



FOR THE LOVE OF GOD

HOW JESUS TRANSFORMS THE WAY WE LIVE

Lifepoint
CHURCH 

CLOSER LOOK

DISCUSSION GUIDE

We have designed this Closer Look study guide to be a “closer look” at the passage of Scripture studied on Sunday through the lens of our **“For the Love of God”** series. The main point of this series is looking at “how Jesus changes the way we live.” Someone once said that books don’t change lives, but paragraphs or even single sentences change lives. If that’s true, Romans 8 is a collection of life-changing sentences. It’s been called the greatest chapter of the greatest letter ever written. In this series, we’ll spend four weeks studying these life-changing truths.

As a reminder to our leaders, every Lifegroup member should have the opportunity to share ideas and thoughts during Lifegroup. Facilitation (not teaching) achieves this goal. The Closer Look doesn’t necessarily need to be read word for word. Instead, as a leader, work through the guide ahead of time to choose the material you believe will best create conversation around the main point for your group while being willing to pivot when necessary during your discussion time.

LEADER NOTES

Throughout the Closer Look, there will be “Leader Notes” interspersed. There are multiple possible goals of the Leader Notes. Some notes might help you, as the leader, understand what the question is asking or provide context and clarity on a difficult word or verse. The leader note may also help you care for your group as you lead them to an appropriate response to the question and understanding of the passage. We recommend reading through all the leader notes as you prepare for the group, not during the discussion time.

MAIN POINT

Lifegroup studies can easily get off course without guardrails to guide and protect the conversation. Because of this, each Closer Look will provide a main point to keep your group on the right track and help you, as the leader, to veer the group back when it gets off course. The hope of the teaching team and the writers is to provide a comprehensive discussion on a particular book or theme found in the Bible throughout the series. That said, to get the most out of a weekly discussion, it is important to be intentional about helping your group grasp and apply the biblical principle highlighted that week.

That said, life is messy! Sometimes, an important theological breakthrough happens, or a member experiences a significant life event that may cause you to veer off track for a week. If something necessitates a move away from the main point, you want to do so on purpose and not by accident.

KICK IT OFF

The “Kick it Off” questions aim to get the conversation started through a series of ice-breaker questions that relate to the main point and prepare the group for more intentional conversation. Please feel free to use these questions as you best see fit for your group.

READ IT IN

This section of questions aims to help your group grasp the content of the week’s passage, challenge their assumptions, and understand beyond the basic details. We know that everyone is coming to Lifegroup and Scripture with a wide range of biblical understanding. We hope that each person will walk away with an increased knowledge of the specific passage and its place in the wider Biblical narrative. As you get into the discussion, use your discernment to ask additional questions if it helps your group grasp the main point.

LIVE IT OUT

Lifepoint's five Core Values will always inspire this section. The questions will ask your group members to consider how that week's Scripture speaks to their individual lives and the world around them. Your group will be asked to consider how the passage challenges or affirms their beliefs, attitudes, or feelings and how they should appropriately respond. We hope that the Holy Spirit will convict each person of a specific way they can apply what they've learned to grow in their gospel identity, reaching priority, spiritual intimacy, reaching priority, or personal ministry.

PRAY IT UP

A short reminder will always be at the beginning of each week's guide to pray ahead of the discussion. There will also be a Pray it Up section at the end of the guide that contains a Lifepoint prayer highlight, space for you to gather personal requests from the group, and specific ways you can pray this Scripture back to God. It is very easy to gloss over this section as you try to finish the group time. We implore you to make the time to lead your group to share appropriate but vulnerable requests and to seek the Lord together in prayer.



WEEK 1:

BASED ON THE
PASSAGE TAUGHT ON
MARCH 10TH, 2024

HOW JESUS TRANSFORMS THE WAY WE LIVE

MAIN POINT

God transforms us through the gift of the
Holy Spirit.

Romans 8:1–11

KICK IT OFF

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Discussion Questions:

- When you were young, who had the most power or influence over your behavior - positive or negative? Who influences you most today?
- What is something that stood out to you from this week's message? Do you sense the Holy Spirit working on you inside to help you grow closer to Him? How?

Leader Note:

Righteousness is the attribute of God by which He does what is right and in accordance with His nature and law. God always acts righteously, and as we'll see this week, He has imputed His righteousness onto us through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Although we are predisposed to unrighteousness, God enables us to live righteously. And He gave us the gift of His Holy Spirit to help us along the way.

READ IT IN

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says about a particular topic.

*Have a volunteer read **Romans 8:1-4**.*

How would you define condemnation, and what does it have to do with a person's relationship with God? Why is there no condemnation for people in Christ Jesus? What does that mean?

Leader Note:

The Oxford Dictionary defines condemnation as “the expression of very strong disapproval; censure.” A person under condemnation has been pronounced guilty and often is punished. Because of the fallen state of humanity, we all enter this world guilty of sin and deserving of death. We cannot have a relationship with God and receive the eternal life and grace He offers on our own. For Paul to declare we, who are in Christ, have NO condemnation means we have no reason to live with guilt in the present. Despite our natural tendency to sin, we are alive through Him.

Verse 2 compares “the law of the Spirit of life” with the “law of sin and death.” What characterizes each of these ways of living? As a Christian, your life is defined by the law of the Spirit. In what ways are we tempted to live under the law of sin and death even after we become Christians?

Leader Note:

Paul added a new dimension to the definition of life in Christ Jesus with the Spirit's law. The law of the Spirit is responsible for breaking the hold of the law of sin and death. This law enslaved and led to death. The Spirit is freeing and life-giving. The former life relied on rules. Life in Christ relies on relationship. The law could not bring life because the flesh limited it—it depended on sinful humans living sinlessly. Except for Jesus Christ, no one has ever been able to keep the law perfectly. Because of our sin, the law only highlights the depth and breadth of our inability to be righteous. In this way, it condemns us. However, Christ was able to do what we could not do in the flesh, having lived on earth in the flesh. This contrast means He was perfect, whereas we are imperfect.

READ IT IN

Read verse 4 again. In everyday terms, what does it mean to be righteous before God? What makes Jesus' death on the cross so significant? This verse tells us it makes us righteous in God's eyes. What part do we play in securing that righteousness?

Leader Note:

God condemned sin by breaking its power by sending His own Son. Having perfectly fulfilled the law, Jesus was uniquely qualified to serve as a sin offering. He could voluntarily take on Himself the penalty for sin and offer forgiveness to us. Christ's accomplishment is even more impressive because He submitted to sin's domain. Jesus took on Himself the same weakness we have in the flesh. He was subject to the full reality of temptation. Jesus knows what we face. To be in the flesh like ours underscores this truth and means the divine Jesus Christ took on a body like ours in every way, yet He remained sinless. To be righteous means to live in obedience to God and His law. Verse 4 underscores the purpose of God's condemning sin or breaking its power. Jesus' death fulfilled the law's requirement that we be righteous and obey the law. We couldn't do that, but Jesus did it for us. Having fulfilled the overarching requirement, Jesus imparts His righteousness to believers. In this way, the requirement of the law is accomplished in us. We now fulfill the law by having faith in Christ. We accept His gracious gift and rely on Him rather than our own strength to try to please God. That is the basic difference between living according to the flesh and living according to the Spirit.

*Have a volunteer read **Romans 8:5-8**.*

What does it mean or look like for someone to live according to the flesh? What about according to the Spirit? Is there someone you know that is very evidently Spirit-led? What does their life look like?

READ IT IN

Leader Note:

To live according to the flesh means to think about the things of the flesh. Thinking precedes action. The mind determines the direction of the body. A sinful mindset inevitably leads to sinful living. On the other hand, Christians are to live according to the Spirit. We can subject ourselves to the control of God's Spirit within us and then live in a way that reflects His presence. The great challenge is to be attuned to the Spirit continually. Death is the experience of someone who has the mindset of the flesh. The consequence for those of us who adopt the mindset of the Spirit is completely different. Life is precisely what we expect and what we receive as a result of having the source of life within us. God sent Jesus to bring us back to life.

How would you describe the role of the Holy Spirit based on this passage or other Bible passages? How did Paul see the Spirit impacting our position as “sons”?

Leader Note:

The Holy Spirit is the guide for our spiritual lives. The Spirit dwells in us, meaning He is an internal source of encouragement, discernment, and revelation. God, who is perfectly holy, wants to have us in fellowship with Him. However, because He is Holy, He cannot abide with any degree of sin. Those in fellowship with Him must be perfectly holy, and this can only happen through the work of the Holy Spirit.

What are we taught about the unbeliever's mind in verses 6-8? Why is it impossible for them to please God? How have you seen this reality play out in the lives of your unbelieving friends/family?

In Christ, God broke the bondage to sin and death; thus, believers are no longer under any threat of condemnation. The law had no power to free, but those in Christ receive the Spirit who enables them to live in ways that please God and to say no to the temptations of their fleshly nature. Because unbelievers do not have the power of the Holy Spirit, it is impossible for them to please God.

*Have a volunteer read **Romans 8:9-13**.*

READ IT IN

| What are the benefits of life in the Spirit discussed in these verses?

After describing the futility and consequence of life in the flesh (vv. 5-8), Paul returned to the theme of life in the Spirit and directly addressed his readers. He reminded them they were not in the flesh. Though the flesh can still exert a powerful tug in our lives as Christians, we are no longer under its domination. We have been fundamentally changed and are different people. The presence of the Spirit is the assurance that life is our final destination. Physical death is not the end of life for a Christian. This great promise is possible because of the righteousness imputed on us through Jesus. The Spirit in us also includes the promise of our future bodily resurrection.

| Why is it important to know that the Holy Spirit's presence with us helps us fight temptations that may come our way? How does the Spirit help us fight our battles? Give an example.

We are all born into this world as sinners. Although the power of sin is present in our lives, the Holy Spirit frees us as believers from being coerced by it. Sin's power in our lives is broken, and God has given us His Spirit to help us live accordingly. The Spirit leads us to live in a manner that honors God. He works to grow, convict, and spur us on toward Godly living as sons and daughters of the Most High God.

LIVE IT OUT

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scriptures apply directly to their lives.

Spiritual Intimacy:

In what way have you recently sensed the Spirit leading you? Have you gone in the Spirit's direction? How can you be more aware of and sensitive to the Spirit's presence and power?

Authentic Community:

Are you aware of your spiritual giftings - ways that God has equipped you to love others and grow His kingdom? Are there any times when you have stepped out in faith to serve in ways you didn't think you could or didn't feel equipped to succeed? What role did the Holy Spirit play in taking that step of courage and obedience?

Core Value 3 - Gospel Identity

Even though you live by the Spirit, what areas of your life most often tempt you to live in the flesh? What are some practical ways you can fight against that tendency? How can you rely on the Holy Spirit to empower you in the fight against the flesh?

PRAY IT UP

Lifegroup Prayer Requests:

Take some time to gather prayer requests from your group.

Lifepoint Prayer Highlight:

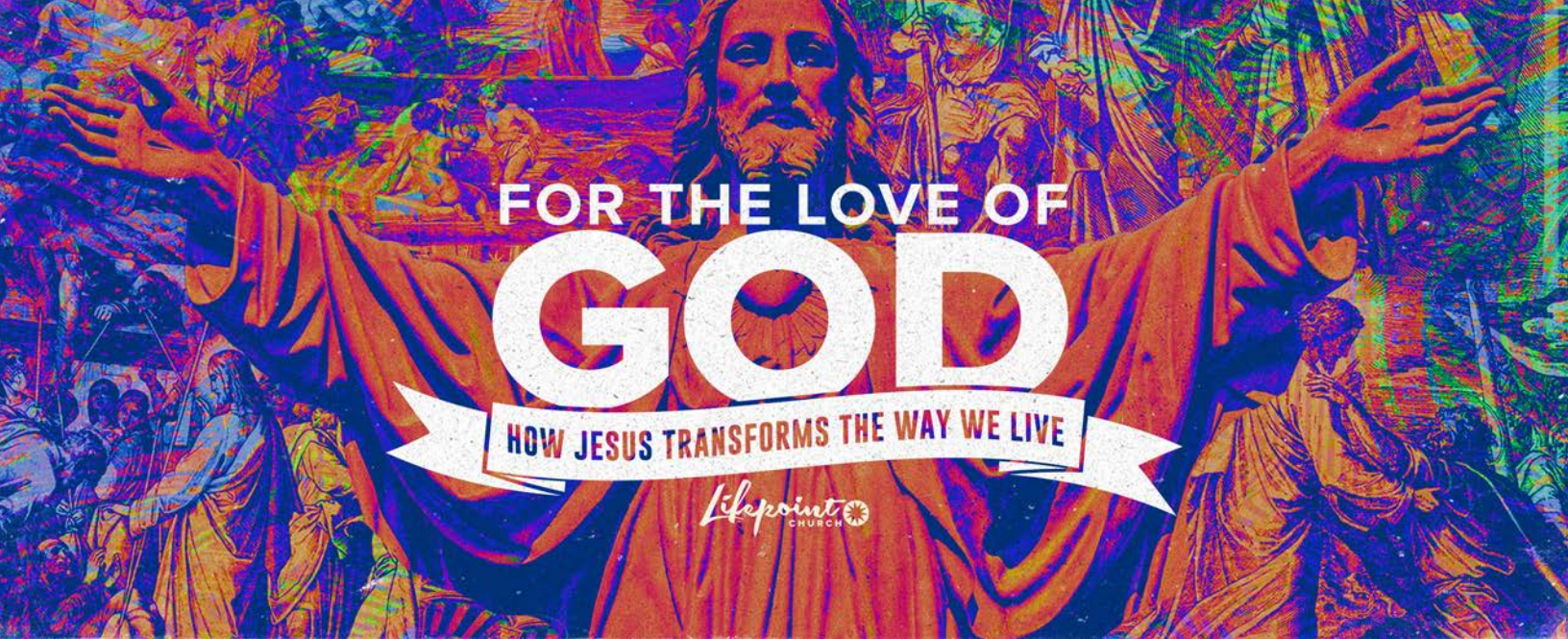
This past weekend was Student Weekend. Please pray for the students who made decisions to follow Christ or took steps of faith. Please pray for our Student ministry staff and leaders that they would rest well this week and continue to care well for Lifepoint's students the rest of the term.

PRAY IT UP

Scripture Prayer:

Lead the group to pray to themselves through the following prompts.

- 2 Corinthians 5:21 says, “He made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might *become the righteousness of God*.” Father, may we not take what Jesus did on the cross for us for granted. By His death, we receive the gift of a right relationship with you. Thank you for this gift of salvation, of righteousness, through Jesus.
- Romans 8:10 says, “Now if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, *but the Spirit gives life because of righteousness*.” Thank you for the promise of Life in Jesus. You are a life-giver, and for that, we are grateful.



WEEK 2:

BASED ON THE
PASSAGE TAUGHT ON
MARCH 17TH, 2024

HOW JESUS TRANSFORMS THE WAY WE LIVE

MAIN POINT

As a result of our salvation through Jesus, we are adopted into God's family with rights and responsibilities as heirs to an eternal inheritance. We are called to surrender to the Holy Spirit and glorify God, who lives within us.

Romans 8:12-17

KICK IT OFF

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Discussion Questions:

- What if every debt you owed were paid in full today; how would you react? What would you do with the news? What would you do with the extra money previously used to pay the debts?
- What is something that stood out to you from this week's message?

READ IT IN

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says about a particular topic.

*Have a volunteer read **Romans 8:12-14**.*

Leader Note:

The word debtor or obligation (depending on your Bible translation) in Greek denotes how we are in debt to God, not our flesh, because of our sin (Blue Letter Bible).

However, through Jesus, our penalty has been paid.

The flesh represents our human nature, which our natural tendencies bend toward apart from the divine influence of the Holy Spirit. However, through the Spirit, we can put to death the deeds of the body and live. This kind of living is a joint responsibility between ourselves and the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit can do His work when we surrender and choose Him over our fleshly desires.

- In some translations, verse 12 mentions that we are “debtors” or “have an obligation or duty” not to live according to the flesh. What does this mean?
- Compare living to our flesh versus living by the Spirit. What does that look like in our daily lives? Share a time when you lived according to the flesh and what you would have done differently or when you obeyed the Spirit but knew what the fleshly temptation was.
- What does it mean to be a child of God? How should understanding our identity impact the way we live?
- What does it practically look like to submit human fleshly desires and live by the Spirit? How does this practice work in your life?

*Have a volunteer read **Romans 8:15**.*

READ IT IN

Leader Note:

As children of God, we do not have to be in bondage to sin. We do not have the spirit of slavery to live by fear. Fear enslaves us. Before we have the Holy Spirit, we fear being unseen, unknown, not being enough, not having enough, and the future. As a result of the Holy Spirit living inside us, we are no longer slaves to fear. Think about that: we do not have to fear anything in this world because of the Holy Spirit. You are seen, known, loved, have a future, an inheritance, and the same power that rose Jesus from the dead lives inside you. He gives us victory over all and ultimate victory through Jesus in the end. This isn't a result of anything we have done. We cannot work harder, go to church more, or perform more good deeds to recommend us to God.

Adoption is when someone is welcomed into another family out of an unideal situation. We are all born into an unideal situation, living according to the flesh and in sin, yet through Jesus' blood, he offers us salvation. God adopts us into his family. We didn't deserve it, but it is our free gift. As a result, he does not become our taskmaster commanding us, but rather our Father, whom we can cry out to and say Daddy (this is denoted by Abba!). It's an intimate word meaning relationship, access, and intimacy with our heavenly Father.

- **Think about the word slavery or bondage. What does it mean for us spiritually to be in bondage to sin? Do you feel this way, or have you felt it before? What did it feel like?**
- **Brainstorm some of the benefits of being a part of God's family (examples might be your status as his child, comforted through the promises of scripture, or never alone).**
- **As children of God, we have full access to the Father and can cry out to him "Abba" (Daddy), which indicates intimacy and love. How does it impact you that you can cry out to God as your loving Father?**

*Have a volunteer read **Romans 8:16-17**.*

READ IT IN

Leader Note:

There may be times when we doubt our salvation or standing with Christ, especially as we struggle with besetting sins. However, this Scripture assures us that the Holy Spirit himself bears witness with our own spirit that we are God's children through repentance and confession. Not only are we God's children, we are his heirs. In Luke 18:18, a ruler asks Jesus what he can do to inherit eternal life. He could not do anything to inherit eternal life because it is "not a matter of doing, but rather of being" a part of God's family (Guzik). This highlights the status of our standing in the family of God; we are fellow heirs with Christ. This inheritance is not only spiritual; it's also eternal. Sometimes, people falsely assume that as children of God, we will never experience suffering. We are not immune to suffering; instead, this Scripture says we suffer with Him (Jesus) so that we may also be glorified with Him. The phrase glorified with Him denotes a companionship or union with Christ. The word glorified means to praise, magnify, celebrate, or hold in honor, rendering it excellent (Blue Letter Bible). James tells us to count it joy when we experience trials because the testing of our faith develops steadfastness (James 1:2). As we suffer, God uses it to make us better, not bigger. It sanctifies us, remaking us to look more like Christ and less like our worldly flesh. In this, we are glorified because we magnify the work of the Holy Spirit inside of us. Thankfully, we have Jesus, who knows what suffering is like and sympathizes with us in our weakness (Hebrews 4:15-16).

- **According to verse 16, how do we know in our spirit that we are children of God? Is this something you struggle to grasp personally? Why or why not? If not, how do you experience this confirmation in your life?**
- **Define what it means to receive an inheritance or be an heir. What does it mean to be heirs of God and receive his inheritance?**
- **Verse 17 talks about how we will suffer. What is a faulty assumption in our modern Christianity about being a believer? How does sharing in Christ's suffering allow us to be glorified with him? What does that mean?**

LIVE IT OUT

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scriptures apply directly to their lives.

Spiritual Intimacy:

What fleshly desires or human tendencies are you struggling with right now (maybe it's working too much, control, worry over fear, children, finances)? Our human nature gravitates toward control and managing this on our own. How can you invite the Holy Spirit into helping you put to death these "deeds of the body"?

Personal Ministry:

How has suffering in your own life produced sanctification? How is your suffering bringing glory to Christ, allowing you to reflect his power and love?

Gospel Identity:

In the "Kick it Off Section," we talked about our earthly financial debts hypothetically being paid, but our spiritual debt of sin has actually been paid. How can you practically live out your true identity as a forgiven, adopted child of our Heavenly Father? Where have you seen your actions change due to this new identity already? What areas must you lean into your identity as God's child?

PRAY IT UP

Lifegroup Prayer Requests:

Take some time to gather prayer requests from your group.

Lifepoint Prayer Highlight:

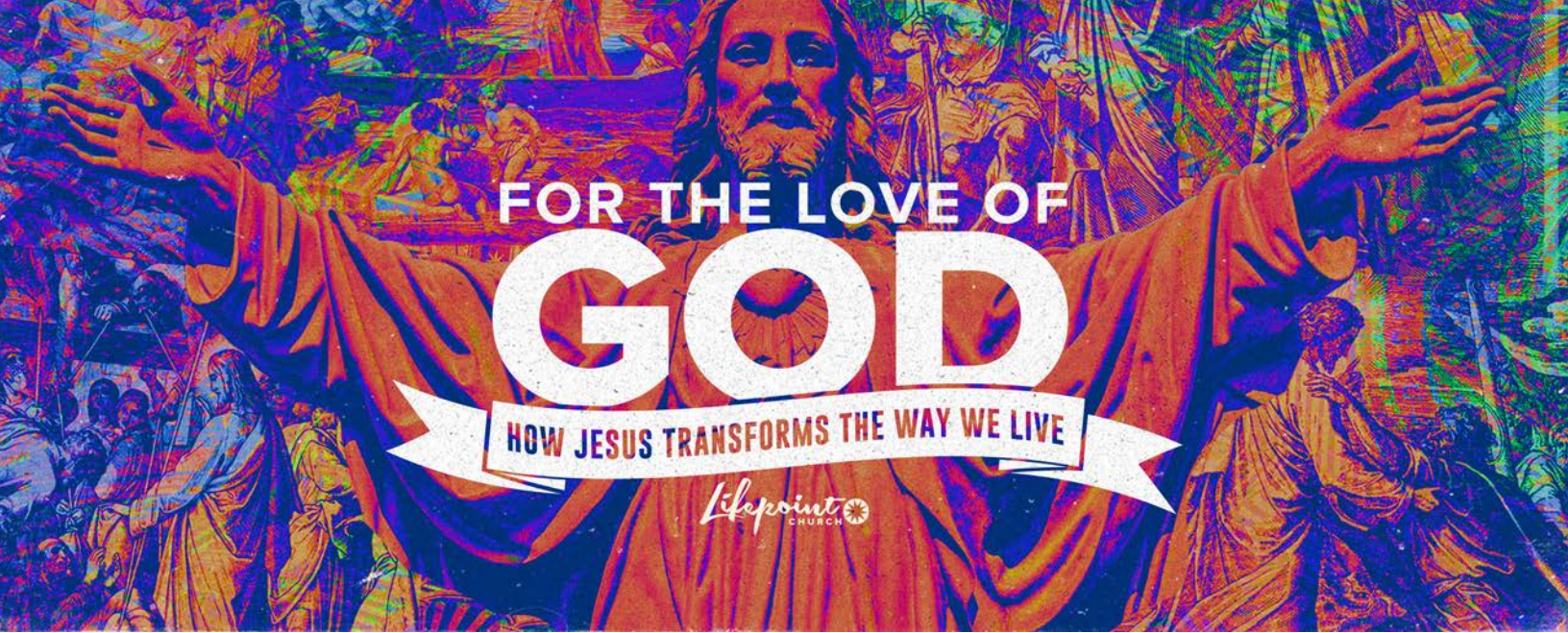
This Sunday will be baptisms. Please pray for those who are going public with their faith. Please pray for these people as a group. Pray they will continue to grow in faith and obedience following this step.

PRAY IT UP

Scripture Prayer:

Lead the group to pray to themselves through the following prompts.

- Romans 8:13 talks about putting to death the deeds of the body. Pray this week that the Holy Spirit will show you an area where you need to follow his lead instead of your own and for the strength to take that step to follow him.
- Romans 8:15 says that we did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear. Ask God for strength to know your genuine fears and for the courage not to be in bondage to fear but rather to live as adopted sons and daughters of the King.



WEEK 3:

BASED ON THE
PASSAGE TAUGHT ON
MARCH 24, 2024

HOW JESUS TRANSFORMS THE WAY WE LIVE

MAIN POINT

**All of creation eagerly awaits the day
of redemption.**

Romans 8:18-30

KICK IT OFF

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Discussion Questions:

- What is your favorite “pick your own” farm around here?
- What is something that stood out to you from this week’s message?

Leader Note:

This week, we will look at the principle of first fruits as a sign of the coming redemption of the sons of God. We will continue our discussion of Romans 8, having been adopted as children of God. But what does that mean? And what does being sons and daughters mean for the way we live now and our future?

READ IT IN

Have a volunteer read **Romans 8:18- 22** and **Luke 22:15-16**.

- **Why is creation groaning? What are some ways you think of creation as “groaning?” (v.16)**
- **What is creation eagerly waiting for? (v.19) What does this mean, and how will it happen?**
- **In verse 22, Paul uses the analogy of childbirth pains to describe creation’s groanings to be redeemed. Why do you think Paul uses this analogy?**
- **How do you think the Luke passage relates to Romans 8:19?**

Leader Note:

Creation was subjected to corruption after the fall (Gen. 3). Since then, it has groaned, awaiting the day it will be redeemed. We often talk about our own redemption, but we do not always consider how creation will also be redeemed someday. Paul uses personification to communicate creation’s frustration. Allow your group to feel the pains of creation as we wrestle with the understanding that this broken world is not what we were created for.

Have a volunteer read **Romans 8:23-25** and **1 Corinthians 15:20-22**.

- **What do you think it means “to groan inwardly”?**
- **In both of these passages, we see the principle of first fruits. How do these principles relate to one another?**

Leader Note:

The principle of first fruits can be seen throughout the Bible. In Leviticus 23:10, the Israelites are commanded to bring the first fruits of their harvest to the Lord. An Israelite would mark the first budding tree or vine of his crop. He will bring this fruit to the priest as the sacrifice of the first fruits. It was a sign of faith and thanksgiving for God’s provision. Until the priest presented the first fruit to God, the rest of the harvest was considered unclean. After the priest recited the blessing and waved the offering of the first fruits (presenting it to God), the harvest was considered kosher and ready for harvesting.

Have a volunteer read **John 4:27-38**.

READ IT IN

Try putting it all together. How does Christ, being the first fruit of the resurrection, allow us to receive the first fruits of the Spirit? What does this tell us about the harvest of the “sons of God?”

Leader Note:

Because Jesus’s sacrifice on the cross was sufficient, the harvest was declared acceptable. We were declared righteous the day Jesus walked out of the grave. He was the first fruit offering made on our behalf. How should this understanding affect the way we live?

*Have a volunteer read **Romans 8:26-30**.*

- List the ways in which the Spirit helps us.
- What does it look like for the Spirit to help us pray? Do you feel the Spirit helps you to pray? Why or why not?

LIVE IT OUT

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scriptures apply directly to their lives.

Personal Ministry:

Your redemption was bought at a price. How does understanding this change the way you live? What are some of the ways you have used your story of redemption to tell His story?

Gospel Identity:

You have been called, justified, and adopted into God’s family. What strongholds keep you from believing this truth? What would it look like to lay those down?

Authentic Community:

How can we as a Lifegroup encourage each other in our identity? What are we doing well? What could we do better?

PRAY IT UP

Lifegroup Prayer Requests:

Take some time to gather prayer requests from your group.

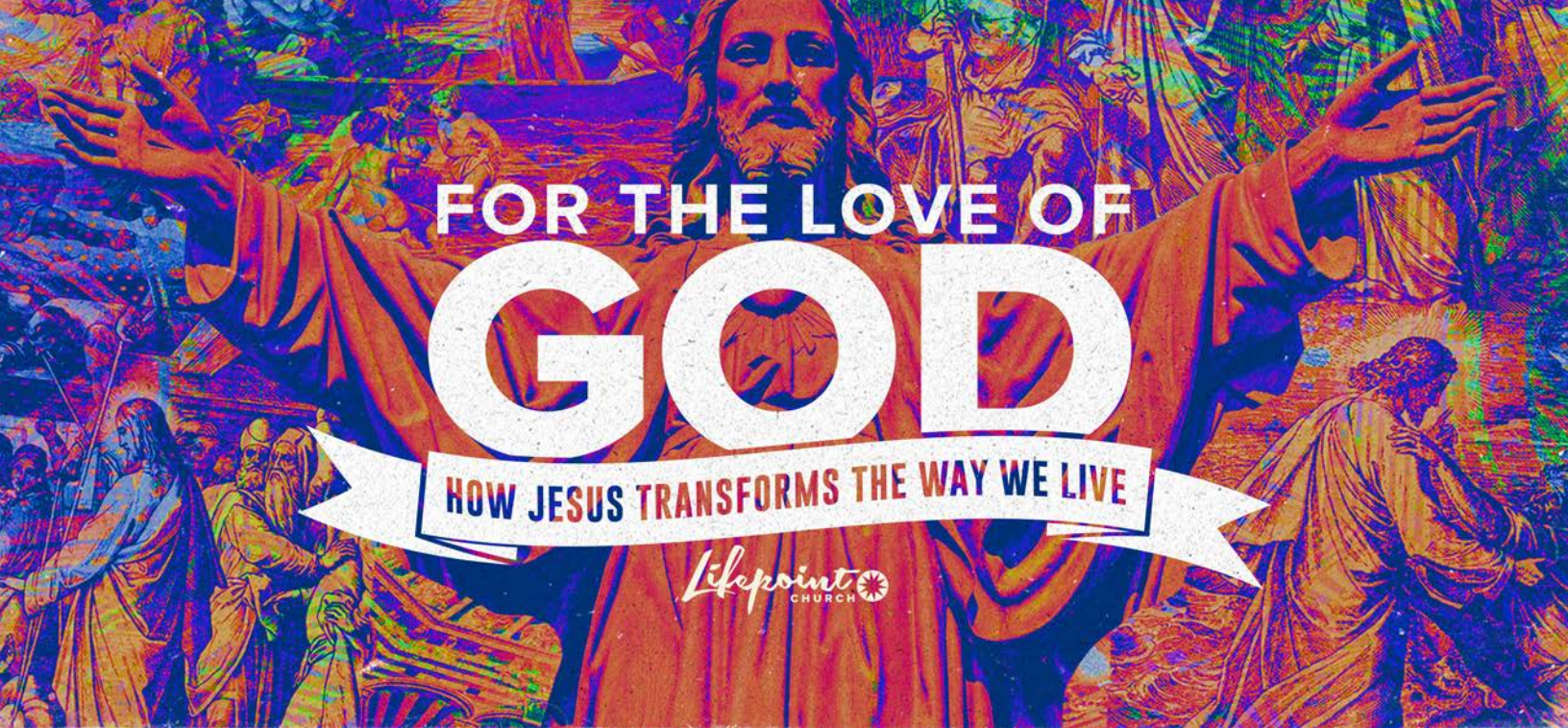
Lifepoint Prayer Highlight:

Easter is this Sunday! As we look forward to this Sunday, let's pray intentionally for people that we can personally invite and those who will attend church for the first time. Pray for our Teaching Pastors as they prepare to communicate the gospel this weekend.

Scripture Prayer:

Lead the group to pray to themselves through the following prompts.

- Romans 8:18 says, "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us." Take a moment to reflect on the glory of the gospel. Sometimes, we can be so consumed with our sufferings that we forget how temporary this life really is. Take a moment to thank the Lord for an eternity free of sin, death, and disease.
- Romans 8:26 says, "The Spirit intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words." While our sufferings are temporary, they leave Him speechless. God loves us so much that He groans for us. Take a moment to thank the Lord for His deep love and compassion for you.



WEEK 4:

BASED ON THE
PASSAGE TAUGHT ON
MARCH 31ST, 2024

HOW JESUS TRANSFORMS THE WAY WE LIVE

MAIN POINT

Nothing in all creation can separate us from God's providential love toward His people. Against every possible opposition, we are more than conquerors through Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:31-39

KICK IT OFF

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Discussion Questions:

- Can you think of a competitive activity or sport you participated in or spectated? Describe either the joy of victory and/or the sorrow of loss you've experienced.
- Based on the message, what did you learn about being declared "more than conquerors"?

READ IT IN

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says about a particular topic.

*Have a volunteer read **Romans 31-32**.*

Leader Note:

In the preceding verses of chapter 8, Paul sets up the context for a series of rhetorical questions to close the chapter. His emphatic, indisputable statements implied from the questions iterate the certainty of God's irrevocable love toward His people. After delivering substantial proof throughout the chapter, Paul asks in verse 29, "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?" Yes! If God! Not just the president or king of a nation is "for us," but if The Creator, The King of Kings, foreknew, predestined, called, justified, and glorified us, then what weight should we give to anyone or anything that could dare come against us? It is no secret that we have adversaries in this life through the world: the devil and indwelling sin. Yet, Paul emphasizes that no one or nothing would matter in such a case. The authority of God trumps them all. Then, in verse 32, on top of the aforementioned affirmations, Paul embeds the affirming truth that if God has already gone to the great length of sacrificing His own Son, delivering foremost to us in Christ, the one thing needed for our security in Him, won't He therefore, graciously give us all we need for this life and the one to come.

- **What does it mean for God to be "for us?" How is the knowledge of God "being for us" essential in our Christian walk? If circumstances caused you to doubt that God was for you, how might that impact your faith and subsequent actions?**
- **How did God demonstrate that He is for us? How does God's sacrifice of His own Son provide hope for the believer?**
- **What kinds of things come against God's people as opposition to His Kingdom being realized on earth? What power do they have?**

*Have a volunteer read **Romans 8:33-34**.*

READ IT IN

Leader Note:

Due to the continual bombardment of accusations from antagonistic enemies, Paul experienced a great deal of hardship when spreading the gospel. Although believers in America don't experience the level of physical opposition, we still have the same principalities, rulers of darkness, and even our own conscience, warring against our faith and confidence in what God says. In verse 33, referencing these adversaries, Paul asks, "Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies." Here, he is signifying that God, the judge, has the final say and has declared us justified in His court of supreme authority! There is, therefore, none higher to annul the effect of anything or anybody who wishes to bring charges against us. Paul further emphasizes through inquiry, "Who is to condemn?" He answers this notion with no one! Christ Jesus is the one who died and, more than that, was raised, is at the right hand of God, and is indeed interceding for us, establishing the firm foundation on which we stand. Believers can and should rest in these conclusions when Satan or the world brings charges against them.

- **Who is God's elect? Romans 6:23 states, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." From what charges have believers been acquitted? Under what circumstances do you most experience the condemnation of being judged either from within or from without? How do you combat the accusations?**
- **Based on the text in vv. 33-34, to what factors can we determine status before a Holy God? How have believers been justified? By what authority has this been done? How does this bring encouragement to you?**
- **What does it mean to have Jesus Christ interceding on our behalf? In what ways does this bring you comfort?**

*Have a volunteer read **Romans 8:35-39**.*

READ IT IN

Leader Note:

At the finale of this chapter, Paul reaches the pinnacle of every previous question he's put forth, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" He brings out every possible notion that could put us at risk of losing the most valuable asset we have as believers. This perfect love bestowed on us can cast out the fear of tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, and sword. In verse 37, we are declared more than conquerors over all these things through Christ, who purchased our freedom from sin and death and every lower thing through His death on the Cross. Paul is assured and assures us that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor ANYTHING in all creation will be able to sever the steadfast love of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Since He is the Creator of all, He alone holds the power and authority, making us victorious over every enemy.

- **What is the love of Christ, and how has it been displayed? How does it have the ability to empower and sustain us through life's struggles? How have you experienced this?**
- **Paul inserts Psalms 44:22 here in v. 36 as a reminder that for the sake of Christ, we are being killed all day long and considered as sheep for slaughter, and then retorts back the security we have because of our justification in Christ. What pressures tempt you to believe we, as believers, are losing the battle? What temptations do you experience in personal struggles?**
- **On what grounds is Paul advocating that we are more than conquerors? What does this mean? How does it show up in your life?**

LIVE IT OUT

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scriptures apply directly to their lives.

Spiritual Intimacy:

Since God justifies you, what tensions in your everyday life tempt you to fear losing this winning status with Jesus? What can you put into practice as a daily discipline to take steps toward closing the relational gap?

LIVE IT OUT

Reaching Priority (Go):

Do you currently support local or global missions? Have you ever considered participating in short or long-term missions? How do the verses in chapter 8 influence your desire to join a local or global mission team?

Core Value 3 - Personal Ministry (God Can Use My Redemption Story):

In what ways have you experienced the victory of being more than a conqueror in overcoming an enemy of your soul? Can you think of a person with whom sharing your story might be a means of encouragement to him/her? How might the fact that God is “for you” give you the courage to share your story?

PRAY IT UP

Lifegroup Prayer Requests:

Take some time to gather prayer requests from your group.

Lifepoint Prayer Highlight:

Pray for those who attended Lifepoint for the first time this past weekend at Easter. Pray that God would continue to work in their hearts this week and that God will continue to draw them to himself. Pray for opportunities for them to connect further at Lifepoint, for salvation, and for spiritual growth for all our first time guests.

Scripture Prayer:

Lead the group to pray to themselves through the following prompts.

- Romans 3:26 says God is just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. Here again, in Romans 8:33, “It is God who justifies.” Therefore, acceptance in the Beloved is not based on our good or bad works. Spend time asking God to search your heart and reveal places where unbelief encroaches on this Truth. Pray that He would encourage your heart to place your full hope in Christ alone.

PRAY IT UP

- Romans 8:37 declares we are more than conquerors over a host of adversaries through Him who loved us. Spend some time praying about the challenges in your life that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God. Seek God's encouragement through prayer that gives wisdom and confidence in facing enemies of your soul.