



ROMANS

Practical, Easy-To-Use Devotionals Made for Families.



BOOK SUMMARY

..... ROMANS

ROMANS



SETTING

The Apostle Paul wrote this letter to the Christians in the city of Rome, probably in the year A.D. 57 (when he was on his third missionary journey).

Who is Paul?! That's a great question! A lot of the big scenes of Paul's life are recorded in the book of Acts. The Holy Spirit used him to help start a lot of the very first churches. God worked through Paul to give people wisdom about how the new chapter started by Jesus' life and death was continuing the Old Testament's story! God also spoke through Paul to write a lot of the New Testament books—most of them are letters to different churches who needed a word of encouragement, protection, correction, or help. This is the first of his letters that you come to in the Bible!

Paul wrote this letter to the Christians in Rome. What do we know about their city? Rome was the capital of the whole Roman Empire! It could be pretty challenging to live in sometimes. In A.D. 49, Emperor Claudius kicked out every Jewish person (including the city's Jewish Christians)! This was terrible! Jewish and Gentile Christians had been worshipping together! Some people think that the Jewish Christians had been the majority, so it would have been very sad and a huge deal when they were forced to leave! (By

the way, "Gentile" means someone who isn't Jewish by family line or faith. This will be an important theme in Romans!)

When Claudius made the whole Jewish community leave, only the Gentile Christians were left to worship together. The culture of the church naturally would have begun to shift. They probably didn't celebrate as many Jewish festivals or keep all the same customs as they did before. New leaders had to rise up.

But in A.D. 54, Claudius died. Many of the Jewish people returned to Rome! They discovered that a lot had changed in the church in five years! It was probably pretty hard for everybody to adjust. *The church-family struggled to agree about how to worship God.* But Paul wanted them to stick together from the heart. (He wrote to them a few years after people started to come back.)

Unity (togetherness through love) is a big part of what Jesus calls us to as His people! It's a huge theme of the Bible. **From the very beginning, God has been working to build an ethnically and culturally diverse family that's known for its love.** God wanted the Jews and Gentiles in Rome (and all over the world) to love and welcome each other.



ROMANS



OVERVIEW

Paul wrote this letter to help the Jewish and Gentile Christians see how much they have in common when it comes to the Lord. He helped them see the Gentiles' place in the long story of God's family. He also showed them how God had been faithful to the Jewish people all along—even when a lot of them rejected Jesus as the Messiah (the Rescuer) and King for whom they'd been waiting. Paul (who was Jewish himself) told them how much he longed for all Jewish people to believe Jesus as their savior, king, forgiver, restorer, and hope. Paul also explained the gospel in detail to them. (The gospel is the good news about Jesus!) This is one of the biggest purposes of the letter he sent!

Here's a quick summary of the gospel message: Paul shows them how God created humanity to love Him and share in His glory and joy. He explains what went wrong in the world—how sin (rebellion against God) led to man's fallenness (the loss of what we were supposed to be, do, and experience in connection with God).

Sin started with Adam (the first man), and it has taken every one of us captive—all the way down to you and me. (You'll hear a lot more about that in Romans.) It affects Jews and Gentiles, young and old, men and women. Each of us has chosen to leave God's way and pursue our own. We allow sin to reign in us instead of God.

Paul will talk about how that experience feels in Romans 7. Because we've let sin have its way in us, we're now guilty before God as the Judge. One day, He's going to punish (bring judgment on) all the sin that has filled and hurt the earth. If He were to ignore it, that would mean that evil would get away with all the awful things it's done! God's justice is a very important thing! But the problem for us is that we've all been part of evil's work in the world. We've hurt and misused God's people, His things, His name, and the earth He loves. So, we've earned punishment from Him. We deserve to be sent away from God's presence forever. That's really, really scary! But that's not the end of the story!

God didn't leave His beloved people alone to be crushed under the weight of their sin and the consequences. He didn't want them to be without His presence forever. Because He cares too much about us to leave it like that, He worked out a plan to save us and overturn evil. He sent us a way of hope. The book of Romans tells us more completely about that way than any other book of the Bible! It tells us how Jesus paid the price for our rebellion through His death and resurrection (rising from the dead). It compares Jesus to Adam and shows how sin and death came to all people through Adam, but Jesus did the reverse—He brought life. It shows us how we can accept His forgiveness by believing Him. It invites us to a whole new kind of Life!



ROMANS



THEMES

Here are some important words/themes in the book of Romans! See if you can spot them as you read.

- Righteousness (God's perfect ways of goodness that we participate in, too)
- Sin (rebellion against God)
- Death (which is the result)
- The Law (instructions God gave Israel in the Old Testament about how to live in light of His goodness. FYI, sometimes when Paul says, "the Law," he's actually talking about the first books of the Old Testament)
- Faith (trust/belief)
- Flesh (the sinfulness that we allow to control our choices. Paul usually doesn't mean our bodies when he says "flesh"—he means our sinful ways and hearts)
- Justification (how we can be made right with God by Jesus' sacrifice)
- God's grace (forgiveness and power-giving)
- The New Holy-Spirit-Filled Life (God is giving it to us.)
- God's promise-keeping faithfulness to

both Jews and Gentile, the new and beautiful chapter that's unfolding in God's history with His people. You'll also see Paul enlist their help for a new mission he wants to go on!

The BIGGEST theme of all is the gospel itself—the good news that Jesus has come to save us! Paul says in Romans 1:16a, "*... I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes.*"

HOW TO USE

The same unity God desired in His family in Rome, He desires for us. He also **really** wants us to believe the gospel and live! He wants everyone (you included!) to know what Jesus has done for us and be saved! That offer is open right now! You can be forgiven and made new forever.





READING PLAN

..... ROMANS

ROMANS



FAMILY READING PLAN

our family name

○ Chapter 1

Paul Longs To Visit; His Letter Starts With The Need For Jesus

○ Chapter 2

God's Judgment For Sin Applies To Jews And Gentiles Equally

○ Chapter 3

No One Is Right With God Except By Faith

○ Chapter 4

Abraham: Declared Right With God By Faith

○ Chapter 5

Death Came Through Adam; Life Came Through Jesus

○ Chapter 6

We're No Longer Slaves Of Sin; We're Servants Of Jesus

○ Chapter 7

The Tension In Our Hearts Between Good And Evil

○ Chapter 8

The Look Of A New Life

○ Chapter 9

Why So Many Of The Jewish People Were Rejecting Jesus

○ Chapter 10

Some Hear With Their Ears, But Don't Listen With Their Hearts

○ Chapter 11

God Is Faithful To His Word And His People

○ Chapter 12

How Being God's People Changes Us; Life Together

○ Chapter 13

Godly Obedience: Honor The Government's Authority

○ Chapter 14

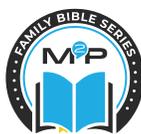
Unity By Honoring Each Other's Consciences

○ Chapter 15

Keeping Unity By Thinking Of Each Other First; Paul's Plans

○ Chapter 16

Closing Greetings





FAMILY JOURNALS

..... ROMANS

Tip

Romans is pretty deep water, and the sentences can be complicated. If you find that it's tough to get through, it might help to try a different translation! The NLT (New Living Translation) is a good option, and it's available free online or through a Bible app.

Paul Longs To Visit; His Letter Starts With The Need For Jesus

SUMMARY *(write or draw)*

WHAT STOOD OUT

FAV WORDS





FAV WORDS





WORTH A NOTE.....

As with any letter, there's a sender and a receiver. See if you can spot who the book of Romans is from and to! As you read vs. 1-17, you'll see that Paul gets right to the point! He talks almost immediately about the way of salvation (Jesus)! He starts to connect the dots from the work of Jesus to the Old Testament story. V16 is the theme verse! Can you memorize it? Also, how does Paul identify himself in the letter?

HIGHLIGHT

In vs. 18-32, Paul begins to lay out why God had to send to Jesus. How would you sum up what he says? Even though most of us don't make idols in the form of statues anymore (v23), all of us make idols in our hearts by loving (and worshipping) something else more than God. We've all relied on or served something else more than we have Him.

A place for thoughts *(write or draw)*

This story inspired me to...



God's Judgment For Sin Applies To Jews And Gentiles Equally

SUMMARY *(write or draw)*

WHAT STOOD OUT

FAV WORDS

FUN FACT

In chapter two, Paul uses a writing trick called "diatribe" to create a pretend conversation between himself and the group. He will ask lots of questions and give speedy answers. Take a minute and read the chapter. What problem do you think he was pointing out? What is your guess? Answer: It seems that some of the Jewish Christians thought that God would show them favoritism (v11), and He wouldn't judge their sin like the Gentiles! Whoa! They didn't realize how badly they needed God's forgiveness, so they were looking down on others.

BACKSTORY

Circumcision was the Jewish Old Testament symbol of belonging to God's family. It was an outward, visible sign. God really wants the inner person (the heart) to be marked for Him, too! Here Paul shows the people that just knowing God's Law can't save them. They have to keep it! Because no one does it perfectly (nobody can because of sin!), the Jews need Jesus—just as much as the Gentiles. Their pride had been standing in the way of unity.

A place for thoughts *(write or draw)*

This story inspired me to...



CHAPTER 3

ROMANS

TODAY'S DATE

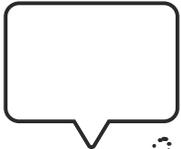
No One Is Right With God Except By Faith

SUMMARY *(write or draw)*

BACKSTORY In Verses 1-20, Paul shows the Jewish Christians that the Old Testament Law in which they took such pride could only do so much for them. It could help them see their real problem (what do you think that problem was? Paul uses five different Old Testament quotes in vs. 10-18 to show it to them!). Once it showed them, it couldn't rescue them (v20). They needed something else! You can peek ahead at v22 to see it.

WHAT STOOD OUT

FAV WORDS



A place for thoughts *(write or draw)*

This story inspired me to...

PICK ONE

Verses 21-31 contain some powerful statements! Pick one (or two or three!) of the points that Paul is making and explain them in your own words. (Note: "atonement" means making payment for a wrong done; "justified" means "made right with God," declared not guilty, no debt left to pay!)



Abraham: Declared Right With God By Faith

SUMMARY *(write or draw)*

BACKSTORY

Abraham is the very first father of the family of Israel (which was now expanding to include the Gentiles!) Physically he was the ancestor of all the Jewish people and the first to have the sign of circumcision. Spiritually, though, he's the ancestor of everyone who has faith in God! What does v13 say about Abraham? Read vs. 14-15. When he believed God's promises, it was credited to him (he was counted) right with God—freely forgiven! The same can be true for us! Paul shows that by faith, all of us (Jew and Gentile) share a spiritual heritage and have the same good standing with God. We're an equal family!

A place for thoughts *(write or draw)*

WHAT STOOD OUT

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This story inspired me to...

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RESPONSE

It's really important to God that we believe Him! Abraham is a great example of someone who trusted God's promises, even though they seemed impossible! You can read Abraham's full story in Genesis 12-23. What do you learn about him and his part of the story in vs. 18-25? Where is God calling you to trust Him right now?



Death Came Through Adam; Life Came Through Jesus

SUMMARY *(write or draw)*

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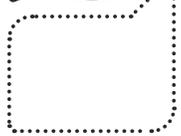
WORTH A NOTE

So far, Paul has been on a mission to show that all people are alike (Jew and Gentile) in that they have all sinned (gone against God) and can be forgiven (saved, made right with God) in the same way—faith in Jesus! What does v1 say we have with God if we've believed Jesus? That's huge! The King of the universe is at peace with us even though we were His enemies because of sin! Wow! Read vs. 1-11 slowly, piece by piece. Choose three of the points to talk about together.

WHAT STOOD OUT

Three large vertical boxes with dotted lines for notes on what stood out in the text.

FAV WORDS



A place for thoughts *(write or draw)*

Large grey area for writing thoughts or drawing.

This story inspired me to...

HIGHLIGHT

Verse 19 sums up vs. 12-19! When one man (Adam) sinned, it allowed sin into the whole family. But, by another man (Jesus!), righteousness and life came to all who believe! One brought death; the other brought life! Why does v20 say that God sent the OT Law? So that His people would see their sin and long for a Rescuer! It wasn't there to save them, but to show them their need!



We're No Longer Slaves Of Sin; We're Servants Of Jesus

SUMMARY *(write or draw)*

WHAT STOOD OUT

FAV WORDS

A place for thoughts *(write or draw)*

This story inspired me to...

RESPONSE

What points has Paul made so far in vs. 1-5? In Chapter Six, he adds the next layer. Paul will show that what Jesus has done for believers once and for all should change their lives NOW! Read vs. 1-14. What words do you see repeated over and over? What is the main point of this section? Look at vs. 11-12. That's a big key! Is there anything in your life that you need to give to God and change? Is there any kind of sin that you're serving (v14)? Because Christ has saved us, that should make us want to live with and for Him!

HISTORY

In the Roman Empire, as many as 25% of people were slaves. Paul's word picture would have felt very familiar. Before God saved us, to what were we slaves (first half of Chapter 6)? What do you think being a slave of sin is like? Read vs. 15-23 (especially v19). Who or what are we to be slaves of now? What does it mean to be a slave of righteousness or God? (Look back at Rom 1:1. What does Paul call himself?) FYI: "slave" and "servant" are the same word in Greek (the language of the New Testament). "Servant (or slave) of God" is a title of honor in the Bible!



The Tension In Our Hearts Between Good And Evil

SUMMARY *(write or draw)*

WHAT STOOD OUT

FAV WORDS

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HIGHLIGHT

(vs. 14-25) What stands out to you when you read how Paul describes what it's like to be torn between sin and living God's way? Some people think Paul is describing his life before Jesus and then after. Others think that he's describing what it's like to be a Christian but still struggle against sin. Vs. 24-25 is the highlight! As you finish, take a minute to read it aloud and thank God for His help.

WORTH A NOTE

In Chapter 7, Paul gives us a vivid illustration of what it's like to live in the tension sin causes. Read vs. 1-13. The Law that God had given His people in the OT was to protect them, lead them to Him, and help them fulfill their mission in the world (to be His bright Light!). (v5) Their flesh (not so much their bodies, but the sinful heart that's in all people from Adam onward) took control of them. It caused them (and it still causes us) to rebel against what we KNOW is good. Have you ever experienced that—when you know the right thing to do, but don't do it? Having the Law (God's commands) showed how deep the problem went in us. It wasn't the problem, though! Sin is always the problem.

A place for thoughts *(write or draw)*

This story inspired me to...



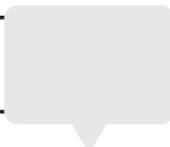
The Look Of A New Life

SUMMARY *(write or draw)*

WHAT STOOD OUT

FAV WORDS









RESPONSE

Take a moment to remind yourself what Paul has just been talking about in Chapters 6 and 7 (especially 7:22-25). Now read vs. 1-17. A few helpful notes: (vs. 1-4) "condemnation" means being sentenced to death. Because Jesus took all the punishment for our sin on Himself at the cross, we are no longer sentenced to die eternally (be separated from God forever)! Wow! Chapter 7 showed us how sin lived in us and controlled us. Chapter 8 shows us a very different picture now that we're "in Christ!" Take a minute to write about what you notice in vs. 5-16!

PICK ONE

Romans 8 is one of the most beautiful chapters in the Bible! Read vs. 18-39, and then pick three parts that are important to you. What do you learn about God, yourself, or how you're supposed to live in the world? What makes that section important? Choose at least one phrase or verse to memorize. *Extra notes: "intercede" means pray for. Who is interceding for us in this chapter?

A place for thoughts *(write or draw)*

This story inspired me to...



Why So Many Of The Jewish People Were Rejecting Jesus

SUMMARY *(write or draw)*

BACKSTORY

Chapter 9 can be a tough one to understand. Paul is writing to help the believers think about a particular question: How could it be that many of God's own family (the Jewish people, Israel, "Abraham's descendants") wouldn't believe in Jesus? He had come to fulfill His promises to save them. In the Old Testament story, God focused the bright light of His presence in one place—on one family, starting with Abraham. He wanted the world to see how good it was to be loved by Him and come in. Now God was expanding the mission, fulfilling a lot of promises that He had made to Israel's people over the years. Why didn't they believe Him? Why didn't they recognize Jesus as God Himself? If they were the family heirs, why weren't they receiving the inheritance? Paul is going to begin to answer that question. What he says can be hard for us to hear. (Remember that Paul is Jewish!) Look ahead to v14. What does it say? Hold that thought verse close to your heart as you read. God is never cruel or unjust. (We'll see that even more clearly in chapter 11.)

A place for thoughts *(write or draw)*

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This story inspired me to...

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WORTH A NOTE

In v6, he's saying that those who have faith are Abraham's true children—it's not about who their parents were (see v8 too). In v13, the idea is "Jacob I chose, but Esau, I rejected." (It's really not about hate.) The main point of this chapter is that God is in total control. He made us, and He has a right to decide. Verse 32 tells us why some of Abraham's physical children don't live as members of God's family: *it's all about faith—believing Jesus.*



Some Hear With Their Ears, But Don't Listen With Their Hearts

SUMMARY *(write or draw)*

WHAT STOOD OUT

FAV WORDS

HIGHLIGHT

In v1, what is Paul's prayer? It's safe to say that God wants that, too (2 Peter 3:9, Matthew 23:37)! Verses 10-13 makes an important promise and tells us exactly how those who aren't in God's family (including some of the Israelites) can come in! What does it say? To call on the name of the Lord is to ask for help. We need Jesus' help of forgiveness. We need Him to give us new spiritual life!

WORTH A NOTE

Verses 14-15 are beautiful. Good news has come! Will we believe it? Verse 16 through the end of the chapter shows that just because someone hears with their ears doesn't mean that they hear with their hearts. God so badly wants us to listen and believe. He wanted that for the Israelites of Paul's day as well.

A place for thoughts *(write or draw)*

This story inspired me to...



God Is Faithful To His Word And His People

SUMMARY *(write or draw)*

WHAT STOOD OUT

FAV WORDS

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HIGH LIGHT

Read v11 through the end of the chapter. There's a word picture of a tree. Some branches of the tree were broken off. Why? Some were grafted in. Grafting is a way to cause a branch from one tree to grow as part of another! It's a common process in caring for fruit trees even today! What hope is there for the broken branches (v 23)? Wow! Hooray! God is so merciful.

BACKSTORY

In Chapter 10, Paul showed that it was sadly because of unbelief that some of Abraham's physical descendants hadn't become part of his spiritual family (and members of God's true family). Paul now asks a really important question. What does he ask (v1)? How does he answer? This is another section that can be hard to hear. God says that there are people within Israel that He has called to Himself. Not because they were better or more special (v 6), but for reasons unknown to us. It's God's privilege to do what He sees best. He's the King! He's a loving father. He has made sure that some of Abraham's physical descendants were represented among his true spiritual ones. But wait! *That's not the end of the story!*

A place for thoughts *(write or draw)*

This story inspired me to...



How Being God's People Changes Us; Life Together

SUMMARY *(write or draw)*

WORTH A NOTE

Now we get to see how belonging to God by faith translates into practical instructions for the believers in Rome (and for us)! In v1, how are we supposed to think about our bodies? In Judaism, animals were sacrificed in the Temple as an offering to God—to give thanks, for a special reason, and for times when people sinned. Jesus died once and for all as the PERFECT sacrifice, so we don't have to do that anymore. What we get to offer Him now is our lives—a living sacrifice!! The rest of this chapter tells us some of how to do that. Read vs. 1-7. (FYI, prophecy here means passing on a message that God put on your heart.) What did you learn?

A place for thoughts *(write or draw)*

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This story inspired me to...

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HIGHLIGHT

(vs. 9-21) There are so many good instructions for relationships here. Read the whole section once, and then pick three sentences to talk about and pray about together. Choose one to memorize. Note: How does this say we should treat our enemies? How did Jesus model that for us?



Godly Obedience: Honor The Government's Authority

SUMMARY *(write or draw)*

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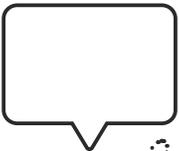
WORTH A NOTE

(vs. 1-7) What is the main point of this section? What does it tell you about the source of authority? Does this show authority as good or bad? Authority is a gift from God. It's here to protect and help us. Does that mean that everything a government official does is from God? No. Some leaders use their power in ways that don't honor God at all. But Romans 12:19 tells us that God sees everything and will repay all evil one day. Our job is to honor them, respect them, pray for them, and obey them (unless they tell us to do something that goes against God's commands).

WHAT STOOD OUT

Three large vertical boxes for writing notes on what stood out.

FAV WORDS



A place for thoughts *(write or draw)*

Grey shaded area for writing thoughts.

This story inspired me to...

Grey shaded area for writing inspiration.

HIGHLIGHT

(vs. 12) No one knows exactly the time that Jesus will return, but we do know that it's closer today than it was yesterday. Knowing that He's coming one day should change the way we live now! What does v11 say to do? Have your eyes wide open, loving, and serving God with everything you've got! Ask God to help you do this today.



Unity By Honoring Each Other's Consciences

SUMMARY *(write or draw)*

WHAT STOOD OUT

FAV WORDS









HISTORY

(v2) There were a lot of pagan temples (for the worship of false gods) in Rome. Some believers were afraid to eat meat because they didn't know if it had been sacrificed to an idol (a false god) before it was sold. Others had strong faith in the fact that Jesus had made their hearts clean. Eating the food didn't violate any of God's commands (like worshipping an idol would).

HIGHLIGHT

(vs. 10-13) Paul gives the Christians in Rome a very important word of perspective. What does he say each of us will do one day? We will all stand before Jesus' judgment seat when He returns to give an account of our lives. This doesn't mean that we have to earn our salvation! Jesus has done that already! What He wants is for us to live in His ways and love Him fully—to care about what He cares about! Everything we do and think matters to Him—big or small. He'll ask us about it one day! Part of loving Jesus is being careful not to lead another believer to do things that harm their conscience. We shouldn't look down on them for their convictions but try to honor them, even if it means giving up a little bit of our personal privileges (vs. 19-21).

A place for thoughts *(write or draw)*

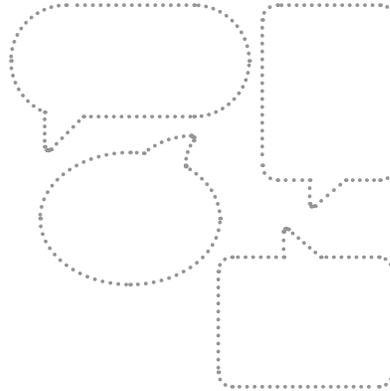
This story inspired me to...



Keeping Unity By Thinking Of Each Other First; Paul's Plans

SUMMARY *(write or draw)*

FAV WORDS



HIGHLIGHT

Verse 13 is a great thing to pray for each other! Name one person in your life and write out a prayer for them.

A place for thoughts *(write or draw)*

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This story inspired me to...

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WORTH A NOTE

The first part of Chapter 15 continues the thought from Chapter 14. Now we find out why it's so important that we keep thinking of each other first. Read vs. 1-9. Who is our example in this (v3)? What happens when we have the same attitude of mind that Jesus did (vs. 5-7)? It brings God praise and glory! It shows others what Jesus is like! Wow. What does v5 say God gives us? Sometimes it's hard to love each other, so God gives us endurance and encouragement! You can ask Him to do that for you anytime you're having a difficult time loving another believer!



Closing Greetings

SUMMARY *(write or draw)*

WHAT STOOD OUT

FAV WORDS

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FUN FACT

(v. 22) It was common practice in Paul's day to dictate your letter to a scribe (called an amanuensis) who would write it down. Who was Paul's amanuensis for this letter? Paul was likely writing this letter from the city of Corinth. Do you see Erastus in v23? He was a city leader. It's cool to know that archaeologists have found an inscription in Corinth honoring Erastus (very likely the same one Paul mentions) for a contribution he made to the city! In v26, Paul wraps up by reminding us that God wants all to see Him and come to Him! To Him be all glory! Write down one thing you learned about Him through Romans.

A place for thoughts *(write or draw)*

LIGHT

Wow! Look at how many people Paul mentioned! God had assembled so many co-workers in the gospel. The Lord means us to work side by side to care for His people, serve His world, and spread the good news! How many does he mention? What does he say about them?

*History Fact: Do you see the names Ampliatus, Urbanus, Stachys, and Apelles in Paul's list? Those were common slave names at that time. In God's household, all have equal status!

This story inspired me to...

