



TRANSFORMING GRACE

i n v i e w o f G o d ' s m e r c y

JUNE STUDIES



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Transforming Grace

After finishing over twenty weeks in the gospel of John, it seems fitting that we should start a series Romans 12. The chapter begins: "therefore, in view of God's mercy." In view of everything that God has done for us in Christ, in view of Christ's death to atone for our sins and give us peace with God, in view of Christ's resurrection giving us newness of life, in view of Christ's Spirit being deposited in us and making us new... this is how we should live as Christians.

“ Our hope and prayer is that this series will provide you with a vision of church, and the study of this chapter will connect God's mercy with God's desire for his church

Transforming Grace is a ten-week series in Romans 12-16. It's a little bit different to how we normally do a teaching series, where we work through a book, week-by-week. This series will be more focused (some weeks looking at just one verse) on the practicals of what God's mercy means for our church. After all, Romans 12-16 come after 11 chapters that sweep through theological history, and lands the plane, instructing the church on how they should live in light of these great truths.

Our hope and prayer is that this series will provide you with a vision of church, and the study of this chapter will connect God's mercy with God's desire for his church: to be a distinct, diverse, devoted, zealous, patient, generous broken, missional, merciful people, set apart from the world around us, to the glory of Christ.

*"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."
Romans 12:1-2*

The background of the entire page is a dense, textured pattern of dark, circular buttons. The buttons are in various shades of dark brown and black, with some showing signs of wear and discoloration. They are scattered across the entire surface, creating a rich, tactile visual field.

WEEK 1 // MAY 29-JUNE 2
MAIN GROUP STUDY
A PATIENT COMMUNITY
Romans 12:12

Be joyful in hope, patient in
affliction, faithful in prayer.

STUDY QUESTIONS

Who in your life has impressed you by their patience? It could be someone you personally know or someone in history.

Have you ever witnessed an entire community enduring hardships with patience?

In what areas of your life at the moment do you need to exercise patient endurance?

Paul says in Romans 12:12: "Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer." Back in Romans 8:18-39, what can we learn about the sort of afflictions the church in Rome was facing, and therefore why did they need to hope in Christ and devote themselves to prayer?

Be joyful in hope... What is hope? What does it do?

How might hope encourage godliness?

How might hope sustain relationships?

How might hope energise mission?

How might hope keep us joyful?

In what ways can we encourage one another to turn to Christ in crises?

Be patient in affliction... From Romans 5:1-4, what's the payload to being patient while wading through difficult seasons in life?

Persistent in prayer... How does God's grace encourage us to be persistent in prayer?

Read this quote from Jonathan Edwards on persistence in prayer...

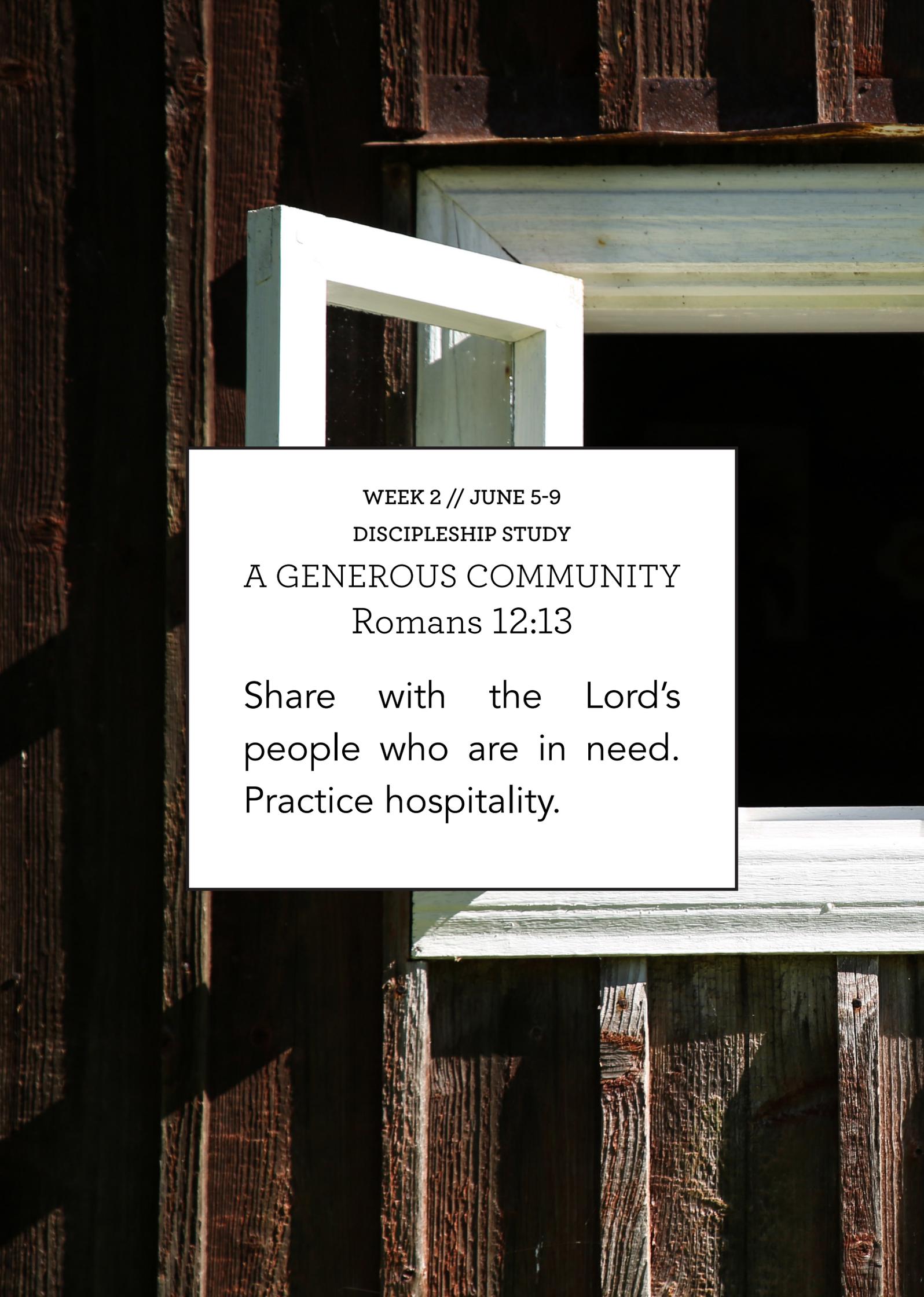
"It is very apparent from the Word of God that he often tries the faith and patience of his people, when they are crying to him for some great and important mercy, by withholding the mercy sought for a season; and not only so, but at first he may cause an increase of dark appearances. And yet he, without fail, at last prospers those who continue urgently in prayer with all perseverance and 'will not let him go except he blesses."

How does this make you feel? Do you find this a helpful or unhelpful way to think about prayer? Why?

As we wrap up:

The cause of a patient community is Romans 1-11: the gospel. The good news of what God has done for us in Christ is what creates a people who are prayerful and patient. We are now adopted into a family whose Father has kept his promises and secured us as his own. We have a Saviour who lived our life for us and died our death instead of us. We enjoy the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, who has been poured out into our hearts.

What comfort – if any – do you personally find from this summary? Is there anything that resonates with you in a new way in light of this study?



WEEK 2 // JUNE 5-9

DISCIPLESHIP STUDY

A GENEROUS COMMUNITY

Romans 12:13

Share with the Lord's
people who are in need.
Practice hospitality.

STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Romans 1:18-3:20.

How does Paul demonstrate beyond a reasonable doubt that we need the gospel?

What has God done for us in the gospel?

How does God's generosity to us in the gospel mean that we have to be generous and hospitable in our gospel community?

How crazy would it be for a community to be void of these responses to God's grace?

What examples of generosity can you see in

- 12:14-21
- 14:13
- 15:2
- 15:7

What does sharing with the Lord's people who are in need look like?

What does hospitality look like?

In what ways can we be extravagant in our generosity with the way we use our time, affection, money, home and resources?

Which ones are we good at?

Which ones could you improve?



WEEK 3 // JUNE 12-16
MAIN GROUP STUDY

A BROKEN COMMUNITY
2 CORINTHIANS 4

We have this treasure in jars
of clay to show that this all-
surpassing power is from God
and not from us.

STUDY QUESTIONS

What is your attitude to weakness and suffering?

How much room in your life is there for weakness, brokenness, suffering, death?

2 Corinthians 4:1 sounds a lot like Romans 12:1. How does this encourage Paul and us not to give up?

Failure to get Paul's ministry, the gospel that Paul lives out and proclaims, doesn't mean that it's wrong. Rather it means that those who fail to get it do so because of their spiritual blindness. What is the reason for this blindness (4:4)?

How does our understanding of the reality of grace, expressed through a crucified saviour, impact the way we share and live out of faith v.4-6?

In what ways have we as Christians become allergic to suffering?

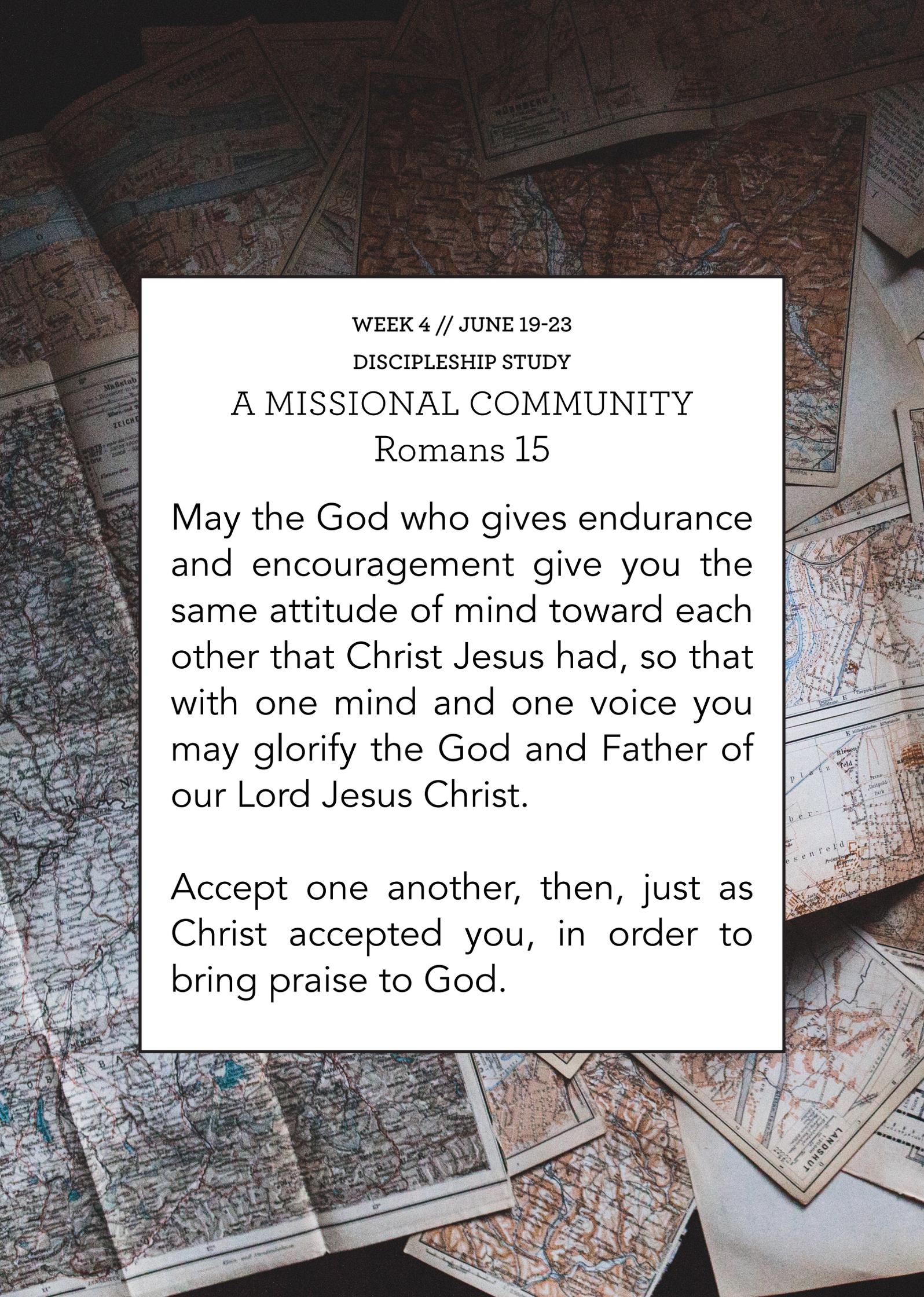
What is at the heart of Christianity? Is it success or failure? Suffering or comfort?

Faithful endurance in adversity or is it deliverance from adversity? Covenant love or spiritual experience? How does our answers affect our lives? our every day decisions? our outlook on life?

In what ways does 2 Cor 4:7-10 both humble and encourage us? How do you feel about being common and ordinary? Weak and fragile? How does keeping our feet on the ground help us in our walk with God and with others?

How does both death and life work in us? And for what purpose? v.11-15 In what areas do you need to die to and begin to live to for the sake of Christ and for others? (eg death to pride, alive to humility...death to selfishness...alive to selflessness)

How do the final words of the chapter encourage us not to give up? (v. 16-18)

The background of the entire image is a collage of various old, sepia-toned maps and documents. The maps show different geographical features like rivers, roads, and terrain. Some text is visible on the maps, such as 'Maßstab', 'ZICHEN', 'Rieseng', 'Platz', 'Feld', 'ber', 'esenfeld', and 'LANDSUT'. The documents are layered and partially obscured by the maps.

WEEK 4 // JUNE 19-23

DISCIPLESHIP STUDY

A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY

Romans 15

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.

STUDY QUESTIONS

It is easy for our faith community to be aligned with our individualistic culture and be distinctive, diverse, devoted, zealous, patient, generous, and broken, primarily for myself and for people just like me. How does 15:1-13 push us away from self indulgence to consider and serve others?

Read verse 14-21. How does Paul's commitment to the Gentiles in "fully proclaiming the good news about the Messiah from Jerusalem all the way round to Illyricum" further push us out to consider others? (especially v.20)

Read verses 22-33. How does Paul keep pushing the church outwards?

How might God be pushing us out to serve others and "evangelize where Christ has not been named" amongst friends, work places, neighbourhoods, schools, the nations? Give specific examples from your own life.

How do we feel about the lost? Are we indifferent? Afraid? Distracted? Expectant?

What do Paul's words in 9:1-3 reveal about his heart for the lost?

Spend some time asking God, in view of His mercy to us, to have mercy and love for the lost and a desire to see family members, friends, strangers and the nations come to know Christ.

Pray for family, friends, strangers and nations by name.



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