



Facing Forward Facing Outward

Bible Study Fellowship Prayer Guide

Strategic Prayer Guide 2017-18 rooted in Romans

Dear Friends,

“First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world. God, whom I serve in my spirit in preaching the gospel of his Son, is my witness how constantly I remember you in my prayers at all times.” – Romans 1:8-10

As a global, in-depth Bible study, our heart’s desire is to produce passionate commitment to Jesus Christ, His Word and His Church. As we study Paul’s letter to the Romans, which many consider the most important letter ever written, we trust God will accomplish this mission. We believe the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ will reach to the far corners of the world as we pray together strategically and earnestly in the power of the Holy Spirit.



This prayer guide has been produced to magnify God and to connect you to His heart. Join prayer warriors around the globe praying these requests, built around God’s Word in Romans, with Bible Study Fellowship’s strategic objectives in view. BSF is strategically focused on reaching the rising generations while continuing to magnify God and mature all who come to a BSF class. We depend on God in prayer, asking that together we are empowered and equipped to [BRIDGE in-depth Bible study from one generation to another](#).

Grounded in the gospel through Romans, we believe God will enable us to [Face Forward](#) to reach future generations and [Face Outward](#) to impact the culture with the truth and grace of our Lord Jesus.

I am thankful to God for the volunteer and staff who helped produce this prayer guide. And I am grateful to God for each one of you who has chosen to devote time to prayer for the ministry of Bible Study Fellowship.

“Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.” – Romans 12:11-12

Thank you for joining us in prayer.

For the fame of Jesus Christ in the nations,

Susie Rowan
Executive Director

“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. **We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.**

And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God.”

Romans 8:26-27

We **worship** You, the God of grace and glory!

Lift your hearts to worship the eternal God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is worthy of our highest praise. Let us worship Him in spirit and truth, basking in the splendor of His holiness.

Lord, show us your glory. Reveal your beauty. Accept the love of our hearts today. You are ...

Creator of Heaven and Earth

“For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.” (1:20)

The Source of Repentance

“Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God’s kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?” (2:4)

Our Redeemer

“This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.” (3:22-24)

The Just and the Justifier

“God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood ... he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.” (3:25-26)

Our Reconciler

“For if, while we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!” (5:10)

Our Intimate Father

“The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.” (8:15-16)

The Restorer of All Things

“I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. ... Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies.” (8:18, 23)

Invincible Love

“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (8:38-39)

The Source of All Wisdom and Knowledge

“Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!” (11:33)

Our Abundant Hope

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” (15:13)

I Worship You Today, God, For Who You Are ...

Continue your own worship.

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel,
because it is the power of God that brings
salvation to everyone who believes: first to
the Jew, then to the Gentile. For in the
gospel the righteousness of God is revealed –
a righteousness that is by faith from first
to last, just as it is written:
‘The righteous will live by faith.’ ”

Romans 1:16-17

We give **thanks** to you, Lord, and will tell of all your wonderful deeds.

Thank You, Father, for ordaining BSF to study Romans during this 500th anniversary year of the Reformation to celebrate righteousness by faith, from first to last. Thank You for faithfully using BSF for 58 years to strengthen the Body of Christ, teach the Bible and train leaders in the cause of Christ. Thank You for establishing nearly 1,200 classes and 3,000 Satellite Discussion Groups, and for drawing 400,000 men, women and children to study the Bible in more than 40 countries around the world. Thank You, God, for your amazing grace and eternal love to me through my Lord Jesus Christ. Because of Jesus, I am ...

saved and made righteousness by faith, not works (1:17)

rescued from futile thinking and a foolish darkened heart to worship the One True God (1:21)

led to repentance by the riches of your kindness, forbearance and patience (2:4)

justified freely by your grace – declared “Not Guilty!” from the penalty, punishment and power of sin (3:24)

filled with lasting peace through my Lord Jesus Christ (5:1)

transformed by endless love poured into my heart through the Holy Spirit (5:5)

forgiven through amazing grace that is ever and always greater than my sin (5:20)

eternally secure and filled with hope through your lavish gift of eternal life (6:23)

set free from accusation and condemnation, now and forever (8:1)

sanctified to live a holy life by the transforming power of the Holy Spirit within me (8:4)

adopted as your beloved child into your forever family (8:15)

raised up as co-heir with Christ, sharing His suffering and glory (8:17)

preserved for an eternal destiny of glory, redemption and restoration (8:18-24)

empowered to pray by the Holy Spirit who intercedes for me in my weakness (8:26)

conformed to the likeness of Christ as He weaves threads of my life together for good (8:29)

victorious over tribulation through Christ’s omnipotent love (8:35)

“I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my people, those of my own race...”

Romans 9:2-3

We anguish for the lost.

The glory of the Lord, the light of His holiness, reveals our desperate need for God to do what only He can do – change us from the inside out! God, we are desperate for You! Break our hearts for what breaks Yours! We cannot muster up God-pleasing anguish, so we ask for Your heart for those far from You, caught up in secular thinking and living. Help us to see people with the compassion of Christ, who wept over His people, for they were like sheep without a shepherd. God, give us the gift of repentance and a heart of anguish.

I repent of my lack of anguish for the rising generations to know Jesus.

I repent of wanting to enjoy Bible study my way more than wanting to adapt to reach and retain younger people.

I repent of being ashamed of the gospel through my silence, for fear of rejection or ridicule.

I repent of my unbelief that the gospel has the power to save.

I repent of having a heart of stone rather than a heart of flesh that beats with compassion toward others.

I repent of religious activity I try to substitute for circumcision of the heart.

I repent of conforming to the culture rather than a heart to transform the culture through God's Word.

I repent of discouragement about circumstances that denies the hope of the gospel.

I repent of gossiping about people rather than talking to God on their behalf.

I repent of prayerlessness that fails to prepare the way of the Lord.

I repent of isolationism in a "Bible bubble" that prevents me from engaging with the culture.

I repent of self-righteousness, which is really unrighteousness.

I repent of withdrawing and looking down on others, rather than reaching out in Christ's power and with His love.

I repent of cursing the darkness rather than proclaiming truth and light.

I repent of erecting barriers instead of building bridges with those who think differently than I do.

I repent of hiding in my comfort zone instead of living by Your power in the faith zone.

“As it is written: ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!’ ”

Romans 10:15

We rely on You as we implement BRIDGE Initiatives

*Father, You have stirred our organization to sound a clarion call to **BRIDGE in-depth Bible study from one generation to another**. We dream that You would use BSF to lead out in effective, life-changing Bible engagement that will benefit the whole Christian community. We desire that our descendants, even the unborn in our families, will be the beneficiaries of our prayers and our efforts today. We yearn to faithfully live out our faith so people's hearts and culture around us are redeemed through Christ.*

Please pray with us for the accomplishment of these strategic BRIDGE objectives:

Build on the momentum of history, culture and community while adding new studies and initiatives

Reach more people under 40 (U40s), men and markets, such as Chinese and Spanish-speakers

Innovate our technology in every way possible

Develop the Satellite Discussion Group model for global impact

Ground everything in doctrinal integrity and fidelity

Enhance the brand – facilities, staff and funding for the next generation

“And do this, understanding the present time: The hour has already come for you to **wake up** from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and **put on the armor of light.**”

Romans 13:11-12

Guide us as we **face forward**.

We plead with God to draw the hearts of the rising generations to study God's Word to know Him, embrace Christ and serve the Church. May we reflect God's heart through prayer by facing forward to fulfill this biblical mandate. We ask God to fortify BSF as a stronghold of truth for our children, grandchildren and those yet to be born. The need is urgent. The time is now.

Gracious Heavenly Father, we pray you would ...

deliver us from complacency that blinds us to the desperate needs of the children and young adults in our lives

awaken the spiritual taste buds of young people to crave truth and desire to know You

establish a mighty army of prayer warriors in every BSF class – to fight this battle first in prayer

inspire us to intercede for the hurting and the lost, asking You to draw them to our classes

draw to our classes:

- more mothers with young children to our day classes
- many young professionals to our evening classes and SDGs
- many fathers and mothers to bring school-age children to our School Program
- young people who are influencers, whose lives reflect the character and qualities that attract others

establish BSF in new locations that attract younger people

reveal ways to build bridges to reach and retain the young and remove barriers that keep them away

captivate the hearts of the young to fall in love with Jesus and the Scriptures

mobilize mature class members to embrace the biblical mandate to pass truth to the next generation and to graciously adjust to new methods and procedures that will reach and retain young people

create desire and **opportunities** for mature leaders and class members to mentor younger people

give wisdom to headquarters staff, area teams and local class staff to develop ways to help the new and young adjust to full participation in BSF

strengthen classes to joyfully face forward, ready to implement new methods such as SDGs, condensed class schedules and new discussion group formats

redeem social media for Your good purposes – help us reach people through the BSF Facebook page and other digital venues

integrate U40s by helping them personally connect to people in their group and class

inspire new class models to stimulate spiritual and numerical growth

expand SDGs, reaching more lives through Long Distance SDGs, Virtual SDGs, Condensed SDGs, YA SDGs, etc.

transition School Program graduating seniors and college students to Virtual SDGs

awaken the hearts of the young to desire your Word

increase BSF classes in China

deepen the impact of Spanish hybrid groups in Florida, California and Texas

motivate us to invite Spanish speakers to our classes and provide bilingual group leaders

burden hearts to join and support a hybrid group

provide funds and translators for the ongoing translation of BSF materials

“How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? **And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard?** And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent?”

Romans 10:14-15

May Jesus be our example as we face outward.

What does it look like to live out the gospel so we are used by God to transform our culture? How does God's Word take root in us to reach every sphere of society?

Lord, we acknowledge our desperate need for you. Hear our prayers as we cry out to you to enable us to face outward to engage the culture around us with the good news of Jesus Christ.

Forgive us for disengaging from and looking down on our culture with spiritual smugness and self-righteousness.

Enable us to fulfill the cultural mandate (Gen 1:28) by cultivating God's good creation, filling the earth with His beauty.

Remind us that all of life is worship as we go to work, school and in all daily activities.

Replace our compartmentalized thinking and living with the realization that there is no sacred/secular divide.

Transform our spheres of influence with the gospel's redemptive power.

Help us think beyond our own personal needs and desires and minister to the needy.

Sensitize our hearts toward the Holy Spirit's redemptive purposes in our relationships. Teach us to listen, learn and love.

Deepen our convictions to faithfully proclaim God's truth in love, as all people are made in God's image and, therefore, worthy of respect.

Enlighten us to recognize and reject cultural counterfeits and empty pursuits that will be satisfied only by You.

Transform our society through the redeemed lives of your people: family, church, business, education, arts and entertainment, sports, government, media, etc.

Reveal to your people how to be engaged in the world as Jesus was engaged in the world He created.

Show us ways BSFers are engaged in the culture for gospel impact that we may share their stories on social media.

“Now to him who is able to establish you
in accordance with my gospel ... to the
only wise God be **glory forever
through Jesus Christ!**”

Romans 16:25, 27

We pray this **through** your Son, Jesus.

“Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!

How unsearchable his judgments,

and his paths beyond tracing out!

‘Who has known the mind of the Lord?

Or who has been his counselor?’

‘Who has ever given to God,

that God should repay them?’

For from him and through him and

for him are all things.

To him be the glory forever! Amen.”

Romans 11:33-36