Introduction

This study guide will offer you and/or your small group an opportunity to dig deeper in Romans 9-12. As you take the time to read, study and apply God's Word to your life, it will give you new insight into your identity in and with Christ.

Note that Paul was on his third missionary journey when we wrote this letter to the Romans. The main theme throughout this writing was how to live a righteous life or living a right life in God's eyes. The book was written to the Romans, who were considered Gentiles, that is, a person who is not Jewish. The Romans had a very different cultural and heritage.

How to Use this Guide

Start each week by reading the corresponding chapter in Romans in the Bible. Take as much time as you need during the week to reflect on the chapter.
Chapter 9: Adopted

The Jews realized that God’s choosing of Israel in the Old Testament was like an adoption. They were undeserving and without rights as natural children. Yet God adopted them as his sons and daughters. What they later forgot was that they had been adopted just as the Gentiles had been.

OPENING QUESTION
– What is the good news that Jesus brings us?

CHAPTER REFLECTIONS
– Consider the first eight verses in the chapter. How did Paul explain the difference between Jews who believe and Jews who did not believe?

– Paul felt deep sadness for his fellow Jews who refused to believe in Jesus and he is baffled that people with so much spiritual privilege could be so blind to the truth. The Jews had a worthy goal—to honor God but they tried to achieve it by being rigid to obey the law. Some became so dedicated to the law; they forgot about God. How could a person come from a very religious background and still not have a personal relationship with God? What disconnect do we create when we depend on a religious background or heritage for our salvation?

– In verses 14-16, how did Paul defend the accusation that God is unjust in the treatment of his people? What determines how God bestows favor on people? How have you experienced mercy from him?

PARTING THOUGHTS
– God is not obligated to save anyone. It is only because of his grace and love that we are adopted into his family. It is important to understand that this is a decision on our part. We can choose to be adopted just by asking God, our Father, to be part of the family. When you look at the story of your faith journey, where does your story intersect with the good news of the kingdom?
Chapter 10: Perverting the Gospel

Rather than living by faith, the Jews tried to make themselves acceptable in God's sight. But our own effort, no matter how sincere, can never substitute for the righteousness God offers us by faith.

OPENING QUESTION
- What are the similarities and differences between a sports fanatic and a committed Christian? How are these similarities and differences helpful and/or hurtful to the journey before us?

CHAPTER REFLECTIONS
- Paul starts out by sharing his heart’s desire for the Jewish people. What is his heart's desire?
- Do we desire that same thing for the people in our lives that are precious to us?
- Paul sees that the people are zealous for God but zeal and good intentions alone can't save them. He points out those who stubbornly refuse to accept God's plan in favor of clinging to their own way of getting right with God, will never get it right. He states that God's way is so simple yet the people refuse to accept the simplicity of it. In what ways do you continue to try and get it right? How is this perverting the gospel?

PARTING THOUGHTS
- Check out verse 9. What were Paul's simple instructions regarding how to begin a relationship with Jesus?
Chapter 11: Always a Remnant

Paul points out that not all Jews have rejected the gospel. There is “a remnant: some but not all that has responded in faith. Paul reminds us that no matter what the flow of culture, there will always be a remnant that follows Christ.

OPENING QUESTION
– When in your experience have you seen a difficult project being saved by the efforts of a few people?

CHAPTER REFLECTIONS
– God allowed the remnant to survive. What characteristics separated the remnant from the rest of Israel?
– What can God do to change the hearts of the people who have turned away from him?
– In verses 17-21 talks about Paul’s analogy of the olive tree: an exercise in graphing and pruning. How does this resemble the family of God?

PARTING THOUGHTS
All of us are absolutely dependent on God. He is the source of all things. He is the power that sustains the world in which we live. And God works out all things to bring glory to himself. Common grace is the grace God gives to creation as a whole. In this universal, non-salvific form of grace, God allows the sun to shine upon both the righteous and the unrighteous. God shows his goodness to all people when He feeds them, allows them to work, experience beauty, learn and have joy. It is also common grace that “restrains” the discipline of God until a later time.

– In what ways do we underestimate God? How does God hold you and your life together?
Chapter 12: A Living Sacrifice

Paul moves from the theological to the practical and gives us guidelines for living as a people who know Christ in a broken, sinful world. In this chapter, he wants us to apply what he's been teaching to the Romans. Through the previous chapters, he's been pointing to the foundation, Jesus Christ. Now he wants us to build on that foundation and change the way we think, be intelligent and intentional, refuse to be conformed, let God transform us, use our gifts, love others, live in peace, make friends with an enemy and face a hostile world.

OPENING QUESTION
- What right does God have to ask us for a full-life commitment to him on his terms?

CHAPTER REFLECTIONS
- We are all wired differently and have passions, talents and abilities that are quite different from one another. What makes believers the same as each another? What makes them different from one another?
- Verses 1-2 give as a vast picture of what we are called to do but that we can be tempted. What are the patterns of the world that work to conform us?
- Contemplate on verses 3-21 and write down all the ways a Christian can renew their mind? Which ones are the hardest for you? Ask God to help you with that one in the coming days.

PARTING THOUGHTS
The Holy Spirit transforms your life by the renewing of your mind but he can't do this unless you give him your body. When you give yourself to God in spiritual worship, you become a living sacrifice to the glory of God.
- What makes offering our bodies as living sacrifices an act of worship?