

References for *Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook*

FEBRUARY 4-10

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD | ROMANS 1-3

"Keep Training Your Conscience"

(Romans 2:14, 15) For when people of the nations, who do not have law, do by nature the things of the law, these people, although not having law, are a law to themselves.¹⁵ They are the very ones who demonstrate the matter of the law to be written in their hearts, while their conscience is bearing witness with them, and by their own thoughts they are being accused or even excused.

Ivs 18 ¶6

A Good Conscience With God

⁶ Even people who do not know Jehovah usually realize that there are things that are right and things that are wrong. The Bible says: "By their own thoughts they are being accused or even excused." (Romans 2:14, 15) For example, most people know that it is wrong to murder or to steal. Though they may not realize it, they are actually listening to their conscience, the sense of right and wrong that Jehovah put inside of them. They are also following God's principles, or the basic truths Jehovah has provided to help us to make good choices in life.

(Romans 2:15) They are the very ones who demonstrate the matter of the law to be written in their hearts, while their conscience is bearing witness with them, and by their own thoughts they are being accused or even excused.

Ivs 19-20 ¶8-9

A Good Conscience With God

⁸ Some people think that listening to their conscience simply means following their feelings. They think that they can do whatever they want as long as they feel good about it. But our feel-

ings are imperfect, and they can mislead us. Our feelings can be so powerful that they affect our conscience. The Bible says: "The heart is more treacherous than anything else and is desperate. Who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9) So we may begin to think that something is right even though it is wrong. For example, before Paul became a Christian, he viciously persecuted God's people and believed that what he was doing was right. In his opinion, he had a good conscience. But he later said: "The one who examines me is Jehovah." (1 Corinthians 4:4; Acts 23:1; 2 Timothy 1:3) When Paul learned how Jehovah felt about what he was doing, he realized that he needed to change. Clearly, before we do something, we need to ask ourselves, 'What does Jehovah want me to do?'

⁹ When you love someone, you don't want to displease him or her. Because we love Jehovah, we don't want to do anything that will displease him. Our fear of displeasing Jehovah needs to be very strong. We see this from Nehemiah's example. He refused to use his position as governor to get rich. Why? He explained that it was "because of the fear of God." (Nehemiah 5:15) Nehemiah did not want to do anything that would displease Jehovah. Like Nehemiah, we too are afraid of displeasing Jehovah by doing something wrong. We can learn what pleases Jehovah by reading the Bible.—See Endnote 6.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

(Romans 3:4) Certainly not! But let God be found true, even if every man be found a liar, just as it is written: "That you might be proved righteous in your words and might win when you are being judged."

w08 6/15 30 ¶5

Highlights From the Letter to the Romans

3:4. When man's word conflicts with what God says in his Word, we "let God be found true" by

trusting in the message of the Bible and acting in harmony with God's will. By having a zealous share in the Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making work, we can help others find God to be true.

(Romans 3:24, 25) and it is as a free gift that they are being declared righteous by his undeserved kindness through the release by the ransom paid by Christ Jesus. ²⁵ God presented him as an offering for propitiation through faith in his blood. This was to demonstrate his own righteousness, because God in his forbearance was forgiving the sins that occurred in the past.

w08 6/15 29 ¶6

Highlights From the Letter to the Romans

3:24, 25—How could “the ransom paid by Christ Jesus” cover “the sins that occurred in the past” before it was paid? The first Messianic prophecy, recorded at Genesis 3:15, found fulfillment in 33 C.E. when Jesus was put to death on a torture stake. (Gal. 3:13, 16) The moment Jehovah uttered that prophecy, however, the ransom price was as good as paid from his viewpoint, for nothing can prevent God from fulfilling what he purposes. So on the basis of the future sacrifice of Jesus Christ, Jehovah could forgive the sins of descendants of Adam who exercised faith in that promise. The ransom also makes possible a resurrection of those of pre-Christian times.—Acts 24:15.

Bible Reading

(Romans 1:1-17) Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus and called to be an apostle, set apart for God's good news, ² which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, ³ concerning his Son, who came to be from the offspring of David according to the flesh, ⁴ but who with power was declared God's Son according to the spirit of

holiness by means of resurrection from the dead—yes, Jesus Christ our Lord. ⁵ Through him we received undeserved kindness and an apostleship with a view to obedience by faith among all the nations respecting his name, ⁶ among which nations you also have been called to belong to Jesus Christ— ⁷ to all those who are in Rome as God's beloved ones, called to be holy ones: May you have undeserved kindness and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸ First of all, I give thanks to my God through Jesus Christ concerning all of you, because your faith is talked about throughout the whole world. ⁹ For God, to whom I render sacred service with my spirit in connection with the good news about his Son, is my witness of how without ceasing I always mention you in my prayers, ¹⁰ begging that if at all possible I may now at last succeed in coming to you by God's will. ¹¹ For I am longing to see you, that I may impart some spiritual gift to you for you to be made firm; ¹² or, rather, that we may have an interchange of encouragement by one another's faith, both yours and mine. ¹³ But I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that many times I have intended to come to you—but I have been prevented until now—in order that I might acquire some fruitage also among you just as among the rest of the nations. ¹⁴ Both to Greeks and to foreigners, both to wise and to senseless ones, I am a debtor; ¹⁵ so I am eager to declare the good news also to you there in Rome. ¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the good news; it is, in fact, God's power for salvation to everyone having faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷ For in it God's righteousness is being revealed by faith and for faith, just as it is written: “But the righteous one will live by reason of faith.”

FEBRUARY 11-17

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD | ROMANS 4-6

“God Recommends His Own Love to Us”

(Romans 5:8) But God recommends his own love to us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

(Romans 5:12) That is why, just as through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because they had all sinned—.

w11 6/15 12 ¶5

God Recommends His Love to Us

⁵ Paul outlined the matter, starting with this point: “Through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men because they had all sinned.” (Rom. 5:12) We are in a position to understand this because God had a record made of how human life began. Jehovah created two humans, Adam and Eve. The Creator is perfect, and so were those first humans, our ancestors. God gave them but one limiting directive and informed them that disobeying that law would bring a death sentence. (Gen. 2:17) However, they chose to act ruinously, violating God's reasonable directive, thus rejecting him as Law-giver and Sovereign.—Deut. 32:4, 5.

(Romans 5:13, 14) For sin was in the world before the Law, but sin is not charged against anyone when there is no law. ¹⁴ Nevertheless, death ruled as king from Adam down to Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the same way that Adam transgressed, who bears a resemblance to the one who was to come.

w11 6/15 12 ¶6

God Recommends His Love to Us

⁶ It was only after Adam had become a sinner that he fathered children, passing on sin

and its effects to all of them. Of course, they had not violated the divine law as Adam had, so they were not charged with the same sin; nor had any law code yet been given. (Gen. 2:17) Still, Adam's descendants inherited sin. Thus, sin and death ruled down to the time when God gave the Israelites a law code, which clearly showed that they were sinners. **(Read Romans 5:13, 14.)** The effect of inherited sin might be illustrated with certain inherited diseases or defects, such as Mediterranean anemia or hemophilia. You may have read that Alexis, son of Russian Czar Nicholas II and Alexandra, inherited the bleeding disorder hemophilia. Granted, even in such a family, some children do not suffer from those diseases, but they still may be carriers. Not so with sin. The defect of sin from Adam was inevitable. All are subject to it. It is always fatal. And it is passed on to all children. Could that predicament ever be overcome?

(Romans 5:18) So, then, as through one trespass the result to men of all sorts was condemnation, so too through one act of justification the result to men of all sorts is their being declared righteous for life.

(Romans 5:21) To what end? So that just as sin ruled as king with death, so also undeserved kindness might rule as king through righteousness leading to everlasting life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

w11 6/15 13 ¶9-10

God Recommends His Love to Us

⁹ What is the sense of the Greek words underlying the expressions “declaration of righteousness” and “declaring of them righteous”? One Bible translator wrote of the concept: “It is a legal metaphor that makes a quasi-legal point. It speaks of a change in a person's status in relation to God, not of an inner change in the person . . . The metaphor pictures God as the judge who has reached a decision in favor of the accused, who had been brought before

God's court, so to speak, on a charge of unrighteousness. But God acquits the accused."

¹⁰ On what basis could the righteous "Judge of all the earth" acquit an unrighteous person? (Gen. 18:25) Laying the groundwork, God lovingly sent his only-begotten Son to earth. Jesus did his Father's will perfectly, despite temptations, extreme ridicule, and abuse. He kept his integrity even to the extent of dying on a torture stake. (Heb. 2:10) In sacrificing his perfect human life, Jesus offered a ransom that might release, or redeem, Adam's offspring from sin and death.—Matt. 20:28; Rom. 5:6-8.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

(Romans 6:3-5) Or do you not know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ So we were buried with him through our baptism into his death, in order that just as Christ was raised up from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also should walk in a newness of life. ⁵ If we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we will certainly also be united with him in the likeness of his resurrection.

w08 6/15 29 ¶7

Highlights From the Letter to the Romans

6:3-5—What is meant by baptism into Christ Jesus and baptism into his death? When Jehovah anoints followers of Christ with the holy spirit, they are united with Jesus and become members of the congregation that is the body of Christ, he being the Head. (1 Cor. 12:12, 13, 27; Col. 1:18) This is their baptism into Christ Jesus. Anointed Christians are also "baptized into [Christ's] death" in that they live a life of sacrifice and renounce any hope of everlasting life on earth. Their death, therefore, is a sacrificial one, as was Jesus' death, though their death does not have ransoming value. This baptism into Christ's death is completed when they die and are resurrected to life in heaven.

(Romans 6:7) For the one who has died has been acquitted from his sin.

w14 6/1 11 ¶1

What Hope for My Ancestors?

When the unrighteous are resurrected, will they be judged on the basis of their past actions? No. Romans 6:7 states: "The one who has died has been acquitted from his sin." The unrighteous will have paid for their sins by dying. Thus, they will be judged on the basis of what they do after their resurrection, not what they did in ignorance before they died. How will they benefit?

Bible Reading

(Romans 4:1-15) That being so, what will we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? ² For instance, if Abraham was declared righteous as a result of works, he would have reason to boast, but not with God. ³ For what does the scripture say? "Abraham put faith in Jehovah, and it was counted to him as righteousness." ⁴ Now to the man who works, his pay is not counted as an undeserved kindness but as something owed to him. ⁵ On the other hand, to the man who does not work but puts faith in the One who declares the ungodly one righteous, his faith is counted as righteousness. ⁶ Just as David also speaks of the happiness of the man to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: ⁷ "Happy are those whose lawless deeds have been pardoned and whose sins have been covered; ⁸ happy is the man whose sin Jehovah will by no means take into account." ⁹ Does this happiness, then, only come to circumcised people or also to uncircumcised people? For we say: "Abraham's faith was counted to him as righteousness." ¹⁰ Under what circumstances, then, was it counted as righteousness? When he was circumcised or

uncircumcised? He was not yet circumcised but was uncircumcised. ¹¹ And he received a sign—namely, circumcision—as a seal of the righteousness by the faith he had while in his uncircumcised state, so that he might be the father of all those having faith while uncircumcised, in order for righteousness to be counted to them; ¹² and so that he might be a father to circumcised offspring, not only to those who adhere to circumcision but also to those who walk orderly in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had while in the uncircumcised state. ¹³ For it was not through law that Abraham or his offspring had the promise that he should be heir of a world, but it was through righteousness by faith. ¹⁴ For if those who adhere to law are heirs, faith becomes useless and the promise has been abolished. ¹⁵ In reality the Law produces wrath, but where there is no law, neither is there any transgression.

FEBRUARY 18-24

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD | ROMANS 7-8

“Are You ‘Waiting With Eager Expectation?’”

(Romans 8:19) For the creation is waiting with eager expectation for the revealing of the sons of God.

w12 7/15 11 ¶17

Let Jehovah Lead You to True Freedom

¹⁷ When discussing the freedom that Jehovah has in store for his earthly servants, Paul wrote: “The eager expectation of the creation is waiting for the revealing of the sons of God.” Then he added: “The creation itself also will be set free from enslavement to corruption and have the glorious freedom of the children of God.” (Rom. 8:19-21) “The creation” refers to mankind with the earthly hope, those who will bene-

fit from “the revealing” of God’s spirit-anointed sons. That revealing will begin when these “sons,” resurrected to the spirit realm, share with Christ in cleansing the earth of evil and preserving “a great crowd” into the new system of things.—Rev. 7:9, 14.

(Romans 8:20) For the creation was subjected to futility, not by its own will, but through the one who subjected it, on the basis of hope

w12 3/15 23 ¶11

Rejoicing in Our Hope

¹¹ “The basis of hope” for mankind was given by Jehovah when he promised deliverance from “the original serpent,” Satan the Devil, by means of the promised “seed.” (Rev. 12:9; Gen. 3:15) That “seed” was primarily Jesus Christ. (Gal. 3:16) By his death and resurrection, Jesus provided a solid basis for mankind’s hope to be set free from enslavement to sin and death. The realization of this hope is related to “the revealing of the sons of God.” The glorified anointed ones are the secondary part of the “seed.” They will be ‘revealed’ when they share with Christ in destroying Satan’s wicked system of things. (Rev. 2:26, 27) This will bring salvation to the other sheep who come out of the great tribulation.—Rev. 7:9, 10, 14.

(Romans 8:21) that the creation itself will also be set free from enslavement to corruption and have the glorious freedom of the children of God.

w12 3/15 23 ¶12

Rejoicing in Our Hope

¹² What relief will come to human “creation” during the Thousand Year Reign of Christ! At that time, the glorified “sons of God” will be further ‘revealed’ when they act as priests with Christ, administering the benefits of Jesus’ ransom sacrifice to mankind. As subjects of the heavenly Kingdom, human “creation” will begin

to experience deliverance from the effects of sin and death. Obedient humans will gradually “be set free from enslavement to corruption.” If they remain faithful to Jehovah throughout the Millennium and during the final test that will come at the end of it, their names will be permanently written in “the scroll of life.” They will enter into “the glorious freedom of the children of God.” (Rev. 20:7, 8, 11, 12) A glorious hope indeed!

Digging for Spiritual Gems

(Romans 8:6) For setting the mind on the flesh means death, but setting the mind on the spirit means life and peace;

w17.06 3

Do You Remember?

What is the difference between “setting the mind on the flesh” and “setting the mind on the spirit”? (Rom. 8:6)

The one doing the former focuses on the desires and leanings of the imperfect flesh, constantly talking about and glorifying things of the flesh. A person doing the latter centers his life on things related to God and his thoughts; such a Christian is dominated by holy spirit. The former leads to death, the latter to life and peace. —w16.12, pp. 15-17.

(Romans 8:26, 27) In like manner, the spirit also joins in with help for our weakness; for the problem is that we do not know what we should pray for as we need to, but the spirit itself pleads for us with unuttered groanings. ²⁷ But the one who searches the hearts knows what the meaning of the spirit is, because it is pleading in harmony with God for the holy ones.

w09 11/15 7 ¶20

What Do Your Prayers Say About You?

²⁰ At times, we may not know what to say in our private prayers. “The problem of what we

should pray for as we need to we do not know,” wrote Paul, “but the [holy] spirit itself pleads for us with groanings unuttered. Yet he [God] who searches the hearts knows what the meaning of the spirit is.” (Rom. 8:26, 27) Jehovah caused many prayers to be recorded in the Scriptures. He accepts these inspired petitions as requests we would like to make and therefore fulfills them. God knows us and the meaning of the things he caused his spirit to speak through the Bible writers. Jehovah answers our supplications when the spirit “pleads,” or intercedes, for us. But as we become better acquainted with God’s Word, what we should pray for may more readily come to mind.

Bible Reading

(Romans 7:13-25) Therefore, did what is good result in my death? Certainly not! But sin did, that it might be shown to be sin working out death in me through what is good, so that through the commandment sin might become far more sinful. ¹⁴ For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am fleshly, sold under sin. ¹⁵ For I do not understand what I am doing. For I do not practice what I wish, but I do what I hate. ¹⁶ However, if I do what I do not wish, I agree that the Law is fine. ¹⁷ But now I am no longer the one doing it, but it is the sin that resides in me. ¹⁸ For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, there dwells nothing good; for I have the desire to do what is fine but not the ability to carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good that I wish, but the bad that I do not wish is what I practice. ²⁰ If, then, I do what I do not wish, I am no longer the one carrying it out, but it is the sin dwelling in me. ²¹ I find, then, this law in my case: When I wish to do what is right, what is bad is present with me. ²² I really delight in the law of God according to the man I am within, ²³ but I see in my body another law warring against the law of my mind

and leading me captive to sin's law that is in my body. ²⁴ Miserable man that I am! Who will rescue me from the body undergoing this death? ²⁵ Thanks to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So, then, with my mind I myself am a slave to God's law, but with my flesh to sin's law.

FEBRUARY 25–MARCH 3

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD | ROMANS 9-11

"The Illustration of the Olive Tree"

(Romans 11:16) Further, if the part of the dough taken as firstfruits is holy, the entire batch is also holy; and if the root is holy, the branches are also.

w11 5/15 23 ¶13

'O the Depth of God's Wisdom!'

¹³ The apostle Paul goes on to compare those who become part of Abraham's seed to branches on a symbolic olive tree. (Rom. 11:21) This cultivated olive tree represents the fulfillment of God's purpose with regard to the Abrahamic covenant. The root of the tree is holy and represents Jehovah as the one who gives life to spiritual Israel. (Isa. 10:20; Rom. 11:16) The trunk represents Jesus as the primary part of Abraham's seed. The branches collectively represent "the full number" of those included in the secondary part of Abraham's seed.

(Romans 11:17) However, if some of the branches were broken off and you, although being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became a sharer of the richness of the olive's root,

(Romans 11:20, 21) That is true! For their lack of faith, they were broken off, but you are standing by faith. Do not be haughty, but be in fear. ²¹ For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you.

w11 5/15 24 ¶15

'O the Depth of God's Wisdom!'

¹⁵ What, then, did Jehovah do to fulfill his purpose? Paul explains that branches from a wild olive tree were grafted onto the cultivated olive tree to replace those broken off. **(Read Romans 11:17, 18.)** Thus, spirit-anointed Christians of the nations, such as some in the congregation in Rome, were figuratively grafted onto this symbolic olive tree. In this way they became part of Abraham's seed. Originally, they were like wild olive branches, not having any opportunity to be a part of this special covenant. But Jehovah opened the way for them to become spiritual Jews.—Rom. 2:28, 29.

(Romans 11:25, 26) For I do not want you to be unaware of this sacred secret, brothers, so that you do not become wise in your own eyes: A partial dulling of senses has come upon Israel until the full number of people of the nations has come in, ²⁶ and in this manner all Israel will be saved. Just as it is written: "The deliverer will come out of Zion and turn away ungodly practices from Jacob.

w11 5/15 25 ¶19

'O the Depth of God's Wisdom!'

¹⁹ Yes, Jehovah's purpose with regard to "the Israel of God" is being fulfilled in a marvelous way. (Gal. 6:16) As Paul said, "all Israel will be saved." (Rom. 11:26) In Jehovah's due time, "all Israel"—that is, the complete number of spiritual Israelites—will serve as kings and priests in heaven. Nothing can cause Jehovah's purpose to fail!

Digging for Spiritual Gems

(Romans 9:21-23) What? Does not the potter have authority over the clay to make from the same lump one vessel for an honorable use, another for a dishonorable use? ²² What, then, if God had the will to demonstrate his wrath and to make his power known, and

he tolerated with much patience vessels of wrath made fit for destruction? ²³ And if this was done to make known the riches of his glory on vessels of mercy, which he prepared beforehand for glory,

w13 6/15 25 ¶5

Let Jehovah's Discipline Mold You

⁵ What if humans stubbornly refuse to be molded by the Great Potter? How, then, does he exercise his divine authority? Think about what happens to the clay if it becomes unsuited for the intended purpose. Why, the potter can make another type of vessel out of it or simply discard it! When the clay is useless, though, generally the potter is at fault. This is never the case with our Potter. (Deut. 32:4) When a person does not yield to Jehovah's molding, the fault always lies with that person. Jehovah exercises his potterlike authority over humans by adjusting his dealings with them depending on their response to his molding. Those who respond properly are fashioned in a beneficial way. For example, anointed Christians are "vessels of mercy" who have been molded into 'vessels for an honorable use.' On the other hand, those who stubbornly oppose God end up as "vessels of wrath made fit for destruction." —Rom. 9:19-23.

(Romans 10:2) For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to accurate knowledge.

it-1 1260 ¶2

Jealous, Jealousy

Misdirected Zeal. One may be sincerely zealous, or jealous, for a certain cause and yet be wrong and displeasing to God. That was true of many of the Jews of the first century. They looked for righteousness to come to them through their own works under the Mosaic Law. But Paul showed that their zeal was misdirected because of lack of accurate knowledge. Therefore they did not receive the real righteousness

that comes from God. They would have to see their error and turn to God through Christ to receive righteousness and freedom from the condemnation of the Law. (Ro 10:1-10) Saul of Tarsus was one of such, being extremely zealous for Judaism to the point of excess, "persecuting the congregation of God and devastating it." He was scrupulously keeping the Law as "one who proved himself blameless." (Ga 1:13, 14; Php 3:6) Yet his jealousy for Judaism was a misdirected one. He was sincere of heart, for which reason Jehovah exercised undeserved kindness through Christ in turning him to the way of true worship.—1Ti 1:12, 13.

Bible Reading

(Romans 10:1-15) Brothers, the goodwill of my heart and my supplication to God for them are indeed for their salvation. ² For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to accurate knowledge. ³ For because of not knowing the righteousness of God but seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. ⁴ For Christ is the end of the Law, so that everyone exercising faith may have righteousness. ⁵ For Moses writes about the righteousness that is by the Law: "The man who does these things will live by means of them." ⁶ But the righteousness resulting from faith says: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' that is, to bring Christ down, ⁷ or, 'Who will descend into the abyss?' that is, to bring Christ up from the dead." ⁸ But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your own mouth and in your own heart"; that is, "the word" of faith, which we are preaching. ⁹ For if you publicly declare with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and exercise faith in your heart that God raised him up from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one exercises faith for righteousness, but with the

mouth one makes public declaration for salvation. ¹¹ For the scripture says: “No one who rests his faith on him will be disappointed.” ¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek. There is the same Lord over all, who is rich toward all those calling on him. ¹³ For “everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah will be saved.” ¹⁴ However, how will they call on him if they have not put faith in him? How, in turn, will they put faith in him about whom they have not heard? How, in turn, will they hear without someone to preach? ¹⁵ How, in turn, will they preach unless they have been sent out? Just as it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who declare good news of good things!”