



DAILY BIBLE READING

THE ROMAN REVOLUTION (PART 1)

Tim Blagg

Read. Ask. Live. Love

Daily Bible Reading

What?

Sometimes we find it hard to read the Bible, don't we? At church we hear it all the time: "*read the Bible more.*" But how? Some of the devotionals on offer seem to have less Bible than story. Some of the Bible reading plans seem too big to take on all at once; what should I think about? How can I possibly know what questions to ask as I read through God's word?

It's in light of these questions that these daily bible readings have come into existence! The aim is to help you read God's word for yourself and ask some of the questions to comprehend what God is saying to you today through his living and active word, with the hope asking these sorts of questions for yourself as you read through the Bible in bigger doses that this has to offer. It's a tool, and hence it's only as valuable as our use of it.

My prayer for you as you use these - whether by yourself or with your family around the dinner table - is that God will work through his word to grow you into the fullness of Christ and bring you joy as you come to know him through his word.

How?

The way to approach it every day (as recommended) is:

- 1) Pray to God; it is his word we're reading, so ask him to help you understand it.
- 2) Read the passage once or twice.
- 3) Go through each question, looking back at the bible to think through them.
- 4) Pray about what you have learned, and live out the applications for today.

Want more?

If you want more studies like these ones, check out our online database at www.trinitycity.church/youth - just follow the links. Alternatively, if you're looking for more in depth bible reading plans, many can be found in study bibles or online. Chat to your bible study group leader or pastor for more information.

In Christ,

Tim

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Week 1

Day 1

- Read Romans 1:1-17

- Think through the following questions:

1. What are the things that “jump out” at you from this text - the things that are surprising or stick in your mind?
2. What questions do you have from reading these 17 verses? Write them down, pray over them and think through them over the next week.
3. What priorities can you see that Paul clearly has in his opening lines of Romans?

- Revolution for Today:

- You can't get one sentence out of Paul in Romans without him jumping straight to the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is what his life is all about. This is what he cares about. The gospel of Jesus Christ. We're going to spend more time in Romans thinking about what this gospel (good news) is all about. But for today, take some time out and reflect; what is *your* life all about? What can't you shut up about? Talk to God about it and give thanks for the good things He has given you! And as we embark on this revolution, take time out to check how your own passions stack up against Paul's. Maybe you might want to ask God to make you even more excited about the good news.

Day 2

- Read Romans 1:1-4

- Think through the following questions:

1. How does Paul introduce himself?
2. Who has Paul been set apart (or “separated”) for?
3. Who is this gospel about?

- Revolution for Today:

- This is a tight, condensed explanation of the gospel (good news) of God. God's good news was *promised* by God in the Bible (v.2), regarding God's Son, who was *fully human* (and descended from David) (v.3), and (after dying) was declared to be the Son of God by His *resurrection from the dead* (v.4). He is King of all, being God's Son. He died, and he was raised from the dead. Take some time now to think about how you would explain this gospel to someone else. How would you pass the gospel onto someone who had never heard it before? And maybe take some time out as well to write down why you think it *is* good news. Talk to God about it.

Day 3

- Read Romans 1:5-7

- Think through the following questions:

1. Through who and for whose name's sake does Paul say he received apostleship and grace?
2. How many people does Paul say he is to call to faith?
3. Who is Paul writing to?

- Revolution for Today:

- Paul explains what the "gospel call" is. He says it in v.5 - "...to call people...to the obedience that comes from faith." Paul *doesn't* mean that by obeying God, people are saved by God. He says that obedience comes from faith; we are saved by faith in God. But, obedience does come from faith! This means that when people really get the gospel, they respond by believing in God and wanting to live in a way that makes sense with them being God's people. It's like the school uniform of a high school. Just wearing the uniform doesn't mean you go to the school. But if you go to the school, you'll wear the uniform too, because it makes sense! Being obedient to God doesn't mean we're saved. Rather, having faith in God means that we live in a way that's consistent with that. We "wear the uniform" of being God's people. Take some time out to thank God for His offer of salvation that *doesn't* require any work on your part!

Day 4

- Read Romans 1:8-10

- Think through the following questions:

1. What is Paul thankful for?
2. How frequently does Paul remember the Roman Christians in his prayers?
3. What is Paul praying for?

- Revolution for Today:

- In these three verses, Paul gives us some insight into his prayer life. He gives thanks to God for other Christians and for people becoming Christian! He prays for other Christians. And he prays that God will help him to see other Christians. Paul has a very full prayer diary for other Christians! Is there anyone who you could be praying for? Take some time to give thanks to God for the Christians that you know - whether they're friends, parents, family or leaders! And pray for them - maybe even let them know that you're praying for them.

Day 5

- Read Romans 1:11-15

- Think through the following questions:

1. What does Paul hope to impart to the Christians in Rome?
2. What does Paul mean by his hope to “harvest” among the Roman Gentiles who didn’t believe in God yet?
3. Who does Paul say he is *bound* to in order to teach the gospel?

- Revolution for Today:

- Paul is eager to call people to faith, and to be mutually encouraged with the Christians who are already in Rome. These two things actually go hand-in-hand. The *best* way any Christian can encourage other Christians is to be getting in alongside them and sharing God’s gospel with people who don’t yet know it or believe it. What opportunities could you have to share the gospel with those who don’t know it yet? What other Christians do you know who are at work doing this? Ask God for help to share the gospel with those who don’t know it yet.

Day 6

- Read Romans 1:16-17

- Think through the following questions:

1. What is Paul not ashamed to do with the gospel? (Look back at v.11-15)
2. What is the gospel powerful to do?
3. What does the gospel reveal?

- Revolution for Today:

- We’ve talked about the gospel over the last week, and now at last we can see why the gospel is so great. The gospel is *so good* because it is the power of God to save people. The gospel is *so good* because through it, God shows us His absolute commitment to making us right with Him. This is why Paul can say he is not ashamed of the gospel; instead, he is eager to share it. He doesn’t want to tell people because he is *commanded* to, or because his youth leader told him to. He wants to share the gospel because he wants to and loves to for God’s name’s sake. Can you walk around and say “I am not ashamed of the gospel.”? Talk to God; ask Him to help you to understand the greatness of His gospel even more. Thank Him for saving you.

Day 7

- Church/Youth Group/Bible Study Group - Passage Covered:

- What was the Talk about?: _____

- What do I need to change? _____

Week 2

Day 8

- Read Romans 1:18-32

- Think through the following questions:

1. What are the things that “jump out” at you from this text - the things that are surprising or stick in your mind?
2. What questions do you have from reading these 15 verses? Write them down, pray over them and think through them over the next week.
3. Last week when we were looking at the first part of Romans 1, we saw that Paul said “...*the gospel...is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes...*” (v.16). Looking at these 15 verses, what do you think that people who don’t worship God need salvation from?

- Revolution for Today:

- There are many people who think that all that matters to God is living a “good life”. That God will let people into heaven based on them basically being good. But the question is, what is *good*? According to some of the people you can talk to, they might say that good is doing nice things like walking little old grannies across the street. According to this passage, however, good is based on honouring God as God; worshipping God as God. Giving thanks to God for the good things He gives us. Take a moment to think about that. Is this how you’d define good? Talk to God about this. Ask His help to see that this is *really* what good looks like.

Day 9

- Read Romans 1:18-20

- Think through the following questions:

1. What is being revealed from heaven?
2. What do “men”, who are godless and wicked, suppress?
3. What can people know about God from the creation of the world?

- Revolution for Today:

- The point Paul makes here is that *everyone* who has ever lived has known enough about God to worship Him. We may not know enough to know His name, or what His commandments are. But there is *no one* who hasn’t known enough to worship the creator. So what goes wrong? As we see in these verses, we *suppress* the truth. We ignore the evidence. There are some people who work *really hard* to ignore the evidence! And because of this, God’s wrath is coming. Think of some of your friends who don’t worship God. Take time to pray for them, that they will get to know and worship God.

Day 10

- Read Romans 1:21-23

- Think through the following questions:

1. Even though people knew God, what didn't they do?
2. Instead, their thinking became _____ and their hearts were _____.
3. People exchange worshipping God for worshipping images made to look like what?

- Revolution for Today:

- The appropriate response to God? Giving thanks to Him. Saying "*God, thank you for my family/friends/good looks/popularity/intelligence.*" But what do we do? We spend more time "worshipping" our family, or our friends, or our good looks, or our popularity, or our intelligence. How can we test this? Take some time to think about your life. Is there *anything* you have, which if it were taken away, would make you really *angry*? What about really sad? We are right to be sad, or upset, if someone or something we care about is taken away. But if we're devastated, there might be something bad going on in our hearts. We might be worshipping something instead of God. Is there anything or anyone in your life that threatens to do that? Talk to God about it. Thank Him for the good things He's given you. Ask Him to help you to keep Him in 1st place in your life.

Day 11

- Read Romans 1:24-25

- Think through the following questions:

1. Because people rejected God, what did God give them over to?
2. We naturally exchanged the truth about God for what?
3. We naturally worship and serve _____ things rather than the Creator.

- Revolution for Today:

- The big point? As us people reject God and worship things made by God, everything else gets messed up. Imagine that I made a banana cake and served it to you. Wouldn't it be weird if you fell down and worshipped the cake? "*I love you cake*" or "*Oh Banana cake, you complete me!*" What Paul is saying is that we are replacing the Creator, God, with created things. We are worshipping the cake instead of the baker! Paul says that because we're all messed up in the *most important area of life*, all the other areas are messed up too. God, because we reject Him, allows us to reject His created order and to have "sinful desires", but not forever. Take some time to apologise to God. Ask Him for forgiveness for rejecting Him and worshipping things He made. Ask Him to help you worship Him.

Day 12

- Read Romans 1:26-27

- Think through the following questions:

1. Because people rejected God, what did God give them over to?
2. As people exchanged God for fake gods, what do women and men exchange natural relationships for?
3. The most important thing for people in these two verses isn't their sexuality (although that plays a part). The most important thing is how they treat God. How should we all be treating God?

- Revolution for Today:

- Some churches, trying to seem relevant, get mixed up and pretend that Paul doesn't mean what he writes in these two verses. Others might say that Paul doesn't go far enough, and that people who are homosexuals should be rejected and can't be saved. Paul isn't saying either of these things. He is clear that homosexuality is sinful. Back in v.24, he was clear that *all* sexual immorality is sinful. And in v.29-30, he lists even more sins. God loves people who are homosexual, whether they practice it or not. He loves them so much that He sent Jesus to die for them. He loves us so much that He sent Jesus to die for us. Homosexuality, sexual immorality, murder, envy, greed... these are all sins which come about from *disordered* worship. We don't put God at number 1, and so everything else gets messed up (remember the banana cake example from yesterday?). If you have any friends or family that are homosexual, pray for them. Pray that they will know Jesus' love. Pray that God will work through you to show them God's love.

Day 13

- Read Romans 1:28-32

- Think through the following questions:

1. Because people didn't think it worthwhile to retain knowledge about God, what did God give them over to?
2. Look at the list of sins from v.29-31. What areas of life do these all affect?
3. How does Paul say that we as a society look on these sins?

- Revolution for Today:

- We all could have a couple of responses to this long list of sins. One response that some Christians have is "*Yes! I am so with you there God! These people in the world are all so horrible! I'm so glad I'm not like them!*" This has missed the point of Romans 1:16 - that *everyone* needs God's salvation. Romans 2:1-3:20 goes on to prove just how bad people who are religious are, and how much we

need God. The other response some Christians have is to appear “tolerant” of everything. These Christians will say “*That’s okay that you’re lying/stealing/watching pornography/cheating on your boyfriend/girlfriend. God loves you anyway and that’s all good stuff.*” It is true that God loves them. But no Christian for a second should pretend that these are good things. How should we respond? We should be upset when we see sin in the world. We should be upset when we see sin in ourselves. And we should be a bit like Paul, who in 1 Timothy 1:15 says “*...Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners - of whom I am the worst.*” We all need God’s salvation as #1 priority. And we need God’s help to stop having misplaced worship and to start worshipping God as He deserves. Pray about this today. Ask God to help you to re-order your life around worshipping Him as your top priority.

Day 14

- Church/Youth Group/Bible Study Group - Passage Covered:

- What was the Talk about?: _____

- What do I need to change? _____

Week 3

Day 15

- Read Romans 2

- Think through the following questions:

1. What are the things that “jump out” at you from this text - the things that are surprising or stick in your mind?
2. What questions do you have from reading these 29 verses? Write them down, pray over them and think through them over the next week.
3. How do you feel when you find out that someone else has been sinning? For example, if you were to find out that a classmate had been cheating on tests or assignments, but then was caught by the teacher and failed. How would you feel?

- Revolution for Today:

- Paul's big concern in Romans 1:18-32 was why people who aren't religious need the gospel. People who were brought up in homes not knowing about God specifically, or Jesus. He says why all the sinful things these people have done stems from their rejection of God. And now, when we hit Romans 2, Paul changes track and looks at the people brought up in religious homes - people who went to church every weekend, who read their bibles, fasted, prayed, etc. Paul looks at them and says that they need the gospel. Take a moment to look at your own life; how have you been brought up? If you were brought up in a Christian household, going to church and reading the bible, be thankful to God for it! You still need the gospel. You still need Jesus. And if you weren't, you need the gospel. You need Jesus. Why? Because our problem is our *attitude* towards God; back in Romans 1:21 "*For though they [people; that's us!] knew God, they did not glorify Him as God or show gratitude.*" Do you look at your own life and recognise that you need Jesus? We all do.

Day 16

- Read Romans 2:1-5

- Think through the following questions:

1. Who is without excuse? Why?
2. What is God's judgement based on? When will His judgement be revealed?
3. Why hasn't God judged people for rejecting Him as yet? What's He trying to achieve?

- Revolution for Today:

- There's a famous Christian thinker called "Francis Schaeffer", who live in the twentieth century. He came up with this idea of the "invisible tape recorder". The

idea was that, when God judges people, one of the ways He could judge us could be by the invisible tape recorder. Every day of our lives, God would record what we say and think, and what “standards” we hold other people to. Then, when God judges people, He just puts down the tape and presses play. God will judge you by the standards by which you judged other people. This isn’t too dissimilar to what Paul’s saying here. Do we judge people for being “sinners” when we act exactly the same? The point isn’t proving that “I’m right, and they’re wrong!” The point is to help people depend on Jesus (v.4). Ask God to help you to see that point; that people need Jesus. That the most loving thing you can do for someone is to invite them to meet Jesus.

Day 17

- Read Romans 2:6-11

- Think through the following questions:

1. Look at these verses. How would you describe God? (Hint: shows no favouritism (v.11), repay each one according to his works (v.6))._____
2. What kind of person is described in v.7 and 10?
3. What kind of person is described in v.8-9?

- Revolution for Today:

- What matters isn’t our background. It isn’t what sins we’ve committed in the past. God shows no favouritism. What matters is how we respond to God’s patience (v. 4). The one group of people responds with faith/obedience by repenting, asking God for forgiveness for their attitude of resistance towards Him. The other group of people responds with disobedience/unbelief, continuing to be self-seeking and act without any reference to God. It doesn’t matter if you’re religious or you’re irreligious. All that counts is how you have responded to God. Maybe there’s a person in your life who you look at and think “*He/She could never become a Christian!*” What counts isn’t their background or behaviour. It’s how they respond to God. Pray for this person. Look for opportunities to share the gospel with them.

Day 18

- Read Romans 2:12-16

- Think through the following questions:

1. On what basis will God judge what people have kept secret?
2. What kind of person is righteous before God?

3. Turn back to John 6:29 and read it. What do you think it means to truly do the work of the law? Based on this, what kinds of irreligious people (i.e. Gentiles) is Paul talking about?

- Revolution for Today:

- When a person becomes a Christian, God sends the Holy Spirit onto them just like that. No delay, no holding back. And one of the big things that the Holy Spirit does in people is it helps them to become more like Jesus. They start to live in ways that are consistent with what God says is right. If you want to think a bit more about this, read Romans 8:1-17, 26-30. So if you've become a Christian, God's working in you to make you more like Jesus! What's the best way for us to cooperate with the Spirit? It's for us to open our Bibles. Pray. Live with Christian community. The Spirit helps us to become more like Jesus every day. And this means that even people who have never read the Bible themselves, when they become Christians, God works in their hearts to change how they live.

Day 19

- Read Romans 2:17-24

- Think through the following questions:

1. What things, in v.17-20, does Paul say that the "Jews" (or for our case, the people brought up in Christian homes going to church regularly) have? _____

_____.
2. In v.21-23, what attitude does Paul ask the Jewish/religious people if they have? (hangman hint: _ y _ _ _ r _ _ y!) The definition of this attitude is to claim to have more "noble" actions or beliefs than a person actually does. They are fakers!
3. What's the big problem with this attitude, according to Paul?

- Revolution for Today:

- Nothing is sadder than to see someone reject Jesus because of how they see Christians acting. People who say "Jesus can't be God, because His people lie and steal and commit adultery while telling others not to!" It is right for Christians to be opposed to wrong behaviours. But we need to do it recognising who we really are. When we read God's word, we need to see what He's saying about us first of all, before we think about what He's saying to others. A sure-bet is that God is telling us that we need Him. That we can *only* be acceptable to Him if we rely on Jesus Christ. Take some time now to ask God to help you to read His word wanting to hear what He has to say to you. Thank Him that He does help you.

Day 20

- Read Romans 2:25-29

- Think through the following questions:

1. Circumcision represents being a Jewish person who has the law of God. In what ways could you say that being brought up in a Christian home could be similar to being “circumcised”?
2. What makes circumcision become uncircumcision according to Paul?
3. What makes someone a true Jew (i.e. a person who is God’s)?

- Revolution for Today:

- For someone to become a part of the people of God, they need what Paul calls “a circumcision of the heart”. This is done by the Holy Spirit, according to Paul, when someone believes in God. In Colossians 2:11, Paul writes “*In him [Jesus] you were also circumcised, in putting off the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ...*” People who believe in God are circumcised in the way that *really* counts in front of God. Church, youth group, reading your bible daily, praying, giving money to God... these are all great things. They all are important parts of the *Christian* life. But what makes someone right with God *isn’t* these things. What makes someone right with God is, as Paul puts it in v.4, *repentance*. A recognition that we need Jesus. Whether you’re a Christian right now, or not, do you see that this is what you need to make you right with God? Talk to God; thank Him for Jesus, who died for you to be truly “circumcised”. Ask Him to help you to rely on Jesus every day to be right with God.

Day 21

- Church/Youth Group/Bible Study Group - Passage Covered:

- What was the Talk about?: _____

- What do I need to change? _____

Week 4

Day 22

- Read Romans 3:1-20

- Think through the following questions:

1. What are the things that “jump out” at you from this text - the things that are surprising or stick in your mind?
2. What questions do you have from reading these 20 verses? Write them down, pray over them and think through them over the next week.
3. Eve Hill, a young woman from church, says that not everyone is “evil”. “There’s some *really* bad people like Hitler and Justin Bieber, but everyone else is pretty decent.” Based on this passage, how would you respond to Eve?

- Revolution for Today:

- Paul makes the big claim in these twenty verses. We’re *all* sinners. We *all* desperately need God’s forgiveness. How do you feel when you read this? How do you feel when you look at these verses? It’s a pretty hard and painful truth to swallow! But it’s a bit like going to the doctor to find out what that weird pain you’ve been having is. We are afraid of how big the problem could be, and might even avoid finding out! But, as painful and hard as it is to hear that we’re really sick (or really sinful, in this case), it’s the only way we can accept the “treatment” (the forgiveness from God). Take some time out to weigh up just what it means for you to be sinful. (And, if you’ve accepted the gospel of Jesus, just *how* good it is that God has forgiven you!). Are you someone who see’s the ugliness of sin? Or are you someone who’s “gotten used to it”? Ask God to help you to see sin as He see’s it. Ask God to help you to see people as He see’s us.

Day 23

- Read Romans 3:1-4

- Think through the following questions (and remember that “circumcision” is a way of saying “keeping all of the laws of Moses”):

1. What’s Paul’s answer to the question in v.1 - “What is the point of being a religious Jew?!”
2. Does Paul think that God has been loyal to His people?
3. Will God break any of His promises?

- Revolution for Today:

- This is a tricky part of scripture (don’t feel bad if you need to read these verses a few times!). Paul claims that God is *very* faithful; that even if *every one* of His people were faithless, He’d still be faithful and keep His promises. How good is that?! We love it when people keep their promises. And it really hurts when

someone breaks their promise. God is the kind of God that keeps His promises, even when we break every one of ours! In Romans 5:8, we get to see what it meant for God to keep His promises. "...*God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners [i.e. still God's enemies], Christ died for us.*" Reflect on this verse. God keeps His promises to us. Nothing can stop God from being faithful! Take some time today to thank God for keep His promises to you.

Day 24

- Read Romans 3:5-8

- Think through the following questions:

1. Does Paul think that God is unfair to pour out His wrath against sin?
2. Does God care about how we live and act?
3. What do you think of the argument that some people may have thought of (v.7-8) - that because God looks good when we are bad, we should do even more bad so that God looks even better?

- Revolution for Today:

- There are some people who say that "it's God's job to forgive me! Based on this, I can do whatever I want to with my life." It's kind of the same as the arguments that Paul considers in v.5-8. Doesn't me being bad make God look good?! But this is so wrong. God's "job" isn't to forgive people. In fact, God promises that He will judge the world *soon*. There are lots of people around us who don't really think God will judge them as being sinful. But that's not how God works. God is a faithful and fair judge; He is just. He won't judge people differently based on how "good" they make Him look. He's going to judge the world on how they have responded to Him. And there is only one way to respond to God's faithful promises; by accepting them and depending on God's promises. Have you accepted God's promises? Have you thanked Him for Jesus, who fulfils God's promise so that you can be forgiven?

Day 25

- Read Romans 3:9-12

- Think through the following questions:

1. Who is under sin?
2. Who is righteous and does what is good?
3. Who seeks God?

- Revolution for Today:

- This sounds kind of dodgy, doesn't it? Lots of people we know might not be Christians or anything, but don't they still look for God? Paul is saying that no one

actually looks for God *because* He is God. No one praises God naturally. No one goes “Jesus Christ is God” without God first finding them. Left to our own devices, we’d all reject God for who He is. We’d want a different god - a god we can control, or a god who gives us stuff. We wouldn’t want the God who has made Himself know through the Bible. This means that the only way anyone can find God is if He finds them first. Can you think of anyone who you know who doesn’t know God yet? Take some time out to ask God to help them to find Him. And who knows? God might want to work through you to help them find Him.

Day 26

- Read Romans 3:13-18

- Think through the following questions:

1. What sorts of things does God have to say about how we naturally use our voices and words?
2. What sorts of things does God have to say about how we naturally approach relationships with others?
3. How does God see how we naturally live?

- Revolution for Today:

- “Fear” is a weird phrase, isn’t it? It makes me think of heights (eek!). Fear of God. What does it mean? Fear means more than being afraid in the Bible. Fear means seeing God as **big**. It means seeing God as far more important than *anything* else. It means recognising God for who He is. And based on that, you live accordingly. None of us naturally do this; we all live our lives trying to make God appear smaller, and trying to make ourselves bigger. Just take a moment to think through your life. What things do you *need*? Who do you worry about accepting you? We do have some things we need - don’t get me wrong! But our *biggest* and *most important* need is for a right standing with God. And the *only* way we can see this happen is through Jesus. A good way to see how *big* God is is to read through some of the great passages of the Bible about Him. Try it today! Read through one of these and pray in light of them. Isaiah 6. Psalm 8. Daniel 7. Revelation 4-5. 1 Kings 18:16-39.

Day 27

- Read Romans 3:19-20

- Think through the following questions:

1. What does the law do to us?
2. Who will be justified in God’s sight by the works of the law?
3. What does the law bring?

- Revolution for Today:

- There are two things we need to see that this passage says. This passage *doesn't* say that true followers of Christ shouldn't do the works they were saved to do (Ephesians 2:10). This passage *does* say that you *cannot be made right with God because you do good stuff. You cannot be right with God because you ticked enough boxes.* Our dilemma is this. We can't be right with God through our actions. We have *nothing* to offer that will make God please with us. In fact, what the law does is it shows us how great God is; how holy and perfect He is. It shows us how much we fall short of reaching His standards. It shows us how much we need Him to do all the work! And this is called "grace". We need God's grace. We need Jesus to die for our rejection of God. We need Jesus' righteousness with God to be made ours. Otherwise, we have no hope to stand in front of God.

For example, think through trying to swim from Australia to Hawaii. One of us can't swim, and drowns immediately. Another one of us stays afloat for an extra few minutes, and then drowns. The third one of us is a strong swimmer, and swims for 48 hours! But, then they become exhausted and drown. Who made it to Hawaii? None of us. Who died? All of us. We need another way there. We need a plane. And, in the same way, we can't be right with God by our own efforts. No matter how good we are, we'll all fall short. We need God's way.

Day 28

- Church/Youth Group/Bible Study Group - Passage covered:

- What was the talk about?: _____

- What do I need to change? _____

Week 5

Day 29

- Read Romans 3:20-31

- Think through the following questions:

1. What are the things that “jump out” at you from this text - the things that are surprising or stick in your mind?
2. What questions do you have from reading these 12 verses? Write them down, pray over them and think through them over the next week.
3. According to this passage, how are people justified in God’s sight? How are people *not* justified in God’s sight?

- Revolution for Today:

- There is only one correct response to God’s offer to justify us. It is to come to Him with empty hands. It is to accept the gift He freely offers! It is to realise that you can only be right with God because of what He has done through Jesus on the cross. This means that when you look at other Christians, there’s no room to think “*I’m better than you*”, or “*I could never be that good/accepted by God!*” We are all accepted by God - justified - by God’s grace alone! Here’s one acronym for G.R.A.C.E - “God’s *righteousness* at Christ’s expense”. Take some time today to reflect on God’s grace in saving you. Thank Him. And pray for people who don’t know God’s grace as yet.

Day 30

- Read Romans 3:20-22

- Think through the following questions:

1. Can anyone be justified (*justified means made right with God*) through doing what God’s law says?
2. How has God’s righteousness been revealed to us?
3. What is one of the things that God’s law (and the prophets) do?

- Revolution for Today:

- v.22 tells us the big game-changer. God’s righteousness comes through to anyone who believes through faith in Jesus Christ. But what is faith? A good word to use instead is *trust*. When you get onto a plane, you’re *trusting* that plane with your life. You’re trusting that it will get you to your destination. And you act accordingly. It wouldn’t make much sense to say “*I trust this plane will get me to Melbourne,*” but then you sit down in the airport and watch it fly off! You need to act on that trust. That’s real trust. And it’s kind of the same with Jesus. We can’t just not commit to Him, but go “*Yeah, I believe that Jesus will save me,*” but then not actually act on it. Hebrews 11:1 says this: “*Now faith is being sure of what we*

hope for, and certain of what we do not see.” Are you committing to Jesus? Are you showing that He’s your king daily? Or are you just sitting in an airport, claiming you trust Jesus but never really acting on it? Talk to God about this today. And the great thing is that it doesn’t matter how much you “trust” the plane when you’re inside. Once you’ve committed, you will get to the destination. When you trust Jesus, you will make it. Why? Because He’s made it.

Day 31

- Read Romans 3:23-24

- Think through the following questions:

1. Who has sinned?
2. Who can be justified?
3. Did God have to justify people?

- Revolution for Today:

- How does God justify people? One of the words that is used is “redemption” (in v. 24). Redemption means paying someone’s debt. It means buying them out of slavery. What do we need redeeming from? We’ve seen in a little in v.23 - we need redemption from our slavery to *sin*. Our slavery to rejecting God. Our slavery which meant we’d die. The debt we owed was death - a punishment for our rejection of God. And Jesus pays the price. He takes all our rejection of God and pays the price for us. He *redeems* us from our rejection of God. We owed God something we could never pay back and live to tell the tale. But Jesus comes in and pays it all! Take some time to thank God for paying the price for you. He didn’t have to. But He did! He *fairly* pays the price.

Day 32

- Read Romans 3:25, 2:4

- Think through the following questions:

1. (from 2:4 and 3:25) What is God’s patience/kindness in not judging people for their sins as yet there for?
2. Who did God present as an atoning/propitiating sacrifice?
3. How does the atoning/propitiating sacrifice have any impact on us? (what do we need to “do” for it to work for us?)

- Revolution for Today:

- Propitiating is another word that Paul uses to describe how God justifies His people. Propitiation means to deal with anger, or to deflect it. That’s a weird word, isn’t it? Going *way* back to Romans 1:18, we see that “*God’s wrath is revealed from heaven against all godlessness and unrighteousness of people who*

by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.” God’s wrath is revealed; God is rightly angry with people for rejecting Him (i.e. sin). God is rightly angry with all of us - not just with our sin, but with us for sinning. We deserve God’s wrath. But what is amazing is that at the cross, Jesus takes all God’s wrath. He propitiates for us! He takes all God’s anger against our unrighteousness, so that there is no anger from God left. When I was in year 7, I taunted a big, strong guy who used to bully me. He came at me and was going to smash my head in. And, because I had made him angry, I definitely had brought it on myself. But another guy stepped in and said “*Don’t bother - it’s not worth it.*” This other guy propitiated the big guy for me. He took away this guy’s anger, and spared me his wrath. But when it comes to God, we’ve done more than just taunt Him. We’ve turned our backs on Him. We’ve rejected the only one in the universe who we *definitely should never* turn our backs on. But Jesus deals with all God’s righteous anger. Have you thanked God for that? Have you realised just how much Jesus has saved you from by dying in your place? Take some time out to write down how you think and feel in response to this. And then pray about it.

Day 33

- Read Romans 3:26

- Think through the following questions:

1. Who did God present?
2. What was God demonstrating by presenting?
3. God is at the same time _____ and the one who _____ people.

- Revolution for Today:

- God has to judge sin. He is a loving, just God. If He didn’t judge sin/unrighteousness, He wouldn’t be just. He wouldn’t be fair. This is pretty hard for us to cope with. All that God owes *anyone* is judgement. We deserve it, because we’ve rejected Him. But because God loves us so much, He has made a way to judge our sin without destroying us. Jesus’ death on the cross. There was absolutely *no other way* for God to make people right with Himself than by sending Jesus to die on the cross. Jesus *fairly* is punished so that we can *fairly* be saved. There are some people who will say that it isn’t fair for God to judge some people. But the truth is, it isn’t fair for God to save *anyone*. We all deserve to be judged. But God found a way to *fairly* save people from judgement. And that’s through faith in Jesus Christ’s death on the cross. Do you know anyone that doesn’t know this? How can you be sharing this good news with them?

Day 34

- Read Romans 3:27-31

- Think through the following questions:

1. Based on the gospel - the justification by faith - what is excluded from our lives?
2. How does God justify *any person* - regardless of background, age, nationality or even religious background?
3. Do we cancel the law (i.e. God's laws as recorded in the Old Testament)?

- Revolution for Today:

- There are some Christians today who would say that we don't need the Old Testament (which is "the law and the prophets" in v.21). However, Paul doesn't agree with that opinion! In v.31 he says that by promoting justification by faith, Christians uphold the law! So what is the point of the Old Testament? Why should we read it? There are heaps of reasons, but we'll just look at a couple:

1/ In 1 Corinthians 10:11, Paul says that the Old Testament happenings were written down as warnings and examples for us today. So we read about people like Daniel, and get an idea of how to show faithfulness to God. We get shown important ways that followers of God live.

2/ As Paul has said throughout Romans 2-3, the Old Testament law is particularly helpful as it shows us how perfect God is and what God is like. It shows us how much we need God's perfection, because we can't live up to His law. It points us to needing God.

Only one person has kept the law perfectly. And that is Jesus. By putting faith in Jesus, not only does He deal with our sin. He gives us all His righteousness. So when God looks at us, He see's Jesus perfect obedience to the law.

So how do we respond? Thank God for Jesus' righteousness. And don't see the law as a "challenge" for us to keep or boxes for us to tick. It is there to point us to Jesus - God's righteousness.

Day 35

- Church/Youth Group/Bible Study - Passage Covered:

- What was the talk about?: _____

- What do I need to change? _____

Week 6

Day 36

- Read Romans 4

- Think through the following questions:

1. What are the things that “jump out” at you from this text - the things that are surprising or stick in your mind?
2. What questions do you have from reading these 25 verses? Write them down, pray over them and think through them over the next week.
3. Has God ever justified anyone by any method aside from faith?

- Revolution for Today:

- Here's the question for every one of us. Imagine, on that last day, that you're standing in front of God. He asks you *“Why should I let you into heaven?”* What would your answer be? Some of the Jewish Christians in Rome would have said that Abraham was right with God because of his law keeping. They would have thought that David was right with God because of his works. But there's only one reason why anyone can get into heaven. That reason is faith in Jesus Christ. Why should God let you into heaven? *Because Jesus died for my sin.* Thank God for this. Take time out to think whether you live like this is the only reason God will accept you.

Day 37

- Read Romans 4:1-8

- Think through the following questions:

1. If Abraham was made right with God by keeping the law (i.e. justified by works), he would have something to _____ about, but not to God.
2. Why did God declare/credit Abraham as righteous?
3. What makes David joyful?

- Revolution for Today:

- Abraham and David were both big heroes of the faith in the Old Testament. They were great! But when we look at their lives, we see that they weren't perfect. In fact, they both consistently rejected God through the way that they acted. They both needed God's forgiveness for their sin. They, just like us, needed to be made right with God through faith. Some people say “I wish I had your faith.” But that doesn't make any sense, really. Faith isn't a “power” or a “muscle”; it's a gift from God. It's how we respond to God's promises. God's the one who makes us right with Him. And based on that, there's no way anyone can say “look how good my faith is!”. No, we all look at God and say “look how good my God is.” Take some

time to thank God for this amazing gift of forgiveness. He is a very generous and great God.

Day 38

- Read Romans 4:9-12

- Think through the following questions:

1. What blessing is Paul talking about? (hint: look at v.6-8)
2. Go back and read through Genesis 15-17 to get some more information on Abraham's life. When was Abraham declared righteous (in relation to being circumcised)?
3. Who is Abraham the (spiritual) father of?

- Revolution for Today:

- God justifies all through the same faith - those who are religious, and those who aren't. People who have grown up going to Church still need to be justified by faith in Jesus. People who have never been to Church need to be justified by faith in Jesus. Who do you know that doesn't yet have faith in Jesus? How can you be praying for them and sharing the good news about Jesus with them?

Day 39

- Read Romans 4:13-15

- Think through the following questions:

1. The promise to Abraham and his descendants wasn't through the _____, but through the righteousness that comes by faith.
2. If Abraham's spiritual descendants (heirs) are those who keep the law, what's the point of faith and the promise?
3. What does the law produce? How does it produce it? (hint: look back at Romans 1:18 and 2:12)

- Revolution for Today:

- God's promises are so big that they aren't dependent on people keeping the law. This is so important for us, because we *can't* keep God's law. In fact, v.15 sounds a little weird - "...where there is no law, there is no transgression." Paul means that when we know the law, which clearly defines right and wrong, we are *even more* guilty of rejecting God's rule, because we actually know it. In that sense, religious people - people who have grown up going to church - need God to justify them by faith. God isn't relying on us to follow His law in order to make us right with Him. A good test of whether you really believe this or not is how you respond when you "mess up" - when you fail to keep God's law. It's true that this is something frustrating. But do you worry that God couldn't possibly save you? Do you think

that, unless you're extremely sorry, you can't be right with God? Being justified by faith means that how well we have kept or will keep the law is irrelevant. God has done it all. Thank Him for saving you today.

Day 40

- Read Romans 4:16-22

- Think through the following questions:

1. How *does* God fulfil his promise?
2. Who is Abraham the (spiritual) father of?
3. v.21 is a great definition of what faith is. Write it out in your own words.

- Revolution for Today:

- Abraham was fully convinced that what God had promised, God would do. There are two great ways to be a bit like Abraham in this. The first is to get to know God's promises and the God who made them. We get to do this even better by reading the Bible more, praying and spending time with other Christians (i.e. Church, youth group). Talk to God about the promises He has made. Ask Him to help you believe them. And the second way to be more like Abraham is to *live* out God's promises. Why? Because God can fulfil them. God is powerful enough to fulfil them. Try it out over the next few weeks - read through the Gospel of John (21 chapters - one chapter a day for three weeks). Write down the promises Jesus makes. Think through them. Pray about them. And live with them as the promises God has made to you and all followers of Christ.

Day 41

- Read Romans 4:22-25

- Think through the following questions:

1. Who were the words, "*it was credited to him for righteousness*", written for?
2. How will it be credited to us?
3. What's the evidence that God offers that it will be credited to us for righteousness?

- Revolution for Today:

- God's promise to declare us as right with Him has proof. Not only has God promised it - not only is God the best promise-keeper ever! But He actually has shown us proof that He will declare us right with Him. The proof? Raising Jesus from the dead (v.24-25). Why can you be confident that God has forgiven you for rejecting Him? Because Jesus is in heaven. Jesus has been raised from the dead. And because He is alive, you can walk around with confidence that He has

forgiven you. Do you have this assurance that you are right with God? Thank God for His work to save you!

Day 42

- Church/Youth Group/Bible Study Group - Passage Covered:

- What was the talk about?: _____

- What do I need to change? _____
