nothing can separate

nine sessions on Romans 8

Secondary

Lunchtime Group Resources
nothing can separate

nine sessions on the Romans 8

The Crusader Union is a Bible-based, interdenominational Christian youth organisation, whose vision is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to students in the Independent Schools of Australia, to nurture Christians and to encourage church membership.

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Welcome

This resource has been specifically written with school groups in mind but can be adapted depending on your needs. It is based on the group running for approximately 30 minutes each meeting.

What's Inside?

- 1 set of leader’s notes for an outreach meeting.
- 8 sets of leader’s notes for regular meetings. The leader’s notes provide the aim of the study, a fun activity, discussion questions (with notes to help answer some questions) and prayer ideas.
- 8 student pages for regular meetings. The student pages can be photocopied and handed out if so desired. Each sheet contains the Bible passage (NIV) and discussion questions. Note there is no student page for Week 2, which is an outreach week.
- 2 colour advertising posters designed to grab the attention of students and help increase awareness of your group. There is space for you to fill in your group name and where you meet. We encourage schools to use the ‘CRU School Groups’ logo when promoting their group so as to link students with the work that God is doing in other schools.

Before You Start

- Please note that all pages in this resource can be photocopied but Crusaders request each school or church purchase at least one original.
- Whilst this resource is aimed at easing the load for the group leader, it is vital that time is spent adapting it to the specific needs of your group. Time also needs to be spent on working through the Bible passage and questions before the group meets.
- A variety of video clips and other resources are used in this series. All resources, including video clips, should be checked before the meeting to make sure they are appropriate for your group and there are no technical problems. The resources can be accessed from the Web Extras section of the CRU website:
  
  www.crusaders.edu.au/school-ministry/resources/web-extras/

- It would be very easy to spend too much time on the activity each week. Remember that looking at the Bible and praying together are the most important parts of the meeting, so divide your time accordingly.
- Note that Week 2 (the outreach meeting) needs a bit more planning than other meetings. It may be wise to look ahead now at what needs to be done.

We pray that this resource will be a great help as you join in God’s work of bringing students to Himself and growing them to be like His Son.

“We proclaim Him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ.
To this end I labour, struggling with all His energy which so powerfully works in me.”

Colossians 1:28–29
# Week 1: Who Can Please God?

**Passage:** Romans 8:5-8  
**Main Idea:** Without Jesus our sin makes us unable to please God.

# Week 2: Set Free Outreach Week

**Passage:** Romans 8:2-3  
**Main Idea:** Jesus is the only one who sets us free from sin and death.

# Week 3: No Condemnation

**Passage:** Romans 8:1  
**Main Idea:** Jesus frees us from all condemnation.

# Week 4: Living Free

**Passage:** Romans 8:9-13  
**Main Idea:** The Holy Spirit sets us free to live for God.

# Week 5: In the Family

**Passage:** Romans 8:14-17  
**Main Idea:** The Holy Spirit makes us children of God.

# Week 6: Suffering Will End

**Passage:** Romans 8:17-21  
**Main Idea:** Suffering is not the whole story in the life of the Christian.

# Week 7: All Things for Good

**Passage:** Romans 8:28-30  
**Main Idea:** God is working in all circumstances to enable us to be more like Jesus.

# Week 8: If God is For Us

**Passage:** Romans 8:31-32  
**Main Idea:** We can be confident that God is for His people.

# Week 9: Never Let Go

**Passage:** Romans 8:33-39  
**Main Idea:** God’s love is always guaranteed for His people.
**AIM**

To help students see that without Jesus our sin makes us unable to please God.

**PREPARE**

- Pray as you prepare that God’s will might be done and the students are drawn closer to Him.
- Read through Romans 8, familiarising yourself with the context and content of the passage.
- Photocopy the Week 1 Students’ page for everyone. (p.22)
- Print on cardboard and hole punch enough copies of the Web Extras document ‘Romans Prayer Card’ for each person to have one.
- Bring a chocolate bar (or several) as a prize for the Fun Activity.
- Bring enough thick cable ties for each person in the group to have one, plus three extra for the Fun Activity.

**INTRO**

Tell your group that over the next term you’re going to be looking at Romans 8 - a whole term on one chapter! Explain that Romans 8 is one of the most encouraging chapters in the entire Bible. It’s so exciting and packed full of goodness that it’s worth spending a term on.

**READ**

Explain that in today’s passage Paul talks about how those who are not saved by Jesus are unable to please God. No matter how hard they try, it’s impossible. It’s like doing push-ups with your arms tied behind your back. You can try all you want, but you will never succeed until someone frees you.

Read Romans 8:5-8

**DISCUSS**

1. The passage talks a lot about two types of people. What do you think it means when it talks about those who live “according to the flesh”?

The phrase has been translated in lots of different ways: “sinful nature”, “the human condition”, “sinful flesh” and “human nature”. The phrase, while confusing, means those people who have not been set free by Jesus from a life of sin and death to a life in line with the Holy Spirit. People who are living in the flesh have an inclination towards evil and all their actions are tainted by their sin. The
important thing to note is that this state of being is not a choice where someone can decide to be either in the flesh or in Jesus, but it is as fundamental as the flesh on our bones. Only Jesus can transform us from one state of being to another so that we can please God.

2 Why do you think this passage spends so much time talking about “the mind”?

The mind is the centre of where our attitudes and desires come from. In this passage, the mind is important because from a changed mind comes a changed way of living. Only the mind that is renewed by God and worships God can lead to a life that pleases God.

3 In Romans 3:10 and 21 it says that “no one is righteous” and “all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.” Do you think this is a fair assessment of what humanity is like?

Allow your group to express their views freely, without correction. However when summing up you may like to mention that sin needs to be seen as both failure to properly love the people around us, but more importantly, failure to submit to God’s perfect rule. When we put it in that perspective everyone is guilty. Everyone has hurt other people and broken God’s laws. When we are living in rebellion against God then there is no possibility of pleasing Him.

4 If people are unable to please God whatever they do, how do you think God feels about the good work of people who don’t know Jesus? Isn’t helping the poor, being kind, and treating others with respect good no matter who does it?

It is true that people who are not saved can do good things. However while what they do can be good, when it comes from a heart and mind which is in rebellion against God, it will not please Him. The New Testament often affirms that what is important to God is not just people’s actions, but the motivation behind them. So while it is good for people to do good things, and we should encourage everyone in this, God is not impressed. God is looking for people who will humbly submit themselves to His mercy, not arrogantly live in hostility to God, unwilling to submit to His law (8:7).

Perhaps a good illustration is products made in sweatshops where employees work in terrible conditions. While the products can be good, and pleasing to those they benefit, the source of the products is inherently evil. The solution is not to eliminate the products but to transform the source and allow a better deal for workers. We should not stop doing good things, but have our hearts and minds transformed so the good things we do can please God.

5 What do you think is the solution for people who feel that it is hopeless trying to please God?

While this issue will be addressed in a few weeks, we can be encouraged that God has not made it impossible to please Him. Instead of being people who live “according to the flesh”, putting our trust in Jesus means we can live “according to the Spirit”. Our hearts can be transformed so that we perform our good deeds out of a purified heart. Just like the volunteers needed someone else to free their wrists from the cable ties, we might not be able to set ourselves free to please God, but Jesus can and will free us when we put our trust in Him.

PRAY

Give each person in your group the prayer card made from the Web Extras document ‘Romans Prayer Card’ and the cable tie. Tell them to take the card and keep it somewhere prominent at home to always remind them that Jesus sets us free from our inability to please God.