

THE GOSPEL FOR ALL | ROMANS SERIES | WEEK 3

THE GOSPEL THAT TRANSFORMS

Romans 5–8

Rachel Abdy | Sunday 21 June 2026 | 9AM Gawler

Big Idea: *We are saved instantly, but transformed daily. The gospel doesn't just save us once - it transforms us every day, as we learn to line up our earthly life with the new spiritual reality we now live in as children of God.*

Introduction - Saved vs Transformed

Romans 8:16–17 *The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are his children, we are heirs - heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.*

Last week, Evan shared about the gospel that saves us - the moment of belief, instant and complete. This week is about the gospel that transforms us - the daily, lifelong process of living out that new identity.

We are transformed into heirs the moment we believe. That is our new spiritual reality. But it takes our brains a long time to catch up. The rest of our lives become about lining up our earthly experience with that new spiritual reality.

The Marriage Analogy

Getting married is a legal, covenantal, and spiritual transaction that happens in an instant - one day you are single, the next you are married. But it takes a long time for your brain to catch up. You might still sign your maiden name, or say 'I'm going home' about your parents' house instead of your own. The fundamental shift has happened, but your mind and habits take time to follow.

This is what Paul is describing as he writes about the struggle to live out our new spiritual reality in our actual, daily lives.

1 | Paul's Honest Struggle - Romans 7

Romans 7:7 *What shall we say, then? Is the law sinful? Certainly not! Nevertheless, I would not have known what sin was had it not been for the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, 'You shall not covet.'*

Romans 7:15–19 *I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me... I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do - this I keep on doing.*

Paul is a real man living a real life with real struggles - and that is deeply relatable. He is naming the gap between knowing what is good and actually doing it.

What Sin Actually Means Here

This passage is not talking about the sin we were saved from at conversion - it is describing the ongoing struggle of trying to live a holy life day to day. Sin is not simply a measuring stick to compare ourselves against others - am I better than that person, am I good enough, am I worthy of love?

The biblical authors are talking about something much deeper than a regulatory list of good and bad behaviour. They are describing a corruption of God's good world that shows up in human relationships and choices - something we do, and something that happens to us.

Sin is part of the human experience, but it no longer needs to have a hold on us. We are set free from it - and from its fruit, which is death.

2 | Dead to Sin, Alive to God - Romans 6

Romans 6:1–4 *What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Don't you know that all of us who were baptised into Christ Jesus were also baptised into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.*

Romans 6:8–11 *Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him... In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.*

We remember both sides - we died with Christ, and we now live with him. But it doesn't stop there. We are to continue living this transformative process, day by day. Sin has no pull and no authority over our lives anymore.

3 | The Picture of the Kite

Romans 6:18 *You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.*

When sin is master, we die. None of us are simply 'free' if we're not enslaved to Christ - we are slaves to something else instead. Before Christ, we were slaves to sin. But by grace, we can be slaves to God - and when God is master, we live.

A kite is free to fly only when it is tethered to the string. Cut the string, and its freedom to fly is severed too. Slavery to God frees us to fly and be what we were created to be.

If you asked a kite, it would probably choose the string - because it cannot be all it was designed to be without it. If the language of slavery, holiness, or surrender to Christ feels difficult, think of your life as a kite. To be all you can be, you want to be on the string.

We now belong to another. What once bound us no longer does. Like a kite, we need to be tethered in order to be free. Our identity is in Christ - let it be.

Reflect: *Does the language of slavery to Christ sit easily with you, or does it grate? Try the kite picture instead - does it change how you see surrender to God?*

Married to Another - Romans 7:4

Romans 7:4 (NIV) *So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.*

Romans 7:4 (KJV) *Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.*

A commentary explains this: believers, through faith in Jesus, are dead to - or completely separated from - the law. Paul deliberately uses the word 'dead' because it is not just that the law no longer applies. We are entirely severed from it, the way death severs a relationship.

We have been separated from the law through faith in Jesus, so that we might be joined to another - to him who was raised from the dead.

We Have Already Been Satisfied

Romans 8:23–25 *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. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have?*

We have already been satisfied - but we spend our lives renewing our minds and transforming our thoughts to line up with that new spiritual reality. Living a transformed life, we share what we have from a place of sonship - as heirs with Christ.

Testimony - Healing and Repentance

Rachel shared a personal testimony: three and a half weeks earlier, she was healed of depression instantly, while in LifeGroup. No one had prayed for her specifically - Richard simply shared a scripture not directed at her:

2 Corinthians 10:5 *We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*

The moment he shared it, Rachel recognised it instantly as truth - and felt a cloud lift along with the usual physical symptoms of depression. The next day was the same, and the next.

But Rachel's honest confession was that she initially kept it to herself - wondering what others praying without answers might think, or that it happened without anyone praying for her specifically. She has now told many people.

Thank Jesus, it can happen in an instant - your life can transform. Don't hold onto the bread you've been given. Pass it on.

Romans 8:26-28 *In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness... And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*

A Challenge for Long-Time Christians

If you are a newer Christian, the contrast between your old life and new life is probably still vivid. If you have been a Christian for a long time, it can be harder to remember what life was like before - because God has always been there.

Are you still being transformed? Does your actual life line up with your spiritual reality - not just what you believe, but what your life looks like?

None of us have arrived at our final transformation yet. If you have been a Christian a long time, do you feel stale or stuck, like you know it all? Continue to be transformed - you are still a new creation, and there is more lining up to do between your natural life and your spiritual reality.

Give It Away Like a Toddler

Imagine a toddler willingly sharing a toy with another child - no fuss, no hesitation. It speaks volumes about that child's sense of security: they know that giving something away doesn't mean going without, because more is coming.

We can live the same way with what we carry - the bread of the gospel. We are not at risk of running out. We have a Father who loves us more than words can hold. So give it away freely, knowing there is always more.

Reflection & Discussion Questions

Use these on your own during the week, or with your LifeGroup.

1. Rachel used the analogy of marriage - your status changes instantly, but your mind takes time to catch up. Where in your life do you still find yourself thinking or acting like your old self, even though your spiritual reality has changed?

2. Paul's struggle in Romans 7 - wanting to do good but not doing it - is deeply honest. Does this passage make Paul (and your own struggle) feel more relatable? Where do you experience that same gap right now?

3. The picture of the kite reframes slavery to Christ as the very thing that sets us free to fly. Does this picture change how you think about surrender and obedience to God?

4. Rachel was honest that she initially kept her healing to herself, worried about what others might think. Is there something good God has done in your life that you have kept to yourself? What would it look like to share it?

5. If you've been a Christian for a long time, Rachel's challenge was direct: are you still being transformed, or do you feel stale or stuck? Be honest with yourself about where you are.

6. The toddler picture shows a child secure enough to give away a toy without fear of going without. What is something you are holding onto tightly that you could give away more freely, trusting there is more to come?

Key Scriptures This Week

- Romans 8:16–17 - We are God's children and co-heirs with Christ
- Romans 7:7, 15–19 - Paul's honest struggle with sin
- Romans 6:1–4 - Baptised into Christ's death, raised to new life
- Romans 6:8–11 - Count yourselves dead to sin, alive to God
- Romans 6:18 - Set free from sin, slaves to righteousness
- Romans 7:4 - Dead to the law, joined to Christ
- Romans 8:23–25 - We wait eagerly, though already saved in hope
- Romans 8:26–28 - The Spirit helps us in our weakness
- 2 Corinthians 10:5 - Taking every thought captive to obey Christ