

Life By His Word

Paul's Great Epistles

Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians

Life by His Word contains one-page lessons covering the entire Bible. The electronic format (student and leader guides) allows adaptation to individual and group needs.

Benefits of one-page lessons:

- Hand out only what you need, relative to the length of the class session and how much content you wish to cover. Taken at a steady pace, a page can be covered in about twenty minutes.
- See at a glance all the material that pertains to the section being covered. Use the discussion questions as your basic outline, and draw in material from the “Look” and “Apply” sections as you wish.

Suggestions for using these lessons:

- Teach an entire book, or teach just part of a book.
- Use a single lesson sheet for a twenty-minute Bible study.
- Use a single lesson sheet as a meeting opener, either as a devotion or a short Bible study.
- Build your own Bible studies. The possibilities are endless. For example:
 - Assemble all the lessons on the penitential psalms, psalms of praise, or David's early years.
 - Assemble sections that deal with predestination, and teach the pertinent passages in their context.
 - Study all references to mountains, cities, nations, and so on, pointing out their importance in the lives of God's people.

Note: Occasionally, the People's Bible Commentary is referenced. In addition to the extensive notes and other features found in *The Lutheran Study Bible*, this supplemental lay-friendly resource may help Bible study leaders and participants get more out of each lesson.

We pray these lessons will help God's people grow in faith and in service to His kingdom.

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Romans 1:1–7

Paul's apostleship and commission

(*The Lutheran Study Bible*, page 1908)

Look

Verse 4 “*According to the Spirit of holiness*”—The ESV interprets *Spirit* as the Holy Spirit. The meaning would be that the Holy Spirit was instrumental in raising Jesus from the dead. If the word *spirit* is used (without the capital letter) it would refer to Jesus’ spirit, that is, his new and glorified existence he had after he rose from death. This seems to make better sense in the context. The contrast then is between Jesus’ humility and his exaltation.

Verse 5 “*Nations*”—This is a Jewish term referring to all non-Jews.

“*The obedience of faith*”—This means obeying God when he tells us to believe in his Son for salvation. It means giving up our own righteousness and submitting to Christ’s righteousness.

Discuss

1. Examine this section on the basis of the following key words:
 - *Paul*
 - *servant*
 - *Christ*
 - *Jesus*
 - *set apart*
 - *apostle*
 - *gospel*
2. In verses 2 and 3, Paul tells us the message he preached to the world. What was that message?

Apply

3. Are you a saint?
4. Could Paul greet us in the same way he greeted the Romans?

Paul introduced himself and his message and wished the Romans God’s grace and peace.

Romans 1:8–17

Paul wants to preach the powerful gospel at Rome

(*The Lutheran Study Bible*, pages 1908–1909)

Look

- Verses 10, 13 “*Now at last . . . have been prevented*”—Paul had wanted to visit the Christians in Rome, but his duties in Asia Minor and Greece had kept him from doing that. He wrote this letter from Corinth. From there he planned to go to Jerusalem and then sail to Rome. He wrote this letter to ground the Romans in the faith so he could use them as a base for mission work in Spain.
- Verse 13 “*Gentiles*”—Paul’s main work was to preach the gospel to non-Jewish people.
- Verse 14 “*Greeks and to barbarians . . . the wise and to the foolish*”—Just as there are Jews and Gentiles, Greeks divided the world into Greeks (wise) and barbarians (foolish).
- Verse 16 “*To the Jew first and also to the Greek*”—The Jews were God’s chosen people. Jesus came to call his people to faith, and only secondarily did he give the gospel to Gentiles (although they were sometimes singled out as examples of great faith). Only after Paul preached in the synagogues to Jewish people did he do his main work of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles.

Discuss

1. According to verses 11 and 12, what two things would happen when Paul visited the Romans?
2. According to verses 16 and 17, why is the gospel the power of God for salvation?

Apply

3. When Paul observed the faith and lives of the Roman Christians, he first of all gave thanks to God. How can your congregation apply this example to how it recognizes the contributions (financial and otherwise) of its members?
4. Paul continually prays for the Roman Christians. Why should we follow Paul’s example?
5. Often churches try to gather members by offering something that appeals to the needs in their lives. Why does this miss the mark and depart from Paul’s mission method?

Paul longed to visit the Romans and preach the gospel among them.

Romans 1:1–7

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 “*The obedience of faith*”—This means obeying God when he tells us to believe in his Son for salvation. It means giving up our own righteousness and submitting to Christ’s righteousness.

Discuss

- Examine this section on the basis of the following key words:
 - Paul* A former Pharisee who was set apart by Jesus for mission work to the Gentiles.
 - servant* Literally *slave*. Paul considered himself God’s willing slave.
 - Christ* The Greek word meaning “the anointed one,” corresponding to the Hebrew for “Messiah.”
 - Jesus* A name that means “Savior.”
 - set apart* Jesus personally appeared to Paul and called him to his service. Paul did not take this responsibility on himself.
 - apostle* Paul was called to be the 13th apostle. An apostle is a special witness to the resurrected Savior.
 - gospel* A word made from two older English words: *good* and *spell* (meaning “story”). Accordingly, *gospel* means “good story.”
- In verses 2 and 3, Paul tells us the message he preached to the world. What was that message?
 That God’s Son was born as a human being and shown to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead.

Apply

- Are you a saint?
 Yes. *Saint* means a holy person. Everyone who is cleansed by the blood of Christ is holy. Note: Contrast this to the Catholic Church, which calls only especially good people saints.
- Could Paul greet us in the same way he greeted the Romans?
 Yes. All believers in Christ have God’s gracious forgiveness. And we rest in the peace of knowing that God is at peace with us.

Paul introduced himself and his message and wished the Romans God’s grace and peace.

Romans 1:8–17

Paul wants to preach the powerful gospel at Rome

(*The Lutheran Study Bible*, pages 1908–1909)

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Discuss

- According to verses 11 and 12, what two things would happen when Paul visited the Romans?
He would continue to work to build up their faith. But it wasn’t a one-way street. He would be encouraged by the faith of the Roman Christians. Every pastor will say the same—his members also strengthen his faith and encourage him in the gospel.
- According to verses 16 and 17, why is the gospel the power of God for salvation?
In it, God’s righteousness is revealed, or made known. This righteousness comes by faith alone. This righteousness, which we don’t have to earn, is how we are saved.

Apply

- When Paul observed the faith and lives of the Roman Christians, he first of all gave thanks to God. How can your congregation apply this example to how it recognizes the contributions (financial and otherwise) of its members?
Whenever we see members doing great things for the Lord, we can remember that God gives the strength and willingness to produce fruits of faith and thank the members accordingly.
- Paul continually prays for the Roman Christians. Why should we follow Paul’s example?
The Lord wants us to pray regularly for our fellow believers.
- Often churches try to gather members by offering something that appeals to the needs in their lives. Why does this miss the mark and depart from Paul’s mission method?
The gospel alone is God’s power for salvation. Teaching people the “foolishness of the cross” must be how we lead people into our churches. Giving people the impression that Christianity is something other than the hope of eternal life through repentance and faith in Christ can hinder people from coming to know the Savior.

Paul longed to visit the Romans and preach the gospel among them.