

Investigating God's Word...

YEAR SIX

Epistles (Part 1)

Sunday School Curriculum

Summer Quarter

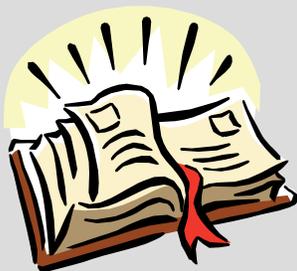
Lesson Sequence

Summer Quarter

The **Lesson Sequence** gives the teacher an overview of the entire quarter.

The central goal of the ***Investigating God's Word...*** curriculum is to enable children the opportunity to read and study the entire Bible—from Genesis to Revelation—by the time they “graduate” from 6th grade.

Week One	Romans 1-5
Week Two	Romans 6-11
Week Three	Romans 12-16
Week Four	I Corinthians 1-9
Week Five	I Corinthians 10-16
Week Six	II Corinthians 1-7
Week Seven	II Corinthians 8-13
Week Eight	Galatians
Week Nine	Ephesians
Week Ten	Philippians
Week Eleven	Colossians
Week Twelve	I Thessalonians
Week Thirteen	II Thessalonians



Suggested Schedule

Welcome <i>Proverbs 20:11</i>	2-3 min.
Drill Time <i>The Apostle Paul</i>	5 min.
W.O.W! <i>Righteousness</i>	5 min.
Historical Context <i>Timeline</i>	2-3 min.
Bible Investigation <i>Romans 1-5</i>	20-30 min.
Lesson-At-Home <i>Romans 3:22-23</i>	2-3 min.

Lesson One

Romans 1-5

Overview

We begin our studies this quarter in the Apostle Paul's majestic Letter to the Romans. Romans 1 opens with Paul's introduction of himself and his longing to visit Rome. It is the power of the gospel that compels him to testify to the Jews and the Gentiles. It is also the power of God in creation that reveals His wrath for sin to all mankind. There is no excuse for anyone, as the rebellious continue to worship themselves rather than the Creator.

Romans 2 continues Paul's logic about God's righteous judgment. Instead of judging others, we should thank God for His mercy towards us. Both Jews and Gentiles are sinners before God. No amount of law-keeping will help their situation. Romans 3 continues the thought by testifying to God's righteousness amidst our own unrighteousness. The only way to be righteous is to enjoy the righteousness of Christ through faith alone.

In Romans 4, Paul makes certain that it is understood that even Abraham, the father of the faith, was righteous only because he believed God. The righteousness of Christ was credited to his account, as it can be for all who are His children. Romans 5 shows how we have peace and joy when we are justified by faith. Death came through Adam, but a full, eternal life comes through Jesus Christ alone!

Preparation

Briefly read through and meditate on Romans 1-5 this week.

Teaching Encouragement

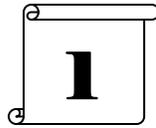
It is easy for children (as well as adults) to be convinced of their own righteousness. We compare ourselves to others and attempt to formulate records that make ourselves look pretty good. At least I'm not as bad as that other guy! In order to understand the gospel truth of the righteousness of Christ, you must train your children to see their utter un-righteousness. In and of themselves, they cannot be "straight" or "right" with God, no matter how good they think they are. Show your students the depths of their unrighteousness so they learn to clothe themselves in the perfect righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ—by faith alone!

The **Welcome** serves as both an opportunity to greet the children as well as an effort to help them get focused on God's Word.

Each week, you will begin with a passage out of the Psalms or Proverbs as an exhortation to study God's Word.

Drill Time gives the children the opportunity to recall and rehearse what they have been taught in the past—at home, school and/or church.

This element allows the **Investigating God's Word...** curriculum to cover much more Biblical "ground," since time is not expended repeating the same Bible stories over and over again from year to year.



Welcome

Greet the students. Welcome visitors. To prepare the students for class today, read Proverbs 20:11.

¹¹ Even a child is known by his actions, by whether his conduct is pure and right.

Say: *This proverb tells us how we are "known" to other people. How do people "know" you? [By watching my actions.] We all are quickly judged by the words we speak and the things we do. We show others that we either tend to do what is right or we run to do what is wrong. This is one reason we study God's Word—so it can change our hearts and thereby change our conduct too!*



Drill Time

Now let's move on to **DRILL TIME**—our weekly opportunity to review what we have learned in the past. Are you ready?

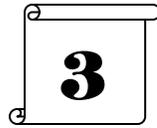
Today's questions: *What was the Apostle Paul's conduct before Jesus changed his heart? Who was Paul's main partner on his first missionary journey? Who was with Paul when an earthquake sprung them out of prison? What was Paul's occupation that provided money for himself as a missionary? Who were Paul's close friends that were also tentmakers? Where did Paul die?*

Call on volunteers or select students to make attempts.

Answers:

1. He persecuted Christians.
2. Barnabas.
3. Silas.
4. He was a tentmaker.
5. Priscilla and Aquila.
6. In Rome.

Say: *This quarter, we will be studying several of Paul's letters. Some of these were written while on his missionary journeys, while others were written while he was in prison.*



W.O.W!

The **W.O.W!** is the **Word of the Week**.

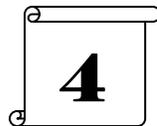
This element is included to help the children build their theological and Biblical vocabularies. These words are vital to the Christian's understanding of God and His Word.

*Remember that, every week, we will define a new word and add it to our growing Christian vocabulary. Our W.O.W! (Word of the Week) this week is **RIGHTEOUSNESS**. Write it on the board.*

RIGHTEOUSNESS is a word used all through the Bible. One definition of RIGHTEOUSNESS is "holy and upright living in accordance with God's law." To be RIGHTEOUS is to live God's way, which is the right way. The word RIGHTEOUS actually comes from a word that means "straight."

Only God is perfectly RIGHTEOUS. Since you and I are sinners, our RIGHTEOUSNESS is very limited. The Bible even describes our RIGHTEOUSNESS as "dirty rags." If all you have is your own RIGHTEOUSNESS, then there is no way you will measure up to God's standard.

Thankfully, as we will read today, we can gain RIGHTEOUSNESS that is not our own. We can be made RIGHT with God. The cross of Jesus transfers upon those who put their faith in Christ a RIGHTEOUSNESS not our own. Whose is it? [Christ's] We'll talk more about this when we investigate God's Word together.



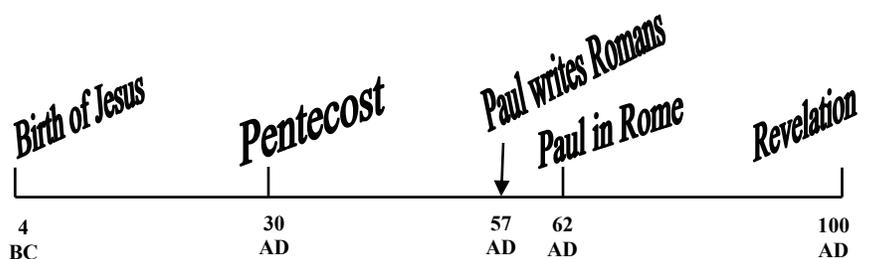
Historical Context

Each week, the Bible Lesson will be placed in **historical context** by use of a timeline.

It is essential that the children learn how the story of redemptive history fits together. Bible stories must not be viewed as detached scenes—they are to be shown as a part of a much bigger picture. The timeline is a useful tool toward that end.

As you study these chapters in Romans today, put this timeline on the board for some important historical context.

A Romans Timeline





Bible Investigation

The Bible Investigation time is the heart and soul of the lesson. It plunges the student directly into God's Word, not simply a paraphrase of a Bible story.

All Scripture text included in the curriculum is from the New International Version (NIV).

The Bible reading is taken in short sections, separated by times of **discussion**, **questions**, and **application points**.

This format allows ample opportunities to stop, think about and discuss what is being read.

Have the students turn in their Bibles to the Book of Romans.

Introduction: *The Apostle Paul wrote the Book of Romans during his third missionary journey. This long letter was written to the church in Rome that he was planning to visit. He probably wrote Romans from the city of Corinth. Paul wrote this letter to give an account of the gospel of Jesus Christ in preparation of his visit. We do not have time to read all of Romans, but over the next three lessons we will gain a good idea of what Paul had to say in this amazing letter!*

We begin in Romans 1. Read Romans 1:1-4.

¹Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God—²the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures³ regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David,⁴ and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.

Discussion: *This is Paul's introduction to this letter. What does he call himself? [A servant of Jesus Christ; an apostle.] Paul was set apart by God to take the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles. He knew firsthand the power of God, didn't he?*

Let's go down to verse 15. Read verses 15-17.

¹⁵That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are at Rome. ¹⁶I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. ¹⁷For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

Application: *There's our Word of the Week! Paul preached a **RIGHTEOUSNESS** that only comes from God through faith in Christ. This is the only gospel there is! It is the power of God.*

Now, go to verse 18. Read verses 18-21.

¹⁸The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, ¹⁹since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. ²⁰For since the

This grey sidebar found on all pages is for the teacher to write notes as he or she prepares the lesson.

Other teaching tips or important exegetical information may also appear on the sidebar.

creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. ²¹For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Discussion: *Paul now says that no one has an excuse because God’s power can be clearly seen in His creation. So why do so many people reject God? Allow answers. Our sinful hearts reject God and darken our minds and hearts. The rest of Chapter One describes the destruction that happens to all who reject God.*

Let’s pick up in Romans 2. Read Romans 2:1-4.

¹You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things. ²Now we know that God’s judgment against those who do such things is based on truth. ³So when you, a mere man, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God’s judgment? ⁴Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God’s kindness leads you toward repentance?

Application: *Do you get what Paul is saying? We cannot pass judgment on others who reject God because God is JUDGE. If we spend our time condemning others, we are showing that we do not understand the GRACE of God in our own lives. It is only God’s kindness that will keep you from rejecting Him too!*

Summary: *In the rest of Chapter Two, Paul calls upon the Jews to not rest in their own RIGHTEOUSNESS or their own keeping of the law. Law-keeping does not save anyone. We need the grace of God in order to be saved! We are simply Un-RIGHTEOUS people that need the RIGHTEOUSNESS of God to appear to us.*

Let’s go to Romans 3. Read Romans 3:9-12.

⁹What shall we conclude then? Are we any better? Not at all! We have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin. ¹⁰As it is written: “There is no one righteous, not even one; ¹¹there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. ¹²All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.”

Application: *So, who is RIGHTEOUS? [No one.] Who seeks God? [No one.] All people have turned away from God. We are all under sin. What a sobering truth! What do we do about it?*

Let's keep reading. Read verses 20-24.

²⁰ Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin. ²¹ But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. ²² This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Application: *Can anyone be declared RIGHTEOUS by obeying the law? [No.] The law just shows us what sinners we are. How can we become RIGHTEOUS before God, then? [Through faith in Jesus Christ.] Because we all have sinned and fall short of God's glory, we all need the RIGHTEOUSNESS that only comes by Christ Jesus.*

Now, let's go on to Romans 4. Read Romans 4:1-3.

¹ What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather, discovered in this matter? ² If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about—but not before God. ³ What does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”

Discussion: *Now Paul uses our Word of the Week to talk about the father of our faith: Abraham. Was Abraham RIGHTEOUS because of all his good works? [No.] He enjoyed the RIGHTEOUSNESS of Christ because he believed God. Paul wants to make sure that we don't think that God's people in the Old Testament were right with God because of all of their sacrifices or law-keeping. All people, at all times, are only made RIGHTEOUS because of Christ.*

Let's go down to verse 13. Read verses 13-15.

¹³ It was not through law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith. ¹⁴ For if those who live by law are heirs, faith has no value and the promise is worthless, ¹⁵ because law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression.

Application: *Again, was Abraham RIGHTEOUS because he obeyed God's law? [No.] If you and I could become RIGHTEOUS by obeying the law, then faith would have no value. The law only shows us that we deserve God's wrath as sinners. The law shows that we are terrible sinners. It is by faith alone in Christ alone that we are made RIGHTEOUS. This is the promise of God from the very beginning.*

Let's read more. Read verses 16-18.

¹⁶Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. ¹⁷As it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations." He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed—the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were. ¹⁸Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, "So shall your offspring be."

Discussion: *Abraham is not just the father of all the Jews. God promised him that he would be the father of many nations. He is your father if you put your faith in Christ! The promise made to Abraham long ago is fulfilled in all who follow Jesus. That's what Paul is saying here!*

Go down to verse 20. Read verses 20-25.

²⁰Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, ²¹being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. ²²This is why "it was credited to him as righteousness."²³ The words "it was credited to him" were written not for him alone, ²⁴but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. ²⁵He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

Application: *More incredible words! Abraham had Christ's RIGHTEOUSNESS credited to his account by the grace of God through faith in Christ. Is that just true for him? No! It is true for all who believe that Jesus died for their sins and was raised from the dead. Do you believe that?*

Now, on to Romans 5. Read Romans 5:1-2.

¹Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ²through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

Application: *If you have been justified (made right) with God through faith in Christ, what do you also have? [Peace with God.] Enjoying the RIGHTEOUSNESS of Christ also means we are no longer at war with God. We also have great joy because of the hope we now have. Peace and joy are the fundamental blessings of a relationship with Jesus Christ.*

Let's continue on. Read verses 5-8.

⁵ And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us. ⁶ You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Application: *That is the love of God—giving us Jesus Christ as the perfect sacrifice for our sins. More incredible truth for us!*

Now, go to verse 12. Read verses 12-14.

¹² Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned— ¹³ for before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law. ¹⁴ Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come.

Discussion: *How did sin enter the world? [Through Adam.] What came with sin? [Death.] So, we are all born sinners, spiritually dead to God. This is the bad news.*

Now, listen to the good news. Read verses 15, 19-20.

¹⁵ But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! ¹⁹ For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous. ²⁰ The law was added so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, ²¹ so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Conclusion: *That's a great place to end our reading of this amazing Letter to the Romans. What's the good news? [Just as sin came through one man, GRACE came through one man—Jesus.] Sin reigned in Adam, but grace reigns in Jesus Christ. If you and I depend on law-keeping for our RIGHTEOUSNESS, we will be condemned to death. If we enjoy the grace of God through faith in Christ, we will enjoy Christ's RIGHTEOUSNESS which leads to eternal life. Which will you choose? Paul will continue to preach the truth of the gospel to our hearts when we pick up our reading in Romans 6 next time.*



Lesson-At-Home

The **Lesson-At-Home** section is the closing time each week. Bookmarks are given to the students that include the Scripture memory verse and a lesson review. The lesson review contains words and phrases that can spark memories as well as conversation with parents.

Distribute the “Lesson-At-Home” bookmarks. Read the Scripture Memory verse (Romans 3:22-23) together.

Romans 3:22-23 (NIV)

²² This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...

Say: *These verses sum up the gospel and remind us of our Word of the Week! True RIGHTEOUSNESS is only found in faith in Christ. We all need it because we are all sinners. There is only one way to eternal life with God and that is to be wrapped in the perfect RIGHTEOUSNESS of Christ!*

Review the verses.

Direct the students’ attentions to the bottom half of the bookmark. It includes reminder points of today’s lesson that can be discussed with their parents and reviewed during the week.

Close in prayer and dismiss the students.