

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a dense forest of evergreen trees. The trees in the foreground are dark and detailed, while those in the background are shrouded in a thick, white mist or fog, creating a sense of depth and atmosphere. The overall color palette is muted, with various shades of green, grey, and white.

# **GOD IS FOR US**

**ROMANS 8**

**GUIDEBOOK**



**GOD IS FOR US**

**ROMANS 8**

# ADDITIONAL HELPFUL RESOURCES

## Books & Commentaries



### **TGC has a helpful online commentary on Romans**

by Donny Ray Matthis II

[www.thegospelcoalition.org/commentary/romans](http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/commentary/romans)

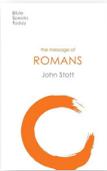
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### **Romans 8-16 For You**

by Tim Keller

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### **The Message of Romans**

by John Stott

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## Videos or Podcasts



### **A Helpful Video Summary of Romans from The Bible Project Team**

from The Bible Project Team

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**The TGC Podcast 'Deep Dish'** is a really good podcast by Women for Women. They have a helpful discussion on Romans 8

## THANK YOU

We are thankful for the permission that St Paul's Anglican, Castle Hill has given us for using their small group material, 'Assurance'. <https://stpauls.church>

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***Growth groups are not meeting in the week of March 22-26 because of our AGM. There is one more Romans 8 study to follow.***

# **MAKING THE MOST OF GROWTH GROUP**

Welcome to the commencement of your Christ Central growth group in 2026! Perhaps this is your first time in a group or you've been involved in our groups for a while now, but either way, it's helpful to spell out how you can make the most of this experience. Our growth groups give expression to what we want to see happen in our lives – that as we teach and study God's word together, that by His Spirit, God does the powerful work to grow us to be more like Jesus. This is not an intellectual exercise of knowing more 'things' – this is about knowing God and living out His word as we really care for those in the group with spiritual encouragement and practical love. Here's some further thoughts on how we can grow in Christ and help others grow too.

## **You & Your Growth Group**

You've signed up to growth group, but if you ever discover you can't properly commit to this group, let your leader know asap. But by saying this is your group – you're not just expressing an ideal, you're going to take action – you'll come each week, even when you're a bit tired, and during those colder months, and even when other options come up. Come each week ready to share your thoughts on God's word and share honest things about yourself too. Along with your Bible, bring this guidebook so that you can take notes and enter into discussion.

## **You & Church**

You'll see that this guidebook has space to write notes on each bible talk so bring along this guidebook on Sundays. By having reflections on the Sunday message, it will help you to participate in growth group discussion. And here's a suggestion – invite someone or a family to meet up over a meal or coffee and read Romans 1-7 together to help prepare for this series.

## **You & Your Family**

For 2026, what's your plans for family devotion time – around the table, or before bed or while you're minding your grandchildren? As a suggestion, you could read passages from Romans 8 and speak to your family members about the things you've been learning and discovering.

# ROMANS 8 & OUR DOUBLE VISION

As a church we've been talking about our 'Double Vision' – we have a 'godly discontent' for more people to be delivered from God's judgement to discover life and hope in Jesus Christ who died for us and rose again. This is the gospel, and in fact Romans 8 is a highpoint for beautiful gospel promises – there is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus, we have a sure hope for glory, and nothing can now separate us from God's love for us in Jesus. So don't we want our friends, family and work colleagues to know the wonderful truth of Romans 8 for themselves?! So throughout this series we'll be encouraging prayer for those who don't yet know Jesus. But also, there are some upcoming Double Vision opportunities that we'd love all of church to participate in.

**SUNDAY  
FEB 15**

**Mission  
Prayer Lunch**

**DOUBLE VISION  
Prayer**

**SUNDAY  
FEB 22**

**Mission  
Prayer Lunch**

**DOUBLE VISION  
Prayer**

**WEDNESDAY  
FEB 25**

**Evangelism  
Course Workshop**

**DOUBLE VISION  
Training**

**WEDNESDAY  
MAR 4**

**1-1  
Workshop**

**DOUBLE VISION  
Training**

Come along to one of the Mission Prayer Lunches where we will pray for our community. And come along to one of our Training Nights. You'll notice that the training is on Wednesday Nights. We fully expect that it will impact your attendance to growth group that week, and that's completely fine.

# INTRODUCING 'GOD IS FOR US'

If the Bible were a mountain range, it's been said that Romans 8 would be its highest peak. And it's true that many Christians list Romans 8 as their favourite chapter in the whole bible. So that says something for why we're studying this single chapter over the first term of this year – it is so jam-packed with beautiful truths! Over the course of this term may we find confidence and assurance as we delve into:

- the work of Christ to free us from condemnation of the law.
- the power and new life we have in the Spirit.
- our new identity as precious children of God.
- the hope we have for future glory.
- the irrevocable, unconditional, and unstoppable love that God has for us!

By taking a detailed approach to our study of Romans 8, it will help us to properly see the context of many of our favourite Romans 8 verses.

## Authorship of Romans

The letter to the Romans was written by Paul, according to Romans 1:1. There is a reference to Tertius in Romans 16:22 with the claim that he “wrote down this letter” (most likely as Paul dictated it). What a privilege this would have been for Tertius. There is little doubt that this letter is God's word through his apostle Paul.

## About the Book

- The Letter to the Romans was written between A.D. 55 and 58.
- There have been many suggestions as to the structure of the letter. Perhaps the most useful and simple is Chapters 1-5:11; 5:12-8; 9-11; 12-16. Chapter 8 comes in the middle of the letter and is considered a highlight of this masterpiece.
- This letter draws together theological insights as God's plan for salvation has unfolded. A key verse for the whole book is 1:16-17, *'For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who*

*believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed - a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."* The high point of this gospel is explained in Romans 8.

- Martin Luther said of Romans, *"This epistle is really the chief part of the New Testament and is truly the purest gospel. It is worthy not only that every Christian should know it word for word, by heart, but also that he should occupy himself with it every day, as the daily bread of the soul."*<sup>1</sup>

John Calvin says that the theme of Romans is as follows: "Man's only righteousness is the mercy of God in Christ, when it is offered by the Gospel and received by faith."<sup>2</sup>

## Historical Context

Paul wrote the letter to the Romans from the city of Corinth, while he was on his third missionary journey (Acts 20:2-3).

One of the aims of the letter is to unify the church in Rome. The church was made up of both Jews and Gentiles and it is believed that it was started by Jews. In A.D. 49 Jewish Christians were expelled from Rome and returned in A.D.54. Paul met Priscilla and Aquila, in Corinth after they had been expelled from Rome by Claudius (See Acts 18:1-2 and Romans 16).

As a result of the return of the Jews to Rome, the social distance between the groups had widened and Gentiles would have demonstrated little or no adherence to Jewish law. This distance was bridged by the Gospel that Paul preached and taught. As Schreiner points out, *"Paul could not arbitrate the debate simply by declaring his opinion. He needed to summarise the basic content of the gospel he preached, especially as it pertained to issues relating to Jews and Gentiles."*<sup>3</sup>

The gospel changes everything!

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1. Luther's Works - Vol. 35: *Word and Sacrament I* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1999), 365.

2. Calvin John. *Commentary on Romans* - <https://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom38.iv.html> (Sighted 2 February 2023).

3. Thomas R. Schreiner. *Romans - Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*. Page 20-21.

## Theological Context

Romans is thought of as a theological highpoint of the Bible. It knits together all that God has been working towards throughout salvation history. It does this through the lens of the Gospel that was given to Paul and the Apostles to pass on. It is worth noting that this letter is not the total of Paul's theology. It has been suggested that Paul's eschatology (theology of the end times) is not fully expounded in this letter, though we will certainly see Paul speak of our future to come in Romans 8!

## Romans 8

In Romans 8 Paul *"relays the means by which the power of sin is broken."*<sup>4</sup> The answer is in the work of Jesus Christ on the cross and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Schreiner goes on to say, *"Christ's work on the cross provides the basis for the deliverance of believers from condemnation, while the Holy Spirit provides the power for conquering sin so that the law can now be kept (8:1-4)."*<sup>5</sup>

Romans 8 provides us with words of assurance through the work of Jesus and the gift of the Spirit. Our future is assured based on the work of Christ, revealed to us by the Spirit. The chapter finishes with the beautiful and powerful declaration that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

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4. Thomas R. Schreiner. *Romans – Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*. Page 395.

5. Thomas R. Schreiner. *Romans – Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*. Page 395.

# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Term 1 | 2026

<b>FRIDAY JAN 30</b> <b>Youth Launch</b> 	<b>SUNDAY FEB 1</b> <b>Double Vision Sunday</b> 	<b>SUNDAY FEB 1</b> <b>Christ Central Kids Launch</b> 	<b>SUNDAY FEB 8</b> <b>Celebration Sunday</b> 	<b>WEEK OF FEB 9-12</b> <b>Growth Group Launch</b> 
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or

<b>SUNDAY FEB 15</b> <b>Mission Prayer Lunch</b> 	<b>SUNDAY FEB 22</b> <b>Mission Prayer Lunch</b> 	<b>WEDNESDAY FEB 25</b> <b>Evangelism Course Workshop</b> 	<b>WEEKEND FEB 27-MAR 1</b> <b>Young Adults Weekend Away</b> 	<b>WEDNESDAY MAR 4</b> <b>1-1 Workshop</b> 
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<b>FRIDAY MAR 13</b> <b>Youth Combo Night</b> 	<b>SATURDAY MAR 14</b> <b>Men's Conference</b> 	<b>SATURDAY MAR 21</b> <b>Women in the Word</b> 	<b>SUNDAY MAR 25</b> <b>AGM</b> 	<b>WEEKEND MAR 3-5</b> <b>Easter</b> 
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**SAT - WED  
APR 11-14**

**Y@C  
Youth Camp**



**Retirees Group**    **1st Wed in the Month**    

**Young Adults All-In**    **1st Sun in the Month**    



# ROMANS 8:1-2

## STUDY 1

### INTRODUCTION

The verses at the beginning of Romans 8 explains what it means for the believer in Jesus Christ. The chapter begins with 'Therefore'. This reminds us that we are at a hinge-point in Paul's letter to the Romans.

### QUESTIONS

**1.** What do you think it means in these verses to be 'in Christ'? In this context "in Christ" is in direct contrast to "in Adam".

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**2.** What does the phrase "no condemnation" mean? Put Romans 8v1 into your own words.

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**3.** How does the Spirit give life? v2

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4. How does the opening verses of Romans 8 reshape your thinking about areas of guilt or shame in your life?

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5. What could you say to someone (including yourself!) who is struggling with guilt or a sense of shame?

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## PRAYER

In addition to responding to today's passage and praying for your group members, please be praying for:

- **Hope Explored** which we recently ran. Pray for those who came, and even those who were invited but didn't attend this time round. Pray that people would know the grace-given 'no condemnation' through Christ Jesus.
- Pray for **Tim Zylstra** who's recently back from his January trip to Vanuatu – pray for his translation work and that God would provide for all those practical on-the-ground needs.
- Pray for the **Young Adults** of our church & for their Weekend Away in two weeks' time, 27 Feb – 1 March.



# ROMANS 8:3-4

## STUDY 2

### INTRODUCTION

If the law is powerless to save, then how does God deal with this problem? The solution does not come from within us, because the flesh is too weak to follow the law.

Martin Lloyd Jones said, "The terrible, tragic fallacy of the last hundred years has been to think that all man's troubles are due to his environment, and that to change the man you have nothing to do but change his environment. That is a tragic fallacy. It overlooks the fact that it was in Paradise that man fell." <sup>7</sup>.

We are no longer judged on the standard of our religious observance, because Christ has been judged in our place, and his righteousness is credited to us who are united to Him by faith. And so there is no place for pride ('look at how good I have kept the rules'), and no need for fear ("Oh no! I could never keep all the rules").

### QUESTIONS

**1.** Are you right with God? How do you know?

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**2.** Read Romans 8:3-4. Why is God's Law powerless to transform us?

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7. Martin Lloyd-Jones quoted in *From here to Eternity* by Ray Galea. Page 50.

**3.** The "flesh" is a concept used in different contexts throughout the bible. Can you think of any way that "the flesh" is used positively in the Bible? What is it about the flesh that makes the law powerless?

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**4.** How does God turn around this problem of the flesh weakening the Law?

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**5.** In verse 3b-4 Paul says that "sin in the flesh" is condemned, with the result that "the requirement of the Law might be fully met in us". What does this say about God's view of the law?

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**6.** What does it mean that we do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit? What could be some common mistakes made with interpreting this verse?

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**7.** What difference does the Spirit make in your life?

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8. Can you think of a time when you've had a clear sense of the Spirit at work in you?

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## PRAYER

In addition to responding to today's passage and praying for your group members, please be praying for:

- We're in the midst of our **Double Vision Prayer Lunches**. For those who participated last Sunday, you could share what it was like. But as a growth group, let's pray for the north side of Brisbane - that gospel would be proclaimed by us and other churches too so that many people would know that through faith in Jesus there is no condemnation.
- Pray for **Christ Central Youth** that's now been going for a couple of weeks. Pray for the teenagers - that would have the courage and conviction to invite their friends even when they find it hard.
- Pray for our **Elders** - that in their many leadership responsibilities, that they would have a heart for the lost and lead us with real mission purpose.



# ROMANS 8:5-8

## STUDY 3

### INTRODUCTION

In the NIV translation of verse 5, the word "For" is missing but it is important. Verses 5-8 (probably verses 5-11) have a logical follow on from verse 4 given the "For". "The reason that believers fulfill the law is because they have the Spirit, and conversely unbelievers cannot keep the law precisely because they lack the Spirit."<sup>8</sup>

There are two meanings in the New Testament for the word "flesh". One is that it refers to the physical aspect of a person's existence. The second, "the flesh" is the tendency within fallen people to disobey God in every area of life. In our passage, given the context, the second definition is being followed.

It is thought that this tendency to disobey God in every way stems from who we are and not merely the decisions we make and subsequently do. We are in Christ and therefore in the Spirit OR we are in the flesh.

The flesh is something created by God. Like many other things, it has been corrupted. The flesh too has been redeemed and will be fully restored on the final day. The desires of our flesh will no longer be at odds with the desires of the Spirit. In fact, the full redemption of our flesh will mean that we will be complete in our worship of God and our minds will become free from the battle with sin.

### QUESTIONS

1. Are you right with God? How do you know?

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8. Schreiner, Thomas R. from *Romans (Baker series)*. Page 409.

**2.** Read Romans 8:5-8. What do you observe in these verses?

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**3.** From these verses what is the mark of a true Christian?

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**4.** How does being in Christ and valuing him above all else help us live according to the Spirit (rather than increasing in willpower)?

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**5.** In verses 7-8 what does Paul say about a person's ability to please God or to keep God's law? What does this tell us about Jesus' sacrifice?

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**6.** What stands in the way of us giving ourselves fully to Jesus?

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7. When do you notice that your mind is governed by the flesh? What do you need to do to change this?

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8. How can we encourage others to remain faithful to Jesus?

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## PRAYER

In addition to responding to today's passage and praying for your group members, please be praying for:

- Pray for the **Ri program at Eatons Hill State School** with leaders from our church and other churches as well. Pray for Ri in other schools too. Pray that God would open hearts to the truth of the gospel and children (and teachers too!) could come to faith in Jesus.
- Pray for **Christ Central Kids**. We're in real need for more leaders - would you be able to play a role to help tell kids about Jesus? If so, talk to Rebecca Scott. Pray that our children would be growing in faith and in God's timing would become disciple making disciples themselves!



# ROMANS 8:9-13

## STUDY 4

### INTRODUCTION

In these verses we see how comprehensive the work of God in Christ is. Paul alternates several different titles, showing and emphasising the oneness of God. Paul uses "the Spirit", "the Spirit of God", "Spirit of Christ" and "Christ".

### QUESTIONS

**1.** Are you right with God? How do you know?

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**2.** Read Romans 8:9-13. Question 1 above is that repeating question we've posed in previous studies – helping us to understand we're true assurance is found, but now in our passage today there's lots of 'ifs' (v9, v10, v11, v13). Why is this a healthy self-examination?

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**3.** In what ways does the Spirit give us life?

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**4.** Verse 12 seems like an incomplete thought. Why do you think Paul is not balancing this verse with a comment about the Spirit?

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**5.** Living according to the flesh means we will die. If we have faith in Jesus as our Saviour and put to death the misdeeds of the body, we will live. In verse 13 why do you think Paul uses the language of death?

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**6.** What would it look like for you to “declare war” on the deeds of the body? How would your life be different?

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**7.** What Spirit-empowered initiatives can you embark upon to kill sin? To “put to death the misdeeds of the body”?

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## PRAYER

In addition to responding to today's passage and praying for your group members, please be praying for:

- Pray for the **retirees** of our church – that they would grow in vibrant faith and have opportunities for sharing the gospel with others.
- Give thanks for the **Young Adults Weekend Away** that's just taken place. Pray that relationships would strengthen, and that we would see more young adults come to faith in Jesus and grow.
- Next week is our **'Startup Lunch' for newcomers**. Pray that newcomers would connect in well. Pray that they would take the next step of joining a growth group!



# BIBLE TALK NOTES

Sunday 8 March

ROMANS 8:14-17

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.

# ROMANS 8:14-17

## STUDY 5

### INTRODUCTION

As we continue through this important and inspiring chapter, verse 1 ought to be revisited as this is the context for all that Paul writes here. How has this verse influenced the way you have been reading this chapter and increased your affection for Jesus?

In verses 14-17 Paul introduces a further benefit with there being no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus. We are adopted as children of God. Adoption in the first century carried with it all the privileges of a biological child. You would be included in the inheritance and any other benefits. For Paul's readers this idea would carry some astounding implications and a further view of God's grace to those who are saved.

### QUESTIONS

**1.** Read Romans 8:14-17. What is the link between 8:13 and 8:14?

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**2.** How do you think the experience of being led by God's Spirit works?

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**3.** According to these verses what are the various privileges of sonship (this includes for men and women!), and do any of these stand out for you for any particular reason?

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**4.** In your prayers, do you tend to refer to God as 'God', 'Lord' or 'Abba Father'? How do you think your language in prayer reveals your relationship with God?

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**5.** What do you think it means that the Spirit testifies with our spirit that we are God's children?

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**6.** How should we understand the qualification - 'if' of v17?

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**7.** Can you think of a time when you felt close to God, and you knew He was close to you?

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## **PRAYER**

In addition to responding to today's passage and praying for your group members, please be praying for:

- Pray for those doing MTS this year - Holly Castle and Natalie Holmes, along with our 1 year voluntary trainees - Declan Childs, Aden Keegan, and Eliana Keegan.
- Pray for Jared and Verona Bradley, along with their children Noah and Sammy who are working with ECM in Germany. Pray for them as they look to make the move to the Tübingen area and work with the BERG church.
- Pray for our Pastors - Josh Dickinson, Garnet Swann, Ming Ting and Kirk Zylstra.



# ROMANS 8:18-22

## STUDY 6

### INTRODUCTION

In these verses Paul is addressing suffering. It is not limited to the suffering we endure as humans in a cursed world but suffering for the sake of Jesus. In fact he says, "that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us."

It begs the question how big is the glory that God is promising? Paul explains here that it extends to the whole creation. God's redemptive plan leaves no stone unturned so that our joy is complete and his promises fulfilled. This is the kind of God we believe in, where we find our assurance.

### QUESTIONS

**1.** Are you right with God? How do you know?

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**2.** Read Romans 8:18-22. Suffering can be a stumbling block to Christianity for many people? Why is suffering seen as a reason to dismiss a good and loving God? As Christians how can we hold suffering and the goodness of God together?

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**3.** What's the comparison (or non-comparison!) we're supposed to make according to v18?

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**4.** Verse 17 spoke about being glorified with Christ and in v18 we have the promise of the glory that will be revealed. What does glory mean?

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**5.** Verse 20 speaks of 'creation was subjected to frustration'. What is this referring to?

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**6.** According to Romans 8:18-22, what perspectives are we supposed to bring to God's creation around us?

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**7.** How does the restoration of the whole creation impact the way you think about the gospel of Jesus?

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8. How much does knowing that we will be glorified affect the way we live, work and play?

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9. Do you think it is important that we look after the planet?

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10. Are you looking forward to glory?

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## PRAYER

In addition to responding to today's passage and praying for your group members, please be praying for:

- The ministry of **Compassion**. Note: Compassion Sunday is this week. We're supporting children in places where the decay and brokenness of this world is felt in all sorts of painful ways. Pray that physical and practical aid can come to these children. But also pray that they would come to know the eternal liberating hope that's found in Christ
- Pray for our **Committee of Management** as we head to our AGM next Wednesday night (25 March). Pray that the men and women of our Committee would have wisdom and a gospel heart as they serve to see money and resources directed towards spreading the gospel.
- Pray for **Christ Central Kids**.



A photograph of a dense evergreen forest, likely a spruce or fir forest, shrouded in a thick, white mist or fog. The trees are dark green and densely packed, with the mist obscuring the background and creating a sense of depth and atmosphere. The lighting is soft and diffused, typical of a foggy day.

 **CHRIST CENTRAL**