

A Study Outline of Romans

Chapter 1

1:1-7 - Paul's greeting.

- Paul was a "called apostle." He was called directly by the Lord (Acts 9:3-20). He also had all the "signs of an apostle" (2 Cor. 12:12).
- Paul wants his Jewish readers to know that the very Scriptures they relied on were the ones which spoke of Jesus (Jn. 5:45-47). Those Scriptures spoke of His fleshly descent (v. 3) and His divine descent (v. 4).
- His purpose in writing is "for obedience to the faith" (v. 5). Faith *should* lead us to obedience.

1:8-17 - Paul's desire to visit Rome.

- Paul sets out a very personal appeal to the church in Rome in this section. He was praying to God that he might be able to see them and impart to them some spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:7-11).
- He felt a great obligation to preach the gospel to all men (1 Cor. 9:16). We are all indebted to God for what He has done through Christ.
- Paul had been beaten, imprisoned, stoned, and he was still unashamed!
- God is righteous, but verse 17 is showing that through the gospel, the way to be righteous before God is revealed.

1:18-32 - God's wrath revealed.

- One commentator said that God's wrath is legal rather than emotional. His law has been violated and His wrath will be seen.
- Verses 19-20 point out that God, throughout time has revealed Himself to man so that man can know Him and His will. Specifically, the physical creation even speaks to the divine nature.
- Verses 21-28 show that the Gentile world *knew* God, but they *chose* not to glorify Him as God.
- It follows three times: God gave them up (v. 24) to various sins, gave them up to *vile affections* (v. 26), and the finally gave them over (v. 28). God cannot force man to stop sinning and do what is right. God does not give us up until we first give Him up.
- The "things which are not fitting" include many different things!
- Leviticus 19:33-34. God repeatedly revealed Himself to the Gentile world in the past. Moses, Jonah, Daniel, etc.
- Verse 32 shows that they *knew* what they were doing was wrong!

Chapter 2

2:1-11 - Hard and impenitent hearts.

- The first three verses reveal that the Jews were guilty of judging others for their sins while not considering themselves.
- 2:1-3 is a commentary on Matthew 7:1-5.

- God had been good and forbearing with the Jewish people for many years, but they refused to repent and obey. The goodness of God was intended to bring people to repentance.
- It was easy to get the Jews (Christians) to see the sins of the Gentiles (world). We must be very careful that we are not hypocritical as they were.
- There is no partiality in God's judgment (6-11).
 - For the wicked: indignation, wrath, tribulation, anguish.
 - For the righteous: eternal life, glory, honor, peace.
- Both reward and punishment will be dealt out according to every man's deeds (v. 6).

2:12-16 - Doers of the Law will be justified.

- Without law = Gentiles, with law = Jews.
- The Gentiles did not "have the law." However, the things that were revealed in Moses' law were things that were known by nature (practice) too.
- The conscience of the Gentiles would either *accuse* or *excuse* them. The Law of Moses (10 Commandments) contained laws that were/are eternally right or wrong. The works of the Gentiles showed that their conscience revealed that to them.
- All of us will be judged by Jesus Christ through the gospel (v. 16).

2:17-24 - The Jews did not teach themselves.

- The Jewish nation took pride in their lineage (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob) and in the fact that God had given them the Law written with His finger (Ex. 31:18).
- They failed to understand that they needed the gospel just as badly as the heathen!
- Verse 24 shows the result of God's people living hypocritically.

2:25-29 - Being God's person is a matter of the heart.

- Circumcision was given to Abraham and his family as a symbol of the covenant God made with him (Gen. 17:9-14). The Jews boasted in this sign and tried to bind it on others (Acts 15:1-5) when God did not.
- The Gentiles (uncircumcised) kept the requirements of the law and that is what pleases God.
- The Jews were more concerned with the outward appearance of being "God's people" instead of fulfilling the Law God had given to them.

Chapter 3

3:1-8 - A lack of faith does not negate God's promise.

- The great advantage the Jews had was not circumcision, but direct access to the revealed will of God (oracles). Paul is refuting the idea that the outward appearance (circumcision - 2:28-29) was the most important thing.
- The Jewish lack of faith (v. 3) was not going to nullify God's promise. If He failed to bless them it would have been a reflection on His character.

- Some might argue that when man sins God's grace seems even greater. Paul's answer - *Certainly not!* If that were true then God would not be able or right in judging the world.
- Some would even try to argue, "*Let us do evil that good may come*" (v. 8). In other words, the more one sins the more gracious God will be!

3:9-20 - Old Testament evidence that all men are under sin and in need of the gospel.

- Paul asks the question, "*Are we (Jews) better than they (Gentiles)?*"
- Verses 10-12 are a quote from Psalm 14:1-3 written about the "fool."
- Verse 13 is a quote of Psalm 5:9 and 140:3 written about "workers of iniquity."
- Verse 14 is a quote of Psalm 10:7 written about the "wicked."
- Verse 15 is a quote of Proverbs 1:16 written about "sinners."
- Verses 16-17 is a quote of Isaiah 59:7-8 written about "workers of iniquity."
- Verse 18 is a quote of Psalm 36:1 written about the "wicked."
- Verses 19-20 show that the Law revealed the nature and consequences of sin, but that it could not provide justification from sin.

3:21-26 - Righteousness with God is found by faith in Christ.

- Paul even mentions that the Law itself and the Prophets were witnesses to this fact.
- Righteousness is available to all who believe, regardless of their lineage (v. 22). The reason is that "*all sinned and are coming short of the grace of God.*"
- Justification (to be acquitted or cleared) is accomplished through:
 - God's grace
 - Redemption in Christ
 - The propitiation (mercy seat)
- What God has done through Christ shows His righteousness and justice and it also allows us to be declared righteous!

3:27-31 - Justification is not found in the Law.

- The Jews cannot boast in their lineage, circumcision, etc.
- What has been done for Jews and Gentiles by God shows the great mercy and faithfulness of God.

Chapter 4

Having stated that all men are under sin and in need of the gospel, Paul now sets out to show how one is justified by faith.

The first converts to Christ were Jews (Acts 2:5) and they attempted to bring Judaism into the church with them, particularly circumcision (Acts 15). They also attempted to justify themselves by their physical descent from Abraham. Romans 4 deals with these issues.

4:1-8 - Abraham was justified by faith before the Law of Moses was given.

- Abraham preceded the Mosaic covenant by many years, yet the Jews made their boast in him (Matt. 3:9).
- God accounted Abraham as righteous (Gen. 15:6) before the sign of circumcision was even given (Rom. 3:27-31 deals with this)!

- By the standards of some in the first century church at Rome, not even Abraham could have been saved!
- If one is going to claim that their own works save them, they are saying that God owes them salvation (v. 4). The Jews, like Abraham, needed to display faith in God in order to be counted as righteous and forgiven.

4:9-12 - Abraham's faith is our model.

- The ability to be forgiven and considered righteous in God's eyes is available to all men.
- Again, this was done for Abraham before the covenant of circumcision was given.
- Acts 15:6-9; Galatians 5:6.

4:13-15 - The promises given to Abraham were given before the Law of Moses.

- The Jews believed that God's promises and blessings came through strict adherence to law (Matt. 23:23-24).
- This passage is abused to teach that salvation is by faith only and that "law keeping" is of no use.

4:16-18 - The promises of God are received by faith through grace.

- This is how all men in all times have been saved!
- Not faith alone and not grace alone. We are saved by the grace of God (Eph. 2:8-9) and by faith working through love (Gal. 5:6).
- Did Abraham become the "father of many nations" by faith only, or was something else involved (v. 18)?

4:19-22 - Abraham had strong faith in the promises of God.

- Why did it require such strong faith for Abraham?
- Genesis 17:17-18.

4:23-25 - The point of the passage. Abraham's faith is the kind we need!

Chapter 5

5:1-5 - The blessings of walking by faith.

- The death, burial, and resurrection of Christ made justification possible (4:25). However, in order to be pronounced "not guilty" (justified), I must access the grace of God by faith.
- *Peace* is not a lack of external problems, but an internal knowledge of being right with God through Christ. This peace also comes from realizing that God is in control.
- The Christian can rejoice in tribulations through the realization that they can help us grow in faith (Jas. 1:2-4).
- Our hope will not lead to disappointment (v. 5). Biblical hope is desire with expectation (8:24-25).

5:6-11 - The demonstration of God's love.

- Apart from God man is *without strength, ungodly, sinners, enemies*.

- In “due time” God’s plan of salvation was executed.
- God has done for us what we would not consider for doing for our enemies (v. 7).
- Through Christ we are saved from the wrath of God! We were taken from the worst possible state (enemies) and made friendly (reconciled) to God.

5:12-17 - What was lost in Adam is more than regained in Christ.

- God told Adam and Eve that if they ate of the tree they would die (Gen. 2:15-17). When they partook of that fruit they were separated from the tree of life and thus faced that consequence for their sin (Gen. 3:22-24).
- You and I face that same consequence today (Heb. 9:27).
- From the time of Adam to Moses we have no indication that there was any written law, yet, there was sin and death (v. 13-14).
- The blessings that come through the atoning sacrifice of Christ are much greater than what was lost in the sin of Adam and Eve.
- An emphasis in this particular section is the grace of God (v. 15, 17).
- The ONE sin in the garden had (and has) great consequences. But the grace of God makes it possible for the SINS of the entire world to be forgiven.

5:18-21 - The abundant grace of God.

- One of the results of the sin in the garden is condemnation (v. 18).
- Guilt and righteousness cannot be transferred from one person to another, but the consequences might.
- Verse 20 shows one of the purposes of law (7:7). God’s ability to forgive sin outweighs sin’s ability to condemn man.
- The grace of God reigns because of what was done by Christ on the cross.

Chapter 6

Paul has concluded that all are under sin (3:9) and need the gospel (5:18). He has stated that it is God’s grace which has made all this available (5:15).

There were some who, based on this teaching, might take the position that the more one sins, the more grace God would provide! This is handled in chapter 6.

6:1-4 - The Christian has died to sin.

- It appears that some were attempting to teach that God will continue to give His abundant grace if they sinned more and more (3:8). Paul’s response: Let it not be!
- The Christian is not to be in the sinning business! RL Whiteside wrote, *“When Paul became a Christian, there was one less sinner in the world as certainly and definitely as if he had died physically and been buried at Damascus.”*
- When did this transaction take place? At baptism (v. 3-4)! Our being buried in water and raised up out of it is “like as Christ was raised up.” In baptism we are buried into the benefits of the death of Christ. Note also that “newness of life” comes *after* we are raised from baptism.

6:5-11 - The old man is put to death in baptism.

- *Crucifixion* was a common manner of execution in Paul's day. Those reading this letter understood what happened when one was nailed to a cross. The picture given here is one of death to the old ways of life (sin) and being set free (v. 7).
- The Christian is living with Christ in this world and we have the hope to live with Him in the next (v. 8-10). We are to be "alive" to God after our baptism (v. 11).

6:12-14 - Sin's control can be broken.

- *"The body is a mere instrument to be used by the inner man, the spirit, for good or bad. The spirit is charged not to let sin control the body."* What one does in the flesh affects the soul.
- This section teaches that man plays a part in freeing himself from sin. Sin uses lust to produce the death of the soul (Jas. 1:13-16).
- Law does not free one from sin. Law reveals what sin is and what the consequences will be (v. 14). Only the grace of God can free a person from the consequences of sin. Verse 14 is not teaching that the Christian is *not* under law to God.

6:15-19 - Make a choice!

- Man has to choose one of two possible masters: sin, leading to death or obedience, leading to righteousness (v. 16). This section destroys Calvinism!
- In order to be freed from sin one must obey the delivered form of doctrine (v. 17). The Romans had already obeyed that form (mold) of doctrine which had been delivered (preached) to them. No one can be saved without obedience to the gospel plan of salvation.
- You have a "then...now" statement in verse 19.

6:20-23 - What profit is there in sin?

- He again asserts that we are set free from sin and have become servants of God.
- Having been exposed to the gospel, the Roman Christians were "ashamed" of the things they did before their conversion to Christ (v. 21).
- The ultimate end of living in sin is death (separation from God).
- Death is earned (wages) by sin. Eternal life in heaven is a gift from God that we do not "earn." We cannot put God in debt to us.

Chapter 7

7:1-6 - We have been delivered from the law.

- Verses 1-4 are an illustration from marriage about the Law of Moses and the Law of Christ. This was one of the main "issues" in the first century church.
- Christians are "married" to Christ and there are expectations to be met.
- We are "in the flesh" when we are outside of Christ. Now that I am married to Him I should be serving in newness of the Spirit.

7:7-12 - The Law of Moses was good and served its purpose.

- Those Christians were not to think of the Old Law as a bad thing, but a good thing in that it warned about sin and its consequences. Sin is personified in this section.

- Verse 9 shows that there is a time in life when a person is “alive without the law.” I believe this might have reference to the concept of the age of accountability. When one reaches an age to know “the law” (right and wrong) sin comes alive and that person is separated from God.
- Paul then commends the law for what it does (v. 12).

7:13-20 - The Law of Moses brought to light the struggle between right and wrong.

- This section of Romans 7 has been abused to teach that one cannot help but to sin.
- The point of this section is stated at the end of verse 13.
- The Old Testament could not bring about justification from sin (Gal. 2:16). We are given a picture here of a person who wants to be justified, but is attempting it in the wrong way.
- Verse 15 shows that the person who is living in sin, without the understanding of what sin is and what it does, is really ignorant of his condition.
- The Law of Moses pointed out the sinfulness of sin, but did not produce the remedy.
- Hebrews 10:1-10.

7:21-25 - Only the Law of Christ can free us from the struggle.

- He points out the struggle and frustration that comes with sin.
- The emphatic question of verse 24 is answered in chapter 8.

Chapter 8

Chapter 7 ends with a man’s struggle to find justification under a system which cannot justify (Law of Moses). Chapter 8 begins with good news.

8:1-8 - Finding life and peace with God.

- To walk in the flesh is to walk according the ways of the world (Gal. 5:16-21). The Christian walks in the teaching of the Holy Spirit. We produce the fruit of the Spirit by walking in the Spirit (Gal. 5:25).
- The law of sin and death is simply that death is the ultimate result of living in sin (Rom. 6:23). Christ and His sacrifice accomplished what the Law could not.
- The Christian is to set his affection (mind, thinking) on things above (Col. 3:1).
- The carnal mind is *insubordinate* to God (v. 7-8). We cannot live for the things of God and the things of the world at the same time.

8:9-17 - Debtors to God.

- The Christian is to possess the spirit (mind) of Christ (v. 9). The Scriptures also teach that the Holy Spirit dwells in the Christian (v. 11).
- Living according to the Spirit causes us to put to death the works of the flesh (Gal 5:24-25).
- To be led by the Holy Spirit is to be a child of God (v. 14). Paul also taught that we are children of God “*through the faith*” of Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:26). The only way one can be a child of God and walk accordingly is through the teaching of God’s word.
- One can be joined to a family by adoption or birth (v. 15). We must be born again in order to become a member of God’s family (Jn. 3:3-8).

8:18-25 - The Christian is saved by hope.

- We are saved by hope (Rom. 8:24), grace (Eph. 2:8), baptism (1 Pet. 3:21), doing God's will (Matt. 7:21). All these things work together in bringing one to salvation. Obedience does not nullify the grace of God!
- The sufferings that we presently face cause us to earnestly desire the glory that waits for us! This includes the redemption of our bodies (v. 23). It is this hope that saves us because without hope we would not endure.

8:26-27 - The Spirit assists us in our weaknesses.

- *Likewise* is an adverb and means, "in the same way..." Just as our endurance helps us live in hope, so the Spirit assists (helps) when we have weaknesses in prayer.
- Intercession is "falling in with or meeting with another." All Christians are to make intercession for others (1 Tim. 2:1), but there is only one mediator (1 Tim. 2:5).
- This is all done "according to the will of God." Also, this is something the Spirit does FOR us, not TO us.

8:28-30 - God works!

- A misunderstanding of this passage is that God causes everything to happen and then can work it out for good. That is not what this passage teaches! The life of Joseph is a commentary on verse 28.
- The *called* are those who have heard the gospel call and obeyed (1 Thes. 2:14).
- God predetermined the *place* and *terms* of salvation. When I meet God on His terms I become one of the predestined.

8:31-39 - If God be for us, who can be against us?

- One of the most encouraging passages in all of Scripture.
- God is the justifier and Christ is the judge (v. 33-34).
- Nothing that man typically fears can separate us from the love of God!

Chapter 9

9:1-5 - Paul's grief for his Jewish brethren.

- Paul had come from a Jewish family and background (Phil. 3:4-6).
- He is expressing a strong desire for those people to come to obedience to Christ, who is over all (v. 5).
- After he left the Jewish faith he became a target of the Jews (Acts 9:20-25).
- They failed to realize that Paul was preaching the only hope they had to be saved!
- He did not choose the Jewish nation for individual salvation, but as a vehicle to bring the Messiah through whom all could be saved.

9:6-13 - God's promise of redemption was fulfilled through the Jewish people.

- He points out that just being related to Abraham did not mean that one was a true child of God (Matt. 3:9; Jn. 8).
- God's promises to Abraham were to be fulfilled in the child of promise (Isaac).

- Verses 10-13 show that when God selected Jacob he did so before he was born. God was selecting His own instruments to work out His plan.
- The Jews mistakenly thought that God's choice assured their national salvation. If so, that would mean that every descendant of Esau would be lost!

9:14-21 - God's will will be done, regardless of man's actions.

- God was not unrighteous for choosing a way by which He could save man from sin.
- Moses was permitted to see God's "back" (Ex. 33:23) when he was discouraged by Israel's rebellion at Sinai.
- God showed mercy to His people even when they did not deserve it.
- God even used Pharaoh to display His power. These choices are in God's hands, not man's.
- Those who question God's plans are being irreverent and unfair to God Himself (v. 19-21).
- God has not predetermined who would be saved/lost, good/evil. He has determined how one can be saved and He is not unjust for doing so.

9:22-29 - God has endured much in order to show His mercy to man.

- God has "called" people from both Jewish and Gentile backgrounds.
- The Law of Moses spoke of this fact (v. 25-29)!

9:30-33 - The Jewish problem addressed.

- The goal of every right thinking person should be how to be right with God.
- The Jews came up short because they did not seek it "by faith." (1) They sought justification by works of the law (which would have required sinless perfection) and (2) they rejected the chief cornerstone!
- Jesus taught against the legalism the Jews attempted to attain (Matt. 23:23-24).

Chapter 10

10:1-4 - Paul's concern for the Jewish people.

- Paul had a great desire for all men to be saved (1 Cor. 9:19-23).
- The problem was that they were willfully ignorant of God's system of righteousness.
- The Jewish people failed to realize that Christ is the *end* (completion or goal) of the Law of Moses. Matthew 5:17-18.

10:5-13 – The Law versus the Faith.

- Righteousness, at one time, was accomplished through the keeping of the Law.
- Now it is accomplished through faith in Christ. It is found in the word that is preached (v. 8).
- It is also accomplished through confessing the deity of Christ. He is writing to Christians about being righteous in God's eyes. He is not writing to non-Christians telling them what to do to be saved.
- The salvation in Christ is offered to all who believe in Him (v. 11).
- What does it mean to call on the name of the Lord (v. 11-12)? Acts 9:13-14.

10:14-17 – Salvation is accomplished through the preaching of the gospel.

10:18-21 – The OT foresaw these things.

- Verse 18 – Psalm 19:4.
- Verse 19 – Deuteronomy 32:21.
- Verse 20 – Isaiah 65:1.
- Verse 21 – Isaiah 65:2.

Chapter 11

Chapter 10 ends with Paul quoting the OT and proving that Israel was stubborn and rebellious. Chapter 11 shows that it was not God who had rejected the Jews, but the Jews who had rejected God.

11:1-6 – Israel rejected the Christ.

- Paul again quotes the OT, this time to show that there was a remnant of people who were faithful followers of His.
- All of this was accomplished by God's grace, not man's works.

11:7-10 – Further OT evidence that the Jewish people were guilty of rejecting God.

11:11-24 – The rejection of the gospel by the Jews ultimately led to the reception of the gospel by the Gentiles (Acts 13:44-46).

- Paul uses the example of limbs being grafted in to a tree.
- Some branches (Jews) were broken off and, in turn, other branches (Gentiles) were grafted in (to Christ). He also warns against arrogance (v. 18).
- The good news is that even the Jews, who rejected the Christ, would stop their unbelief, they could be saved (v. 23-24).

11:25-33 – The depth of God's knowledge is past our understanding.

- Paul wants his readers to fully understand God's plan concerning the Jews and Gentiles.
- Verse 26 does not teach that all of Israel will be saved. *So* is an adverb of manner meaning, "in this manner" or "in this way" Israel can be saved.
- They can only be saved through the *Deliverer* and His covenant (v. 26-27).
- God loved them all even though they were enemies of the gospel.
- God's mind and plan are unsearchable! All things will be done to His glory.

Chapter 12

Paul now begins the practical side of this letter.

12:1-2 – Christians are living sacrifices in service to God.

- *Present* means to "place beside or set at hand." This service to God is *reasonable* (logical).
- *Conform* – to follow a pattern.
- *Transform* – to change form.

12:3-8 – We are members one of another.

- For verse 3 read Psalm 39:4-5.
- Every member of the church can contribute something to God's work!
- Verses 6-8 – Whatever we are capable of doing, let's do it!

12:9-16 – Brotherly love on display.

- If we love our fellow-man, we hate that which is hurtful to him.
- *Preference* means “to think before.” Our Christian family is priceless!
- *Curse* (v. 14) means to wish evil or hurt on someone.

12:17-21 – Do not seek revenge.

- I think verse 18 may be my favorite verse in dealing with my fellow-man!
- *Vengeance* means “punishment.” God will take care of the punishment of evil-doers.

13:1-7 – The Christian and government.

- Be subject, don't resist, do what is right, and pay your taxes.
- The Christian can live a good and peaceful life in any type of governmental system.

13:8-10 – A summary of the law.

13:11-14 – Christians are to walk in a seemly manner, with propriety. We are not to take forethought for fleshly activities.

Chapter 14

14:1-15:13 is one unit discussing matters over “doubtful things” and the fact that we should “receive” everyone in Christ, even those who are “weak” in certain areas.

The key to understand this entire section is 14:19.

14:1-13 – God is the Judge of Others.

- This section recognizes that in local congregations there will be differences of opinion (14:1). Paul is not doctrinal issues!
- Do not despise (treat with contempt, to make light of).
- Do not judge (condemn).
- Be fully convinced in your own mind (v. 5).
- God has received both in Christ, even though there may be differences in opinion.
- I need to be concerned with my impact on others (14:6-9) because these things were being done “to the Lord.”
- Christians CANNOT say, “I'm living my life and I don't care.”
- The opinions of others are between them and God!
- According to verses 10-13 I am not the Judge!

14:14-23 – Avoid Making Others Stumble.

- The emphasis is on opinions (v. 14) and the Christian wants to walk in love (v. 15).
- Whose work am I affecting when I “do what I want” (v. 20)?

- My actions can *destroy* (tear down) and I need to be sure that I do not condemn others for not holding my view on things that, ultimately, don't matter.

15:1-13 – In All Things I Should Act Like Christ.

- We are to act for the good of others. This is the concept behind *agape* (love).
- Christ is the ultimate example on this issue.
- God is the God of both Jew and Gentile (15:7-13) and they should receive one another in all these things.

15:14-21 – Paul's Goal in Preaching the Gospel.

- He wants to effectively bear fruit among the Gentiles through their obedience (v. 18).
- He didn't want to try to build on another man's work, but spread the gospel to those who had never heard it (v. 20-21).

15:22-33 – Paul's Desire to go to Rome and Some Things He Must Do on the Way.

- Everywhere Paul went, the gospel went with him!
- Verse 25 connects Acts 19:21 with 1 Corinthians 16:1-2 and 2 Corinthians 8-9.
- One of his works in the church was ministering to those who were poor (v. 26).

16:1-16 – Paul Lists Many Faithful Workers in the Church.

- He mentions both men and women who helped him in his service to God.
- Women – Phebe, Priscilla, Mary, Junia, Tryphena, Tryphosa, Persis, Rufus' mother, Julia, Nereus' sister.
- Phebe as a "deacon." Deacon (*diakonos*) means, "a servant, an attendant." Jesus (Mk. 10:45), Barnabas and Saul (Acts 12:25), angels (Heb. 1:14), government officials (Rom. 13:4). While Phebe was a servant in the church, she was not a "deaconess."

16:17-20 – Paul Warns Against False Teachers.

16:21-27 – Paul's Conclusion.

- Several Christians are named as greeting the Roman brethren.
- The value of the Scriptures (v. 25-26).
- God's word manifests what it means to be obedient to the faith (gospel).