

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

FEB 27TH-28TH, 2021 // BOOK OF ROMANS

## THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS

### WHAT IS ROMANS ABOUT?

1. The Problem of Sin (Chapters 1-3)- humanity doesn't possess righteousness on our own and we are under the wrath and judgment of God.
2. Justification by Faith (Chapters 4-5)- we are made right with God and receive His righteousness only through faith in Christ.
3. God's transforming righteousness (Chapters 6-8)- when the power of the gospel shows up in our lives, we are changed from God hating rebels to God loving worshipers.
4. God's plan for Israel (Chapters 9-11)- God is sovereign, faithful and His promises to Israel still stand.
5. The Gospel at work in our lives
6. (Chapters 12-16)- our understanding of what God has done for us in Christ shapes EVERYTHING about our lives- our Relationships, finances, retribution/vengeance, politics, sexuality, appetites, worship, and our personal convictions.

### WHY STUDY ROMANS?

In AD 386, a rebellious young man with a profound sexual addiction in north Africa picked up his copy of the book of Romans...

- "A light flooded my heart and all darkness of doubt vanished away..." - after his conversion, Augustine of Hippo went on to be one of the most influential theologians in the history of the Christian church.

In 1519, a neurotic, guilt ridden German monk had a profound, life-changing epiphany while reading Romans 1:17...

- "I felt that I was altogether born again and had entered paradise itself through open gates..." - after his conversion, Martin Luther shook up the entire world as the leading figure in the protestant reformation as many returned to the Bible's key teachings on salvation.

In 1738, part of Luther's commentary on Romans was read by a failed, discouraged English missionary...

- "I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for my salvation" - John Wesley went on to preach the gospel in England and influenced a great revival in the American colonies where thousands came to faith.

### WHY STUDY ROMANS?

- We need the POWER of the gospel at work in our lives- not just religion or moralism.
- We need our lives shaped by the gospel- if what God has done for us isn't shaping every part of who we are, we're missing something.
- We need the gospel's power at work in our world now more than ever!

### GREETINGS (ROMANS 1:1-7)

In the 1st century, a letter always opened with the writer's name.

- Paul introduces himself and gives his credentials while stating to whom this letter is addressed (vs. 7).
- Some of the believers in Rome might have known Paul personally, but many of them he'd never met.
- It was important for him to establish credibility.

### PAUL, A SERVANT OF CHRIST JESUS (VS. 1A)

The Greek word Paul uses for servant is "Doulos", a person who had been purchased and was his master's possession.

- Paul's first identity is that he is not independent, autonomous, and does not belong to himself.
- He was purchased for a price and now he is living to please his Master and Lord.

### ... CALLED TO BE AN APOSTLE (VS. 1B)

An apostle was someone who was sent as a legal representative, and in the early church someone with apostolic authority had to have seen the risen Christ and been directly commissioned by Jesus.

- Paul's apostleship was a big deal in his letters, and he often alluded to his vision of Jesus on the road to Damascus (Acts 9, Gal. 1:11-20) and how Jesus commissioned him to be an apostle to the Gentiles.
- Paul's writings are scripture that is inspired by God.

### A PREACHER OF THE GOSPEL (VS. 1C-4)

Paul's commission was to be, "set apart" for the, "good news" of God.

- This gospel was "promised beforehand"- this gospel is all through the O.T., starting in Genesis 3:15 and especially through the prophets (vs. 2).
- At the center of the gospel message is Jesus: fully man, fully God, the messianic king, and the only one to have ever been resurrected from the dead (vs. 3-4)!

### MISSIONARY TO THE GENTILES (VS. 5-7)

Through Jesus, Paul and the other apostles have received grace and a commission to bring about "the obedience of faith" to the nations.

- The word used for "Faith" is, "pistis", and it more directly translates as faithfulness, trust, or even allegiance.
- To respond to the gospel with faith is to obey it- obedience & faith aren't considered two separate ideas.

### MISSIONARY TO THE GENTILES (VS. 5-7)

This is the goal of the gospel preached to the nations- the "obedience of faith"- allegiance to King Jesus, both to the "nations" AND to those already saved (vs. 6b).

- King Jesus is worthy of our allegiance, obedience, and worship!

- This letter was specifically addressed to those in Rome "loved by God and called to be saints" (vs. 7)

### NOT ASHAMED (ROMANS 1:8-17)

#### PAUL IS THANKFUL FOR THE ROMAN CHURCH (VS. 8)

The "whole world" (the whole Roman Empire) had been impacted by the faith of this church.

- Their allegiance to King Jesus was evident in that the testimony of Christ's gospel was spreading everywhere through them!
- Can the same be said about us? What impact does our faith have on those around us?

#### PAUL IS PRAYING FOR THE ROMAN CHURCH (VS. 9-10)

Paul's desire to come visit the believers in Rome is not casual.

- He tells them he is mentioning them constantly in his prayers, most likely because he's hoping and planning to come to Rome to train them to be his next missionary outpost.
- Intentional, strategic prayer to prepare us for ministry work matters!

#### PAUL WANTED TO DISCIPLE AND EQUIP THEM (VS. 11-12)

Paul longs to be with them so that he can impart a "spiritual gift to strengthen them" and they can "mutually encourage" one another in the faith.

- The picture here is of believers building up, edifying, and strengthening each other as they share life together and grow in maturity.
- It's the idea that NO BELIEVER is intended to mature in their faith walk by themselves!

#### PAUL WAS BURDENED FOR THEM (VS. 13-15)

As an apostle to the Gentiles, Paul had an obligation to minister in Rome.

- He had intended to come earlier but he was prevented, and now he is eager to get to Rome so he can enjoy a "harvest".
- But would this gospel message succeed in the great city of Rome- the epicenter of all culture, government, and power?

#### PAUL IS NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL (VS. 16-17)

If we think our culture is hostile to the gospel, culture in 1st century Rome was much more so.

- But Paul is "not ashamed"- Jesus warned us that if we are ashamed of Him before men, He will be ashamed of us before His Father (Mark 8:38).
- Christians and their message were frequently misunderstood by Roman culture, yet Paul was not ashamed: but why?

#### PAUL IS NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL (VS. 16-17)

For it is the "power of God for salvation to everyone who believes".

- The word power is the Greek word, dunamos- where we get the word, dynamite.
- This gospel message has POWER to change people's lives!
- Paul had seen the gospel transform his own life from a Jesus hater to a Jesus worshiper.

#### PAUL IS NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL (VS. 16-17)

Paul had seen the gospel work in other wicked, pagan cities like Corinth & Ephesus.

- He was confident and unashamed in the gospel because he knew it has real POWER, unlike the power of religion, philosophy, or moralism.
- This gospel is for "everyone who believes"- to the Jew first, but to every nation and people group.

#### PAUL IS NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL (VS. 16-17)

What is this gospel in a nutshell? The righteousness of God is provided for people who have no righteousness of their own through faith.

- The problem, "how can a holy God ever forgive guilty sinners and still be holy?" is solved by the gospel.
- Through the death and resurrection of Christ, God is seen as both, "just, and the justifier" (Rom. 3:26).
- How is this righteousness credited to us? Faith.

#### CONSUMER GOSPEL

- "Jesus is there only to get me into heaven when I die". Creates immature (or even false) converts; has no power to change a life, a church, or a community; brings shame of no spiritual fruit.

#### PROSPERITY GOSPEL

- "Jesus is there only to meet your needs on earth". Creates entitled, self-indulgent, lovers of self; has no power to change a heart; brings shame because it doesn't work.

#### PROGRESSIVE/LIBERAL GOSPEL

- "Jesus is there to serve as an example of a social activist". Creates accommodation to culture and corrosion of truth; has no power to transform personal vice (only focused on societal sins); brings shame because of the human inability to be good on our own.

#### CONSERVATIVE/RIGHT GOSPEL

- "Jesus is there to help me be right". Creates proud, unloving, Christ-less exclusiveness; has no power to create love towards enemies; brings shame because it brings hostility and unkindness.

#### THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST.

- "Jesus is King, and He's worthy of my faith, trust, allegiance, obedience, and worship".
- Creates grateful, obedient, humble, & loving followers of Jesus.
- Has the power to change EVERYTHING about ANYONE who fully trusts in Christ.
- When it EXPLODES in your life, it brings you no shame- only continued, confident trust.