the saints is based on his atoning death."* – Schreiner, 297.

**Verse 37** **In all these things we are more than conquerors** The Greek verb expresses overwhelming victory, not just a simple win. Paul emphasizes unchanging, decisive triumph. – *Duranno Life PLUS*, September issue, 206.



**Verse 38 I am convinced** The verb is in the first-person perfect tense, emphasizing that past assurance continues into the present and is already complete. Following this, Paul lists multiple dimensions—Jewish, temporal, cosmic powers—yet none can separate us from God’s love. – *Duranno Life PLUS*, September issue, 208.

**Verse 39 Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus** Paul stresses that God’s protection and power are revealed in Christ. Those who abide in Christ are held with great comfort and strength. – *Duranno Life PLUS*, September issue, 209.

# • Ministry Prayer Request for September •

## Major Ministry Schedule

- Through the 54th Anniversary Founding Service on September 21, may the three campuses come together to passionately worship the great God.
- From September 1, may the 37th Evangelism Explosion course be filled with abundant grace, and may workers for spreading the gospel be raised up.
- Through the Women's Fall Wednesday Worship that began on September 3, pour out rich grace and comfort so that all participants are strengthened and build up their homes and church beautifully.
- Through the HJI Fall Semester starting September 6, may all adult participants be strengthened both physically and spiritually.
- Through the 49th One-on-One Discipleship Trainer Class beginning in September, may applicants be trained and established as mature discipleship leaders.
- Bless the September discipleship courses (Korean Q.T. School, English Q.T. School, and Family Relationships 2 built on the Gospel of Mark) with abundant grace so that participants grow spiritually.
- During the Relationship Skills Training Retreat from September 12–14, grant grace, and through the eight-week practical training, may participants experience restored relationships and transformative grace.

## Next Generation Prayer Requests

- May Sonlight students grow both physically and spiritually as they begin the new school year, and send volunteers to spiritually guide them.
- As Coram Deo students start the new semester, may they move forward with expectation and hope rather than fear, and faithfully seize the new opportunities God provides.

- May NEXT students build new friendships well with the start of the new semester and help establish a beautiful community within the church.
- May EW College students overcome the various trials they face in the world through God's Word and guidance.
- Pour out abundant grace on NeWave youth so that team leadership and small groups are established in a healthy way.

## • 10 Suggestions to Activate Community •

- Be a model of transparency by sharing your own needs.
- End meetings on time and allow for fellowship afterward.
- Open your home to others.
- Share food and enjoy fun moments together in the group.
- Serve one another and engage in everyday activities together like games or shopping.
- If possible, sit together during Sunday worship.
- Teach about the stages of small group life (Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing) to help people gain practical help.
- Call each other until the next meeting.
- Encourage members to build accountable relationships.
- Divide roles to grow together.

**Source** Adapted from Korea NCD Church Development Institute, "Four Directions for Healthy Holistic Small Groups" (Gwacheon: Korea NCD Church Development Institute, 2023), p. 37.

# Small Group Preview

Jesus community where God's kingdom is realized on this earth

2025. 9. 7. Bothell Main Campus 2pm



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