

Small Group Discussion Questions

Series: Romans

Speaker: Jay Haugh

Message: God's Sovereign Freedom

Date: 08/09/2026

Memory Verse: Romans 6:23 NIV

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The goal of these questions is to foster meaningful discussion and to encourage participants to reflect on God's Word and lead to heart transformation. Feel free to modify or expand upon these questions based on the dynamics and needs of your Small Group.

Big Idea: Salvation is NOT by morality or merit, but ONLY by God's free, unmerited grace.

Read Romans 9

1. Paul is a proud Israelite, and he is extremely sorrowful that some of his countrymen do not recognize Jesus as the savior (vv 1-3). Do you have any family or close friends who have not yet come to faith in Jesus? How heavy is your heart for those who do not know Jesus? How can you tactfully share the gospel with them?
2. Paul lists eight privileges God uniquely gave to Israel, yet many still did not turn their hearts toward Jesus (vv 4-5). Why do you think it's possible to receive blessings from God and still miss a relationship with Jesus? What are some blessings that God provides all people that may go overlooked?
3. Even though many Israelites have rejected the Messiah, Paul insists that God's Word has not failed (v 6). When God's promises don't unfold the way you expect, what doubts tend to surface in your heart? If your faith has ever felt like it was on rocky ground, what helped you find a solid foundation again?



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4. Paul goes back to the Old Testament to show that not all descendents of Abraham were chosen by God to be part of His plan. Neither Ishmael nor Esau, even though they were direct descendants of Abraham are not considered “children” of the promise (vv 6-13). What assumption about entitlement or “automatic inclusion” might Paul be confronting in his readers (see Matthew 3:9 & John 8:39)? Are you ever tempted to assume God owes you something? If so, what do you feel you are owed? How can entitlement subtly replace humility in a believer’s life?
5. Paul uses the image of the potter and the clay to describe God’s sovereignty over all His creation (vv 20–21). What does the imagery of a potter and clay communicate about our relationship to God? Do you ever find yourself wanting to “talk back to God”? In such situations, how should we direct our hearts and minds to God?
6. Using Hosea to speak about the Gentiles, Paul shares how it has always been God’s plan to have people far from Him become part of His family (vv 24-26). NCBC’s 2030 vision calls us to reach people who are far from God. Where do you sense God inviting you to stretch beyond what feels familiar in order to love people the way He does? What leads some religious communities to become "country clubs" where they only feel comfortable with people who look, act, and talk like them? What might need to change in our hearts or habits to ensure we are building a church family on mission, not a place of comfort?
7. Summarizing what he has been sharing, Paul affirms that those who relied on the law to establish righteousness stumbled, while those who trusted God by faith received it. Good works, while important, are not a replacement for faith (vv 30-33). Why is it important to distinguish between obedience that *flows from faith* and obedience that *tries to earn God’s approval*? How can striving to “do the right things” slowly turn into relying on yourself instead of Jesus?



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