

INVESTIGATING GOD'S WORD...

EPISTLES [PART 1]
YEAR SIX | SUMMER QUARTER



SUNDAY SCHOOL CURRICULUM
FOR OLDER ELEMENTARY CHILDREN

SS06SU-E

LESSON SEQUENCE

SUMMER QUARTER

The Lesson Sequence gives the teacher an overview of the entire quarter. The central goal of the *Investigating God's Word...* curriculum is to enable children the opportunity to read and study the entire Bible—from Genesis to Revelation—by the time they “graduate” from 6th grade.

LESSON ONE	Romans 1–5
LESSON TWO	Romans 6–11
LESSON THREE	Romans 12–16
LESSON FOUR	I Corinthians 1–9
LESSON FIVE	I Corinthians 10–16
LESSON SIX	II Corinthians 1–7
LESSON SEVEN	II Corinthians 8–13
LESSON EIGHT	Galatians
LESSON NINE	Ephesians
LESSON TEN	Philippians
LESSON ELEVEN	Colossians
LESSON TWELVE	I Thessalonians
LESSON THIRTEEN	II Thessalonians

LESSON ONE | ROMANS 1–5

SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

WELCOME

Proverbs 20:11
2–3 mins.

DRILL TIME

The Apostle Paul
5 mins.

W.O.W!

Righteousness
5 mins.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Timeline
2–3 mins.

BIBLE INVESTIGATION

Romans 1–5
20–30 mins.

LESSON-AT-HOME

Romans 3:22–23
2–3 mins.

OVERVIEW

We begin our studies this quarter in the Apostle Paul’s majestic Letter to the Romans. Romans 1 opens with Paul’s introduction of himself and his longing to visit Rome. It is the power of the gospel that compels him to testify to the Jews and the Gentiles. It is also the power of God in creation that reveals His wrath for sin to all mankind. There is no excuse for anyone, as the rebellious continue to worship themselves rather than the Creator.

Romans 2 continues Paul’s logic about God’s righteous judgment. Instead of judging others, we should thank God for His mercy towards us. Both Jews and Gentiles are sinners before God. No amount of law-keeping will help their situation. Romans 3 continues the thought by testifying to God’s righteousness amidst our own unrighteousness. The only way to be righteous is to enjoy the righteousness of Christ through faith alone.

In Romans 4, Paul makes certain that it is understood that even Abraham, the father of the faith, was righteous only because he believed God. The righteousness of Christ was credited to his account, as it can be for all who are His children. Romans 5 shows how we have peace and joy when we are justified by faith. Death came through Adam, but a full, eternal life comes through Jesus Christ alone!

PREPARATION

Briefly read through and meditate on Romans 1–5 this week.

TEACHING ENCOURAGEMENT

It is easy for children (as well as adults) to be convinced of their own righteousness. We compare ourselves to others and attempt to formulate records that make ourselves look pretty good. At least I’m not as bad as that other guy! In order to understand the gospel truth of the righteousness of Christ, you must train your children to see their utter un-righteousness. In and of themselves, they cannot be “straight” or “right” with God, no matter how good they think they are. Show your students the depths of their unrighteousness so they learn to clothe themselves in the perfect righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ—by faith alone!



WELCOME

THE **WELCOME** SERVES AS BOTH AN OPPORTUNITY TO GREET THE CHILDREN AS WELL AS AN EFFORT TO HELP THEM GET FOCUSED. EACH WEEK, YOU WILL BEGIN WITH QUESTIONS OR AN ACTIVITY THAT WILL ENGAGE THE CHILDREN AND HELP THEM THINK ABOUT GOD AND HIS WORD.

DRILL TIME GIVES THE CHILDREN THE OPPORTUNITY TO RECALL AND REHEARSE WHAT THEY HAVE BEEN TAUGHT IN THE PAST—AT HOME, SCHOOL AND/OR CHURCH.

THIS ELEMENT ALLOWS THE INVESTIGATING GOD'S WORD... CURRICULUM TO COVER MUCH MORE BIBLICAL "GROUND," SINCE TIME IS NOT EXPENDED REPEATING THE SAME BIBLE STORIES OVER AND OVER AGAIN FROM YEAR TO YEAR.

Greet the students. Welcome visitors. To prepare the students for class today, read Proverbs 20:11.

¹¹ Even a child makes himself known by his acts, by whether his conduct is pure and upright.

Say: *This proverb tells us how we are “known” to other people. How do people “know” you? [By watching my actions.] We all are quickly judged by the words we speak and the things we do. We show others that we either tend to do what is right or we run to do what is wrong. This is one reason we study God’s Word—so it can change our hearts and thereby change our conduct too!*



DRILL TIME

Let’s move on to DRILL TIME—our weekly opportunity to review what we have learned in the past. Are you ready?

Today questions: *What was the Apostle Paul’s conduct before Jesus changed his heart? Who was Paul’s main partner on his first missionary journey? Who was with Paul when an earthquake sprung them out of prison? What was Paul’s occupation that provided money for himself as a missionary? Who were Paul’s close friends that were also tentmakers? Where did Paul die?*

Call on volunteers or select students to make attempts.

Answer:

1. He persecuted Christians.
2. Barnabas.
3. Silas.
4. He was a tentmaker.
5. Priscilla and Aquila.
6. In Rome.

Say: *This quarter, we will be studying several of Paul’s letters. Some of these were written while on his missionary journeys, while others were written while he was in prison.*

THE **W.O.W!** IS THE WORD OF THE WEEK. THIS ELEMENT IS INCLUDED TO HELP THE CHILDREN BUILD THEIR THEOLOGICAL AND BIBLICAL VOCABULARIES. THESE WORDS ARE VITAL TO THE CHRISTIAN'S UNDERSTANDING OF GOD AND HIS WORLD.



W.O.W!

*Remember that, every week, we will define a new word and add it to our growing Christian vocabulary. Our W.O.W! (Word of the Week) this week is **RIGHTEOUSNESS**. Write it on the board.*

RIGHTEOUSNESS is a word used all through the Bible. One definition of RIGHTEOUSNESS is “holy and upright living in accordance with God’s law.” To be RIGHTEOUS is to live God’s way, which is the right way. The word RIGHTEOUS actually comes from a word that means “straight.”

Only God is perfectly RIGHTEOUS. Since you and I are sinners, our RIGHTEOUSNESS is very limited. The Bible even describes our RIGHTEOUSNESS as “dirty rags.” If all you have is your own RIGHTEOUSNESS, then there is no way you will measure up to God’s standard.

Thankfully, as we will read today, we can gain RIGHTEOUSNESS that is not our own. We can be made RIGHT with God. The cross of Jesus transfers upon those who put their faith in Christ a RIGHTEOUSNESS not our own. Whose is it? [Christ’s] We’ll talk more about this when we investigate God’s Word together.

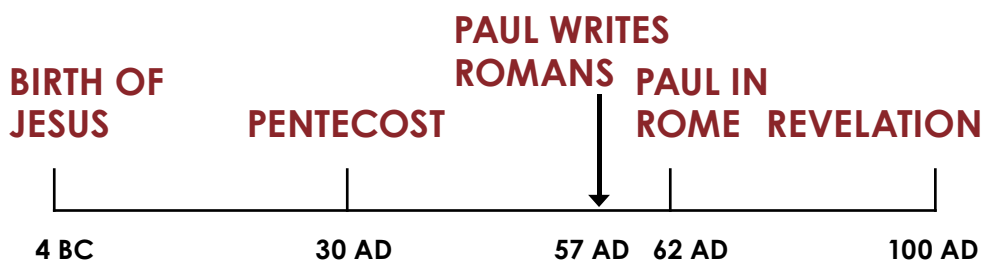


HISTORICAL CONTEXT

EACH WEEK, THE BIBLE LESSON WILL BE PLACED IN **HISTORICAL CONTEXT** BY USE OF A TIMELINE. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE CHILDREN LEARN HOW THE STORY OF REDEMPTIVE HISTORY FITS TOGETHER. BIBLE STORIES MUST NOT BE VIEWED AS DETACHED SCENES—THEY ARE TO BE SHOWN AS A PART OF A MUCH BIGGER PICTURE. THE TIMELINE IS A USEFUL TOOL TOWARD THAT END.

As you study these chapters in Romans today, put this timeline on the board for some important historical context.

This Week’s Timeline





BIBLE INVESTIGATION

THE BIBLE INVESTIGATION TIME IS THE HEART AND SOUL OF THE WEEK'S LESSON. IT PLUNGES THE STUDENT DIRECTLY INTO GOD'S WORD, NOT SIMPLY A PARAPHRASE OF A BIBLE STORY.

ALL SCRIPTURE TEXT INCLUDED IN THE CURRICULUM IS FROM THE ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION (ESV).

THE BIBLE READING IS TAKEN IN SHORT SECTIONS, SEPARATED BY TIMES OF DISCUSSION, QUESTIONS, AND APPLICATION POINTS. THIS FORMAT ALLOWS AMPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO STOP, THINK ABOUT AND DISCUSS WHAT IS BEING READ.

Have the students turn in their Bibles to the Book of Romans.

Introduction: *The Apostle Paul wrote the Book of Romans during his third missionary journey. This long letter was written to the church in Rome that he was planning to visit. He probably wrote Romans from the city of Corinth. Paul wrote this letter to give an account of the gospel of Jesus Christ in preparation of his visit. We do not have time to read all of Romans, but over the next three lessons we will gain a good idea of what Paul had to say in this amazing letter!*

*We begin in Romans 1. **Read Romans 1:1-4.***

¹ Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ² which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, ³ concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴ and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord,

Discussion: *This is Paul's introduction to this letter. What does he call himself? [A servant of Christ Jesus; an apostle.] Paul was set apart by God to take the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles. He knew firsthand the power of God, didn't he?*

*Let's go down to verse 15. **Read verses 15-17.***

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, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

Application: *There's our Word of the Week! Paul preached a **RIGHTEOUSNESS** that only comes from God through faith in Christ. This is the only gospel there is! It is the power of God.*

*Now, go to verse 18. **Read verses 18-21.***

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. ¹⁹ For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. ²¹ For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him,



THIS **GREY SIDEBAR** FOUND ON ALL PAGES IS FOR THE TEACHER TO WRITE NOTES AS HE OR SHE PREPARES THE LESSON.

OTHER TEACHING TIPS OR IMPORTANT EXEGETICAL INFORMATION MAY ALSO APPEAR ON THE SIDEBAR.

but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Discussion: *Paul now says that no one has an excuse because God's power can be clearly seen in His creation. So why do so many people reject God? **Allow answers.** Our sinful hearts reject God and darken our minds and hearts. The rest of Chapter One describes the destruction that happens to all who reject God.*

*Let's pick up in Romans 2. **Read Romans 2:1-4.***

¹ Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things. ² We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who practice such things.

³ Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God? ⁴ Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?

Application: *Do you get what Paul is saying? We cannot pass judgment on others who reject God because God is JUDGE. If we spend our time condemning others, we are showing that we do not understand the GRACE of God in our own lives. It is only God's kindness that will keep you from rejecting Him too!*

Summary: *In the rest of Chapter Two, Paul calls upon the Jews to not rest in their own RIGHTEOUSNESS or their own keeping of the law. Law-keeping does not save anyone. We need the grace of God in order to be saved! We are simply un-RIGHTEOUS people that need the RIGHTEOUSNESS of God to appear to us.*

*Let's go to Romans 3. **Read Romans 3:9-12.***

⁹ What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, ¹⁰ as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; ¹¹ no one understands; no one seeks for God. ¹² All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one."

Application: *So, who is RIGHTEOUS? [No one.] Who seeks God? [No one.] All people have turned away from God. We are all under sin. What a sobering truth! What do we do about it?*



APPLICATION POINTS ARE
WOVEN INTO THE FABRIC
OF THE DISCUSSION,
RATHER THAN BEING
LEFT TO THE END OF THE
LESSON.

*Let's keep reading. **Read verses 20-24.***

²⁰ For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. ²¹ But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

Application: *Can anyone be declared RIGHTEOUS by obeying the law? [No.] The law just shows us what sinners we are. How can we become RIGHTEOUS before God, then? [Through faith in Jesus Christ.] Because we all have sinned and fall short of God's glory, we all need the RIGHTEOUSNESS that only comes by Christ Jesus.*

*Now, let's go on to Romans 4. **Read Romans 4:1-3.***

¹ What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? ² For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³ For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness."

Discussion: *Now Paul uses our Word of the Week to talk about the father of our faith: Abraham. Was Abraham RIGHTEOUS because of all his good works? [No.] He enjoyed the RIGHTEOUSNESS of Christ because he believed God. Paul wants to make sure that we don't think that God's people in the Old Testament were right with God because of all of their sacrifices or law-keeping. All people, at all times, are only made RIGHTEOUS because of Christ.*

*Let's go down to verse 13. **Read verses 13-15.***

¹³ For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴ For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵ For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression.

Application: *Again, was Abraham RIGHTEOUS because he obeyed God's law? [No.] If you and I could become RIGHTEOUS by obeying the law, then faith would have no value. The law only shows us that we deserve God's wrath as sinners. The law shows that we are*



terrible sinners. It is by faith alone in Christ alone that we are made RIGHTEOUS. This is the promise of God from the very beginning.

*Let's read more. **Read verses 16-18.***

¹⁶ That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, ¹⁷ as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. ¹⁸ In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, “So shall your offspring be.”

Discussion: *Abraham is not just the father of all the Jews. God promised him that he would be the father of many nations. He is your father if you put your faith in Christ! The promise made to Abraham long ago is fulfilled in all who follow Jesus. That's what Paul is saying here!*

*Go down to verse 20. **Read verses 20-25.***

²⁰ No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹ fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²² That is why his faith was “counted to him as righteousness.” ²³ But the words “it was counted to him” were not written for his sake alone, ²⁴ but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, ²⁵ who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

Application: *More incredible words! Abraham had Christ's RIGHTEOUSNESS credited to his account by the grace of God through faith in Christ. Is that just true for him? No! It is true for all who believe that Jesus died for their sins and was raised from the dead. Do you believe that?*

*Now, on to Romans 5. **Read Romans 5:1-2.***

¹ Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ² Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.



Application: *If you have been justified (made right) with God through faith in Christ, what do you also have? [Peace with God.] Enjoying the RIGHTEOUSNESS of Christ also means we are no longer at war with God. We also have great joy because of the hope we now have. Peace and joy are the fundamental blessings of a relationship with Jesus Christ.*

Let's continue on. Read verses 5-8.

⁵ and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. ⁶ For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Application: *That is the love of God—giving us Jesus Christ as the perfect sacrifice for our sins. More incredible truth for us!*

Now, go to verse 12. Read verses 12-14.

¹² Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—¹³ for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. ¹⁴ Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.

Discussion: *How did sin enter the world? [Through Adam.] What came with sin? [Death.] So, we are all born sinners, spiritually dead to God. This is the bad news.*

Now, listen to the good news. Read verses 15, 19-21.

¹⁵ But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. ¹⁹ For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. ²⁰ Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, ²¹ so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.



Conclusion: *That's a great place to end our reading of this amazing Letter to the Romans. What's the good news? [Just as sin came through one man, GRACE came through one man—Jesus.] Sin reigned in Adam, but grace reigns in Jesus Christ. If you and I depend on law-keeping for our RIGHTEOUSNESS, we will be condemned to death. If we enjoy the grace of God through faith in Christ, we will enjoy Christ's RIGHTEOUSNESS which leads to eternal life. Which will you choose?*

Paul will continue to preach the truth of the gospel to our hearts when we pick up our reading in Romans 6 next time.



LESSON-AT-HOME

THE LESSON-AT-HOME SECTION IS THE CLOSING TIME EACH WEEK. BOOKMARKS ARE GIVEN TO THE STUDENTS THAT INCLUDE THE SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE AND A LESSON REVIEW. THE LESSON REVIEW CONTAINS WORDS AND PHRASES THAT CAN SPARK MEMORIES AS WELL AS CONVERSATION WITH PARENTS.

Distribute the “Lesson-At-Home” bookmarks. Read the Scripture Memory verses (Romans 3:22–23) together.

Romans 3:22–23 (ESV)

²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction:
²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...

Say: *These verses sum up the gospel and remind us of our Word of the Week! True RIGHTEOUSNESS is only found in faith in Christ. We all need it because we are all sinners. There is only one way to eternal life with God and that is to be wrapped in the perfect RIGHTEOUSNESS of Christ!*

Review the verses.

Direct the students' attentions to the bottom half of the bookmark. It includes reminder points of today's lesson that can be discussed with their parents and reviewed during the week.

Close in prayer and dismiss the students.