

## Small Group Guide

### GOSPEL TRANSFORMATION

The Church at Brook Hills,

Dr. Bart Box

November 13, 2011

Romans 1:1-7

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This guide is a tool to help you lead your group into spiritual transformation. Use it as a resource to train your group into potential disciple-makers and lead your group in discovering, owning, and applying the truths of God's Word. There may be aspects you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on an aspect of their relationship with God. Your role is to help facilitate this encounter with God in His Word with His Body, not just to complete the guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid group task list.

### Relate . . .

Begin your group time by engaging in relational conversations and prayer that may include the following elements:

*Welcome*—a simple, brief time to greet one another (especially new friends), enjoy refreshments, and make announcements.

*Review*—a time to review the truths discussed last week and report on how members have had success or frustrations in applying those truths during the week. (The leader will want to provide encouragement and shepherding during this time.) Periodically, the leader will also want to review the gospel and allow members to share reports about opportunities they've had to share the gospel. Occasionally, the leader will want to review the vision for the group and discuss ways to accomplish that vision better.

*Prayer*—a time of general prayer with the whole group praying for struggles regarding the application of truths, for those with whom the group is sharing the gospel, and for understanding of today's truths.

### Reflect . . .

Use the following summary and questions to review this week's message and reflect on its implications for our lives. (As a training tool, leaders might want to have various members summarize the teachings in their own words each week sharing how they think the Scripture applied to the original hearers and how the principles apply to us today.)

#### Message Outline

#### Gospel Transformation Romans 1:1-7

#### A World Transformed by the Gospel...

- The transforming story of the gospel:
  - The gospel is promised in the Scriptures. (v. 2) (Romans 3:21)
  - The gospel is provided in the Son... (vv. 3-4)
    - Through His incarnation as the Son of David. (Romans 8:3)
    - Through His resurrection as the Son of God.
      - Prior to His resurrection, Jesus was the Son of God in humility. (Mark 15:39)
      - After His resurrection, Jesus is the Son of God in power. (Matthew 28:18, Romans 14:9, Acts 17:31)
- The transforming significance of the gospel: (v. 4)
  - Jesus is the merciful Savior of sinners.

*"Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified." (Acts 2:36)*

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- Jesus is the undisputed Lord of all.

*The early Christians were not fed to wild beasts or dipped in wax and set ablaze as lamps in Nero's garden because they thought Jesus was a helpful life coach or role model but because they witnessed to him as the only Lord and Savior of the world. His authority strips away ideas of private religion because He is not simply a "personal Lord and Savior," He is the Creator, Sustainer, Ruler, Redeemer and Judge of all the earth. And now he commands everyone everywhere to repent. All idols are shams. All power and authority not only in heaven but on earth is Christ's. (Michael Horton)*

#### Leading to Lives Transformed by the Gospel

- Because of the gospel, we now serve as slaves of Christ's kingdom. (v. 1)
  - With unquestioned allegiance to the King.
- Because of the gospel, we now seek obedience to Christ's Lordship. (vv. 1, 5) (Romans 16:25ff, 15:18-19)
  - According to our individual gifting.
- Because of the gospel, we now long for the glory of Christ's name. (vv. 5-7)
  - Among all peoples and in all places. (Revelation 11:15)

#### Message Summary

In Paul's quest to make the church at Rome his base for his desired mission to Spain, Paul began his letter to the church by introducing himself and the gospel. The gospel was primary in his mission. It provided transformation for the world and for individual lives. God promised the gospel through prophets in the Old Testament and fulfilled those promises in the coming of His Son. In humility, Jesus took on flesh as a man, was crucified as our Savior, and was resurrected in power as the living Lord and King. Because He is Lord, He demands and deserves our all. We are His devoted subjects, willing to do anything to serve Him with our obedience and follow Him as our Loving King. As we use our gifts to fulfill His calling in our lives, we work toward and long for the worship of His name by all peoples from all places.

#### Group Discussion

Use the following questions to help review the application of God's Word to our Head (What does God want me to know?), to our Heart (What does God want me to desire?), and to our Hands (What does God want me to do?).

- What does Paul's expression of the gospel at the onset of this letter reveal about the importance of it in his life? In his mission?
- When we think about how we would describe ourselves and our purpose in life to others, what role does the gospel play in our typical description of ourselves?
- How can we use the gospel to describe ourselves to others that we meet without using "churchy" words?
- Paul stated that God promised in the Scriptures to send His Son to provide salvation for sinners. What does this tell us about God's character, His love for His people, and His provision of the gospel?
- Can Jesus be our Savior and not our Lord?
- What does our answer to the previous question indicate about how we view the relationship between salvation and obedience?
- What are the practical implications of recognizing Jesus as our Lord, and not just our Savior? Can we function apart from His commands or His will and still live in obedience?
- How does our faith influence our unquestioned obedience to Christ?
- How can the maturing of our faith help us to more faithfully and fully obey Christ, particularly when we don't understand or appreciate the reasons for His commands?

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- How can we, then, thank God for the things that strengthen our faith even though we don't always enjoy the difficult journeys?
- If God has indeed gifted us for His purposes, how are our gifts a part of our obedience to Christ?
- How can each of us in our small group use those gifts not just for ourselves, but to advance the gospel and build up the church? (You might want to spend some time helping each other see how their gifts can be used to help advance the gospel and build up the church.)
- What should be our response to the knowledge and belief that Christ is the Savior and Lord for all peoples?
- How can we together integrate our belief in the gospel and the need for the gospel next door, in our city, and around the world?

### **Respond . . .**

*Encourage your group to break out into smaller, same-gender groups where they will respond to the truths of today's study. These groups will share with one another based on the following questions and then close in prayer:*

- What are some of the main truths that God wants you to know from this study?
- How do your thoughts need to adjust to align with these truths?
- According to the truths from this study, what does God want you to desire/value?
- How do your values need to change to align with His values?
- What actions does God want you to take according to the truths of this study?
- What is an action that you can start to implement today or tomorrow?
- What is going to be the most difficult aspect of this study to personally apply?

Close this time by praying for each other, specifically for strength to apply these truths, for personal needs, for the lost people with whom you are seeking to share the gospel, and for our weekly prayer focus as a church..

### **Weekly Prayer Focus ... (from our worship guide)**

- *Lives and Church: Pray that Jesus would receive the glory that he rightly deserves from every people group on earth. And pray that God would grant us grace to persevere in the work of magnifying Christ in all nations.*
- *Local: This week we are praying for gospel ministry to college students in Birmingham, across the U.S., and around the world. We are also praying for Household of Faith, Larry Cockrell, Pastor.*
- *Global: This week we are praying for two Brook Hills Short-Term teams serving in India. We are also praying for our partner, Chris A., serving in Southeast Asia.*