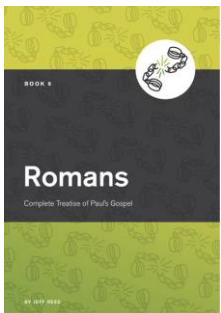


# Knowing Who We Are

## And Why That Matters



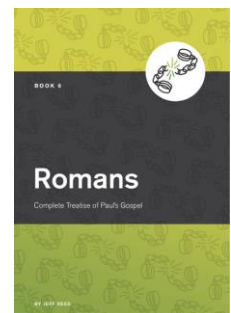
## 2 Corinthians 11:28-29

<sup>28</sup> Apart from *such* external things, there is the daily pressure on me *of* concern for all the churches. <sup>29</sup> Who is weak without my being weak? Who is led into sin without my intense concern?

“pressure” - prolonged concern and anxiety

“weak” - incapacity

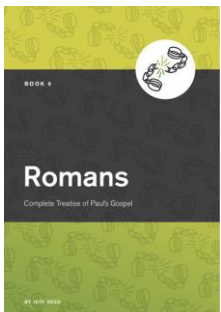
“intense concern” - to be upset, with great concern and anxiety

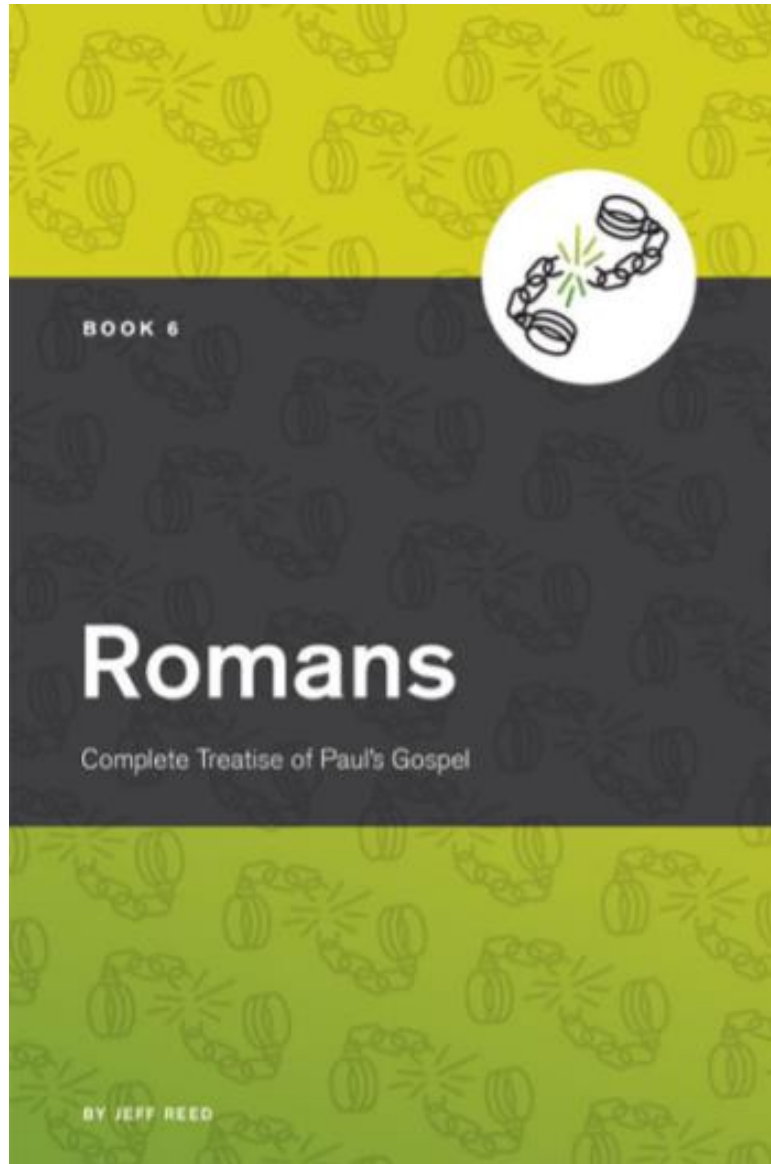


## 2 Corinthians 11:28-29

<sup>28</sup> Apart from *such* external things, there is the daily pressure on me *of* concern for all the churches. <sup>29</sup> Who is weak without my being weak? Who is led into sin without my intense concern?

What did he do?







This course will lead the student through a process of beginning to identify the core elements of his or her worldview. In a way, this will lead to shaping the “first draft” of one’s life purpose...

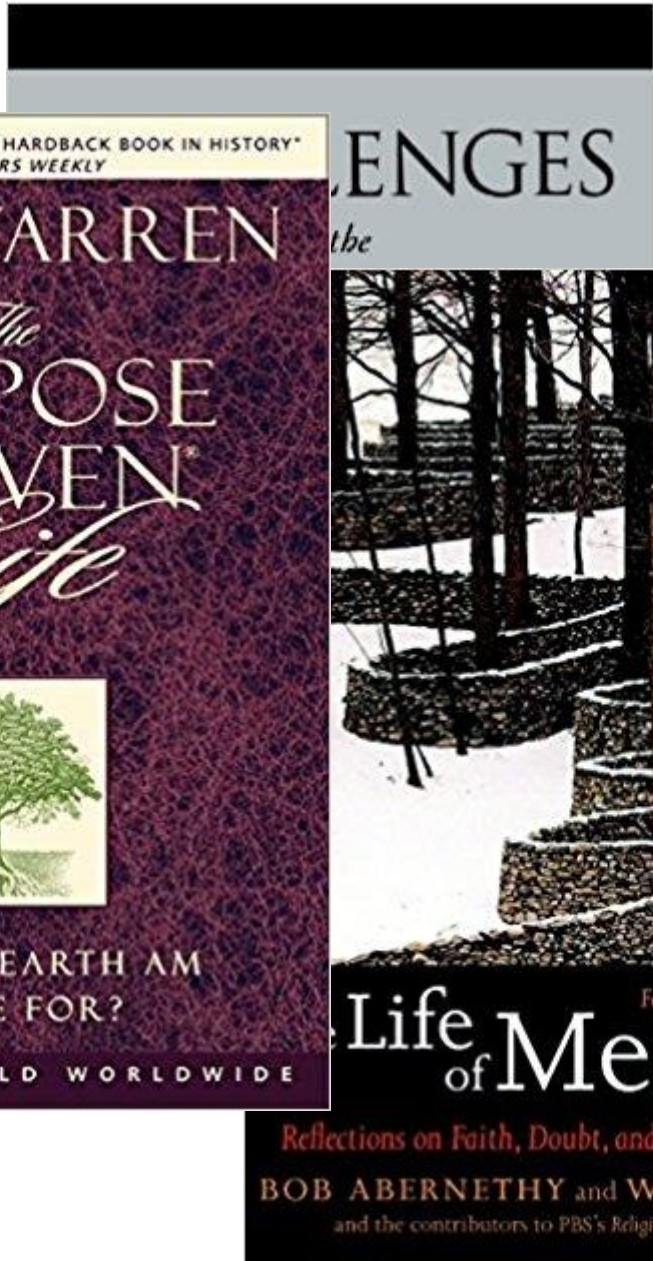
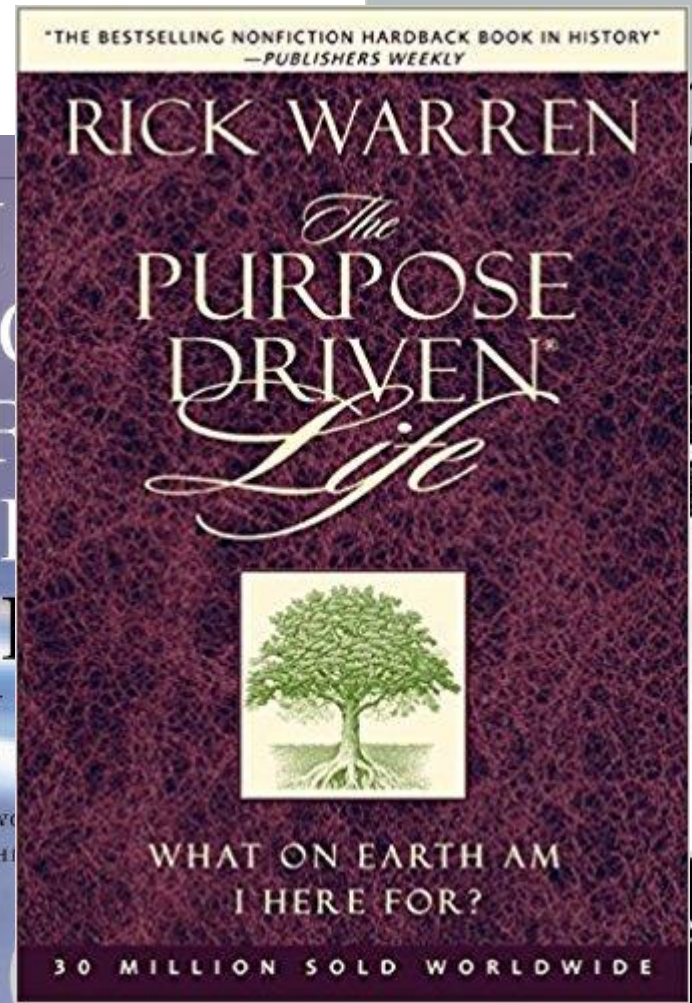
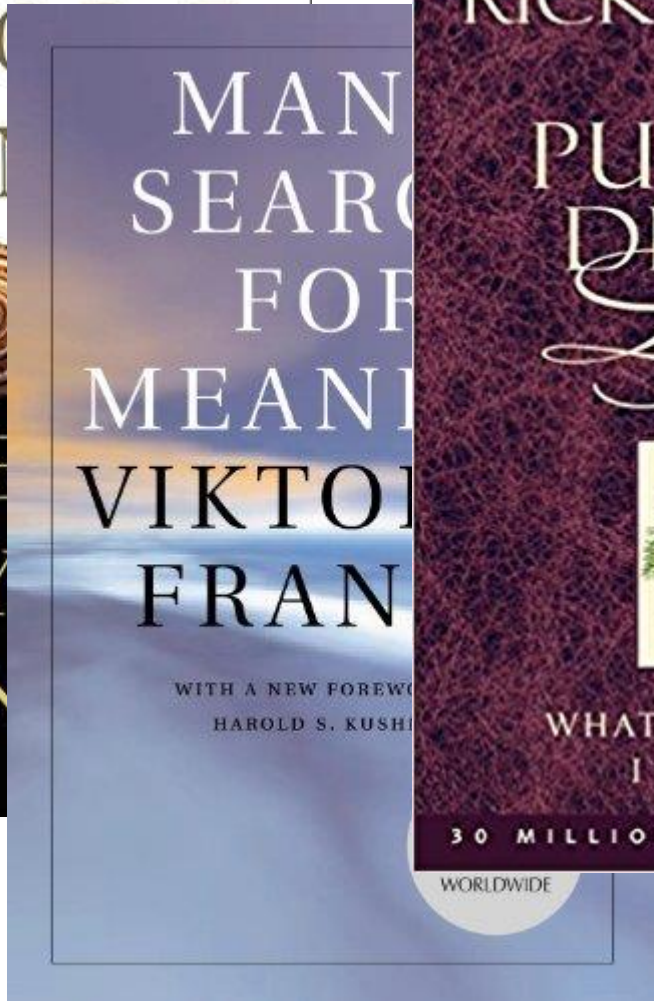
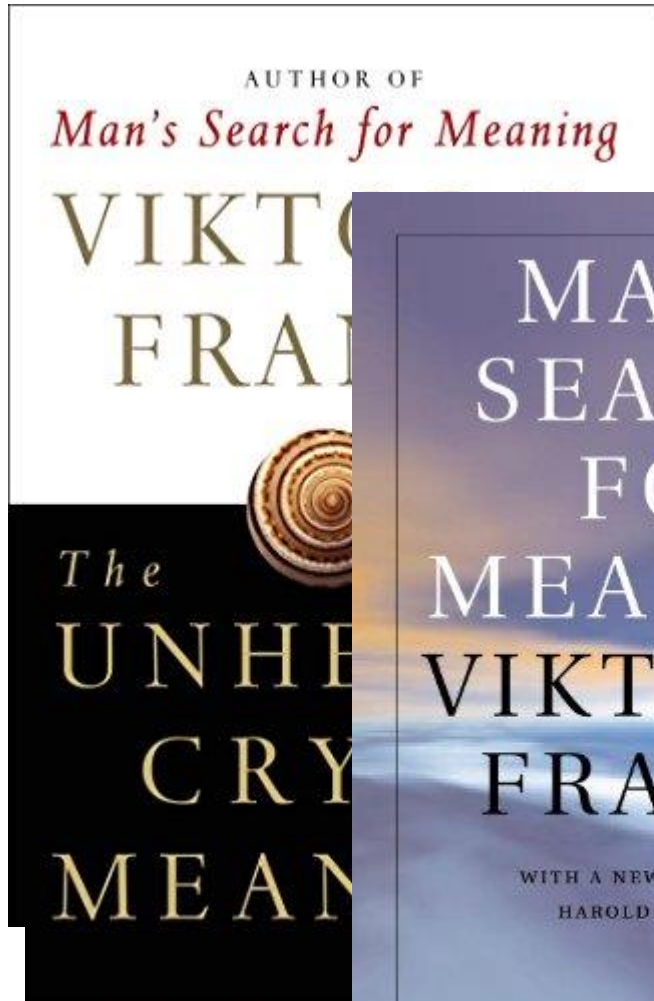
- ...
- To understand the power of understanding our identity in everyday life
- ...
- ...
- ...



What gets you up in the morning?

What keeps you going day after day?

What is worthy of the whole of your life?

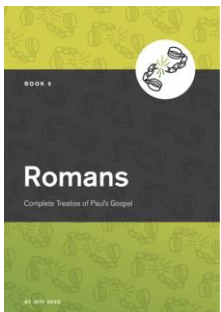


# The Need for Meaning

“Consider today’s society: it gratifies and satisfies virtually every need – except for one, the need for meaning!”

“Ever more people today have the means to live, but no meaning to live for.”

Victor Frankl



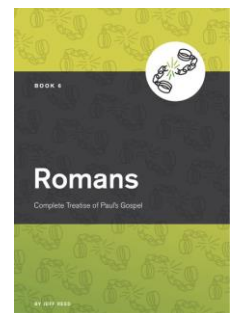


# Meaning or Meanings?

“So there is a will to meaning in man; but is there also a meaning to life?”

“One may say...values are transmitted through traditions but that meanings, being unique, are a matter of personal discovery. They must be sought and found by oneself, and such discovery of unique meanings, as we now understand, will be possible even if all universal values disappear totally. To put it succinctly: the values are dead – long live the meanings.”

Victor Frankl

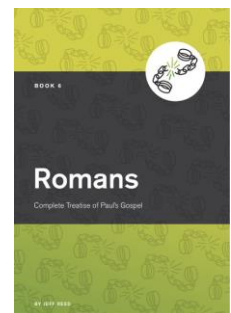


# Ecclesiastes 1:2; 3:14; 12:13

<sup>2</sup> “Meaningless! Meaningless!” says the Teacher. “Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless.”

<sup>14</sup> I know that everything God does will remain forever; there is nothing to add to it and there is nothing to take from it, for God has so worked that men should fear Him.

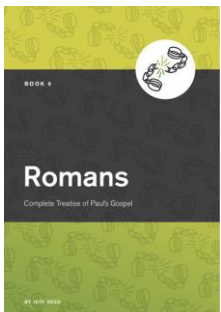
<sup>13</sup> The conclusion, when all has been heard, *is*: fear God and keep His commandments, because this *applies to every* person.



# Paul Understood Meaning

Paul understood the relationship between meaning and life, between common worldview and vibrant community, between developed worldview and sustained partnerships.

Thus the letter to the church at Rome – the whole letter seeks to develop worldview clarity that in turn will shape their community life and commitments.



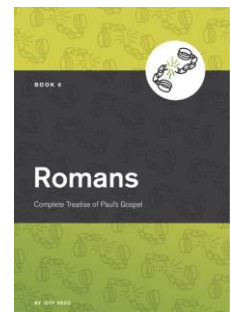
# Discussion

What does a worldview system of meaning accomplish for you? How does it help us find our way in the world? What metaphors would you use to describe the function a worldview serves?

How will it effect a church family if our worldview becomes corrupted or if parts are forgotten? How will it effect a church community if individuals seek after personal meanings but reject that there is an ultimate meaning that binds all of us?

What will happen if you encourage particular behaviors but don't supply worldview backing, if you don't supply a "why" for that behavior?

How do you establish a whole community in sharing a worldview?



# What Does a Full Worldview Accomplish?

**Lens** – See the world / ourselves in focus and accurately

**Filter** – Evaluate and choose best over better and good

**Scenic Overlook** – THIS is what we're a part of!

**Compass** – We're lost. Where is true North?

**Map** – How do we get from here to there?

**Anchor** – Stability when the ground is moving under us

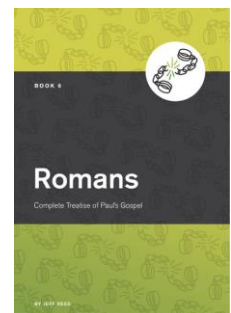
**Storyline** – What's gone before us? What's coming after us?

**Mission** – What is our part?

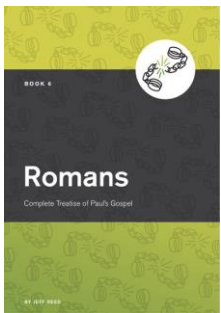
**Engine** – Power for mission in the world

**Examples** – Show us how to play our part

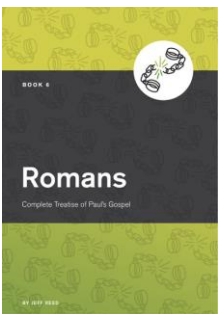
**Links** – Ties people together and keeps them together



How did the churches acquire this?

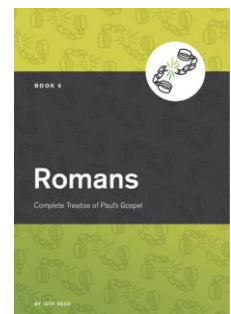


“Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle... to all who are beloved of God in Rome...”



# Romans 15

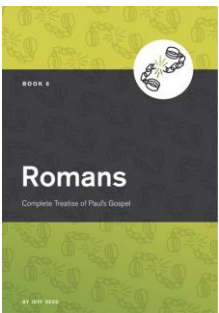
<sup>1</sup> Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not *just* please ourselves. <sup>2</sup> Each of us is to please his neighbor for his good, to his edification. <sup>3</sup> **For even Christ did not please Himself**; but as it is written, “THE REPROACHES OF THOSE WHO REPROACHED YOU FELL ON ME.” <sup>4</sup> **For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction**, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. <sup>5</sup> Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to **be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus**, <sup>6</sup> so that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.





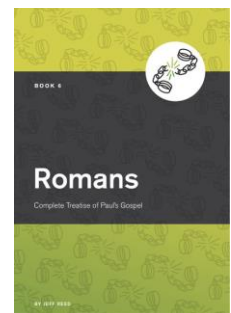
# Romans 15

<sup>7</sup> Therefore, **accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us** to the glory of God. <sup>8</sup> For I say that Christ has become a servant to the circumcision on behalf of the truth of God to confirm the promises *given* to the fathers, <sup>9</sup> and for the Gentiles to glorify God for His mercy; as it is written, “THEREFORE I WILL GIVE PRAISE TO YOU AMONG THE GENTILES, AND I WILL SING TO YOUR NAME.” <sup>10</sup> Again he says, “REJOICE, O GENTILES, WITH HIS PEOPLE.” <sup>11</sup> And again, “PRAISE THE LORD ALL YOU GENTILES, AND LET ALL THE PEOPLES PRAISE HIM.” <sup>12</sup> Again Isaiah says, “THERE SHALL COME THE ROOT OF JESSE, AND HE WHO ARISES TO RULE OVER THE GENTILES, IN HIM SHALL THE GENTILES HOPE.”



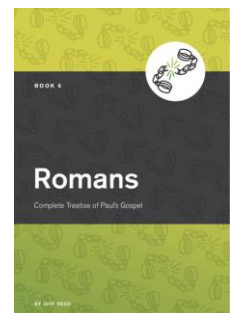
# Romans 15

<sup>13</sup> Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. <sup>14</sup> And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and **able also to admonish one another.** <sup>15</sup> But I have written very boldly to you on some points so as to remind you again, because of the grace that was given me from God, <sup>16</sup> to be **a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles**, ministering as a priest the gospel of God, so that *my* offering of the Gentiles may become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. <sup>17</sup> Therefore in Christ Jesus I have found reason for boasting in things pertaining to God.



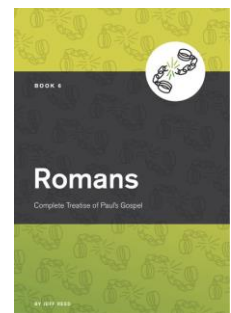
# Romans 15

<sup>18</sup> For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed, <sup>19</sup> in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit; so that from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. <sup>20</sup> **And thus I aspired to preach the gospel, not where Christ was *already* named,** so that I would not build on another man's foundation; <sup>21</sup> but as it is written, "THEY WHO HAD NO NEWS OF HIM SHALL SEE, AND THEY WHO HAVE NOT HEARD SHALL UNDERSTAND." <sup>22</sup> For this reason I have often been prevented from coming to you;



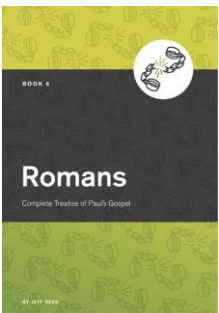
## Romans 15

<sup>23</sup> but now, with no further place for me in these regions, and since I have had for many years a longing to come to you <sup>24</sup> **whenever I go to Spain—for I hope to see you in passing, and to be helped on my way there by you, when I have first enjoyed your company for a while—** <sup>25</sup> **but now,** I am going to Jerusalem serving the saints. <sup>26</sup> For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. <sup>27</sup> Yes, they were pleased *to do so*, and they are indebted to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things, they are indebted to minister to them also in material things.



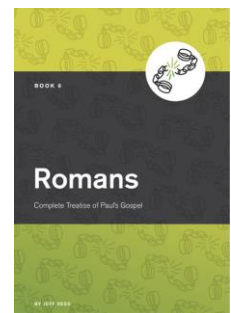
# Romans 15

<sup>28</sup> Therefore, when I have finished this, and have put my seal on this fruit of theirs, I will go on by way of you to Spain. <sup>29</sup> I know that when I come to you, I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ. <sup>30</sup> Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me, <sup>31</sup> that I may be rescued from those who are disobedient in Judea, and *that* my service for Jerusalem may prove acceptable to the saints; <sup>32</sup> so that I may come to you in joy by the will of God and find *refreshing* rest in your company. <sup>33</sup> Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.



# Romans 16:17-20

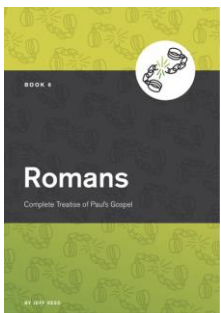
<sup>17</sup> Now I urge you, brethren, **keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching** which you learned, and turn away from them. <sup>18</sup> For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting. <sup>19</sup> For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil. <sup>20</sup> The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.



# On Paul's Mind

He wanted the worldview that he had re-thought and passed to them to unite them as a community, to become second nature, and to produce instinctive action.

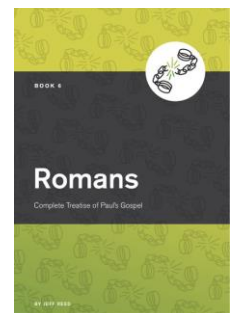
This was going to require that they renew their minds



# Romans 12:1-2

<sup>1</sup> So, my dear family, this is my appeal to you by the mercies of God: offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God. Worship like this brings your mind into line with God's<sup>2</sup> What's more, don't let yourselves be squeezed into the shape dictated by the present age. Instead, be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you can **work out** what God's will is – what is good, acceptable, and complete.

**“work out”** - to try to learn the genuineness of something by examination and testing, often through actual use (LN)

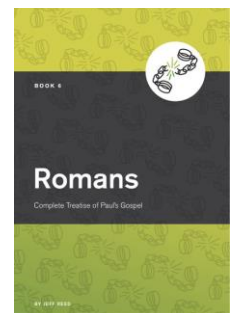




# Ephesians 4:22-24; 5:8-10

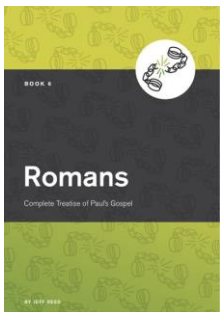
<sup>22</sup> that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, <sup>23</sup> and that you **be renewed in the spirit of your mind**, <sup>24</sup> and put on the new self, which in *the likeness of* God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

<sup>8</sup> for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light <sup>9</sup> (for the fruit of the Light *consists* in all goodness and righteousness and truth), <sup>10</sup> **trying to learn** what is pleasing to the Lord.



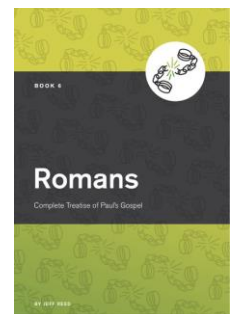
# Phil 1:9-10

<sup>9</sup> And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, <sup>10</sup> so that you may **approve** the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ;



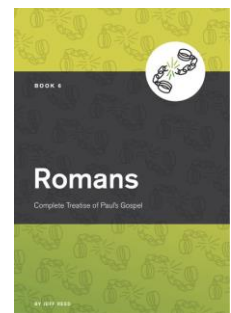
# What do renewed minds working out what God's will is look like in action?

1. Seeking to understand and be motivated by God's saving plan in all its complexity (all of Romans)
2. Allowing the apostles teaching, consisting of life-principles, to direct our choices as we play our part in God's plan (Rom 12-16)
3. On other lifestyle matters, keeping a clear conscience with attitudes valuing the good of others in the community (Rom 14)
4. Staying united around this plan as a church family, investing in the global progress of the gospel because we are part of something bigger than ourselves (Rom 15-16)



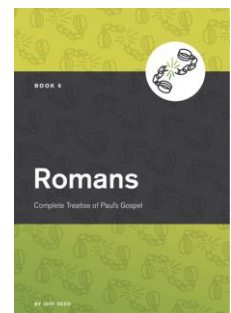
# What do renewed minds working out what God's will is look like in action?

“Christian theology, for Paul, was not just about *what* you know, but about *how* you know. And, just as the Christian worldview compels people to think in a new way, because otherwise the worldview itself is unstable, so Christian theology remains both a corporate task, one in which the church as a whole has to engage, rather than being spoon-fed by one or two high-octane teachers, and also an incomplete task, because each generation needs to become mature in its thinking.”



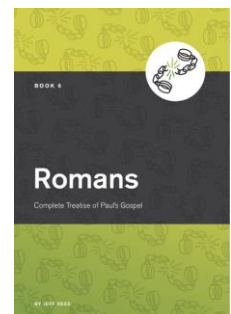
# Summary

- We long for and strive for meaning in our lives – this is ancient look at Solomon
- Our culture rejects that there is any ultimate and true thing that we can fit into and say is THE meaning of life.
- Many push off answering the question, filling their lives in the meanwhile with family, career, entertainment, etc.
- Others accept partial answers, consciously finding purpose IN something (work, family, volunteer) that works for them, while rejecting that there is any ultimate purpose that binds all of us



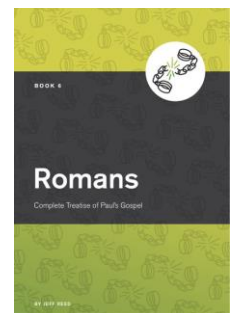
# Summary

- But we need more than partial slices of meaning. We need whole systems of meaning – a fully adequate worldview (see the metaphors)
- Communities form, thrive, and survive when they share a meaning system – when it has become second nature and when it has been internalized at a level where it creates instinctive action.
- The church at Rome had worldview gaps – in their understanding of how God's plan was unfolding, of their place in it, and of what their new life together amidst a pagan world should look like. They were in danger of fragmenting.



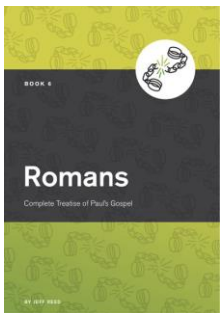
# Summary

- This is why Paul went to the lengths he did in his letter. He was worldview-building
- Renewing the mind meant shedding the thoughts patterns of the world and mastering God's plan and its accompanying way of life.
- When they did this, they would be able to affirm God broad agenda (His will for His saving plan) and make discerning, instinctive choices to live consistent with God's plan, leading to both local and global impact.



# Summary

We must establish our churches in this way!

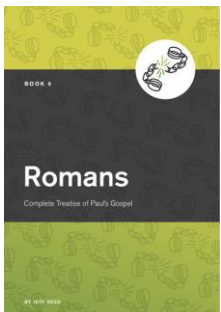




## 2 Corinthians 11:28-29

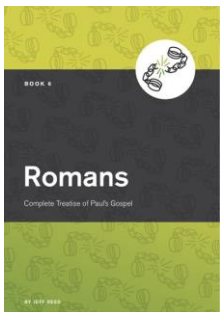
<sup>28</sup> Apart from *such* external things, there is the daily pressure on me *of* concern for all the churches. <sup>29</sup> Who is weak without my being weak? Who is led into sin without my intense concern?

What did he do?



# Assessment of our Churches

- Is your church collectively united around the worldview of elements of Romans?
- What worldview pieces are fuzzy? What do you need to have a discussion and teaching around?
- Are there issues in anyone's life that demonstrate a lack of understanding of key themes from Romans?



# What Does a Full Worldview Accomplish?

**Lens** – See the world / ourselves in focus and accurately

**Filter** – Evaluate and choose best over better and good

**Scenic Overlook** – THIS is what we're a part of!

**Compass** – We're lost. Where is true North?

**Map** – How do we get from here to there?

**Anchor** – Stability when the ground is moving under us

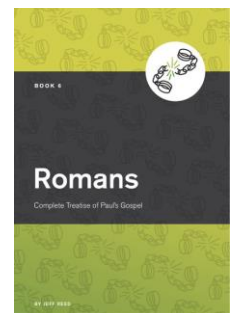
**Storyline** – What's gone before us? What's coming after us?

**Mission** – What is our part?

**Engine** – Power for mission in the world

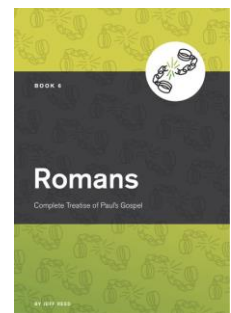
**Examples** – Show us how to play our part

**Links** – Ties people together and keeps them together



# Signs of Worldview Deficiency

- Indifference and little energy around God's plan (needs **overlook & storyline**)
- Self interest placed over good of the church (poor **lens** or **filter**)
- High anxiety over an uncertain future (no **compass**)
- High anxiety over things outside of their control (no **anchors**)
- Over-simplifying problems when counseling (need better **map**)
- Poor prioritizing (inadequate **filter**)
- Just doing their thing while using community (no **links**)
- Confusion or feeling useless (needs **mission & examples**)

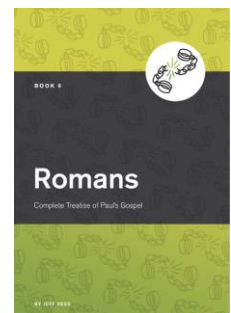


# The Need for Training and Equipping

Leaders – YOU MUST NOT PLATEAU

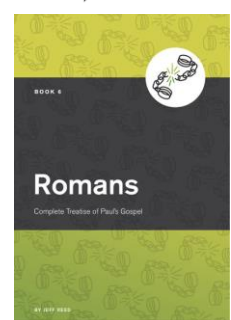
Emerging Leaders – Engage in training. Find your voice.

All – We must renew our minds together, developing a strong and collectively held worldview. Every FP discussion, Sunday evening teaching, LS course, Life(n) discussion, etc contributes to this.



# Over the Summer – Build on Romans

- Read and re-read (or audio) over the summer.
- Polish your own author's intention statement of Romans. Review the sections until you can summarize verbally for your church.
- Identify sections you want to master for use in ministry. Dig into to these and share your findings with your church.



# Other Summer Opportunities

- Acts Course, Mon and Thurs, 6-8pm. May 24 – June 28
- Pauline Epistle Course, Mon and Thurs 6-8pm. July 2 – Aug 9
- Life(n), Thurs, 8-10pm. May 24 – Aug 9
- Acts Course, Wed, 11am-12:30pm. May 30 – Aug 15

