

COMMUNITY GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

ROMANS 3

September 6, 2026

OPENING FOCUS

If you had to tell a friend who wasn't there Sunday what the main point of the message was, using just a sentence or two, how would you say it?

Romans 1:16–17

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. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written: 'But the righteous one will live by faith.'

1 God Is Faithful, Even When We Are Not

Romans 3:1–4

Then what advantage does the Jew have? Or what is the benefit of circumcision? Great in every respect. First, that they were entrusted with the actual words of God. What then? If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it? Far from it! Rather, God must prove to be true, though every person be found a liar, as it is written: 'So that You are justified in Your words, and prevail when You are judged.'

WHAT THIS MEANS

God's faithfulness doesn't depend on us. It doesn't waver when we stumble, doubt, or fail. His character is unshakeable because He is truth itself.

DISCUSSION QUESTION 1

Can you think of a time when someone you trusted let you down? How is God's faithfulness different from human faithfulness?

2 The Law Shows Us Our Sinfulness; It Cannot Save Us

Romans 3:5–8

But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? The God who inflicts wrath is not unrighteous, is He? (I am speaking from a human viewpoint.) Far from it! For otherwise, how will God judge the world? But if through my lie the truth of God abounded to His glory, why am I also still being judged as a sinner? And why not say (just as we are slanderously reported and as some claim that we say), 'Let's do evil that good may come of it'? Their condemnation is deserved.

WHAT THIS MEANS

The Law reveals our need; it doesn't meet our need. Paul is making it crystal clear: we can't sin more so that God's grace looks bigger. That's twisted thinking.

3 Everyone Is Guilty Before God

Romans 3:9

What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin;

Romans 3:10–20

as it is written: 'There is no righteous person, not even one; There is no one who understands, There is no one who seeks out God; They have all turned aside, together they have become corrupt; There is no one who does good, There is not even one.' 'Their throat is an open grave, With their tongues they keep deceiving,' 'The venom of asps is under their lips'; 'Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness'; 'Their feet are swift to shed blood, Destruction and misery are in their paths, And they have not known the way of peace.' 'There is no fear of God before their eyes.' Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God; because by the works of the Law none of mankind will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes knowledge of sin.

WHAT THIS MEANS

It doesn't matter if you're Jewish or Greek, rich or poor, educated or simple—sin has affected everyone. Period. And the Law proves it. This closes every excuse, stops every mouth, and leaves us all standing before God needing help.

DISCUSSION QUESTION 2

Why do you think Paul wanted to make it so clear that everyone is guilty? What difference does it make in how we see ourselves and others?

4 God Gives Me a Righteousness I Could Never Earn

Romans 3:21–22a

But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, but it is the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe;

WHAT THIS MEANS

God offers us something we could never earn, work for, or deserve—His own righteousness. It's not something we achieve; it's something we receive. And it comes through faith in Jesus Christ.

DISCUSSION QUESTION 3

Once you understand you could never earn God's approval no matter how hard you tried, how does that change what you think about being 'good enough'?

5 I Am Saved by God's Grace

Romans 3:22b–24

for there is no distinction, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus,

WHAT THIS MEANS

We're justified—declared righteous—as a gift. Not a payment plan. Not a reward for good behavior. A gift. That's what grace means.

6 God Doesn't Justify Me by Ignoring My Sin

Romans 3:25–26

whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in God's merciful restraint He let the sins previously committed go unpunished; for the demonstration, that is, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

WHAT THIS MEANS

Jesus took our sin upon Himself on the cross. God's justice was satisfied. His mercy was displayed. Both His character and our salvation are real.

DISCUSSION QUESTION 4

Why couldn't God just forgive us without Jesus dying on the cross? What does the cross tell us about how serious sin is and how much God loves us?

7 Because of God's Grace, I No Longer Measure My Faith by What I Do, I Treasure My Faith Because of What Christ Has Done

Romans 3:27–30

Where then is boasting? It has been excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith. For we maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from works of the Law. Or is God the God of Jews only? Is He not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since indeed God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith is one.

WHAT THIS MEANS

There's no room for pride here. God's grace extends to everyone, regardless of background, culture, or history. One God. One way. One grace for all.

DISCUSSION QUESTION 5

If your relationship with God isn't based on how good you are, what should it be based on? How does that change how you view yourself as a Christian?

NEXT STEPS FOR THIS WEEK

Sometime this week, write down one area of your life where you're still trying to earn God's approval, and bring it to Him in prayer—confessing that you're letting Him trade your effort for His grace.