

The Letter to the Romans

Founded in 753 B.C., Rome was the capital city of the Roman Empire. It is about 15 miles from the Mediterranean Sea. In Paul's day, there were roughly 1 million citizens, many of which were slaves.

The church of Rome was likely founded by many followers who were converted on the day of Pentecost. Paul longed to visit the church in Rome for many years but was prevented from doing so. This inability to visit Rome inspired Paul to write this letter.

The purpose of this letter was to give information to new believers who had not received instruction directly from Christ. Paul looked to: edify believers, preach the gospel, fellowship with Roman believers so that they could encourage him, pray better for him, and help him with his ministry in Spain.

Other epistles (personal letters) focused on correcting beliefs and behaviors. Romans is different in that it focuses on doctrine and instruction for believers.

Romans is broken down into two main sections. Chapters 1-11 focus on theological truths in the doctrine, while chapters 12-16 detail practical uses of these truths by individual believers and the body of believers known as the church.

The Good News

Read Romans 1:1-17

Do you remember where and when you first heard the good news that Jesus died for your sins?

What is “good” about the good news of the gospel?

As you begin this study, what do you hope to learn from the book of Romans? How do you want your faith to grow?

What does the passage reveal about the promise of the good news and the Person of the good news?

Verses 8-15 provide some insight to Paul’s character and motives and the kind of behavior that should mark all true spiritual leaders. What admirable qualities are described in these verses?

What reasons does Paul give for not being ashamed of the gospel?

Read Acts 26:1-18

How did Paul’s encounter with Christ change the purpose for his life?

Read Philippians 3:1-7. What in Paul’s life before Christ would have caused him to see the message of Christ as “good news”?

What caused Paul to want to travel sharing the good news with others?

How do you answer someone who asks: “What is the grace of God and why is it such a good thing?”

How can lukewarm Christians recapture the sense that the gospel is the good news, the best ever announced?

Who in your life needs to hear and embrace God’s good news of salvation by grace through faith in Christ? Take some time to pray for them now.

The Bad News

Read Romans 1:18-3:20

Do you think Christians should share on the consequences of sin with unbelievers or stay focused on the goodness and mercy of God?

Why does Paul say humanity is deserving of the wrath of God?

List the words, descriptions, and phrases that mention man's rebellion from God.

What are the short-term consequences to rebellion that Paul mentions in this passage?

Why does Paul say even moral and religious people are not exempt from God's judgement?

How can we understand the depths of depravity in the human heart and the heights of love God has for his creation?

So far in this study, what convicts you most, challenges you most, and compels you to action the most? Why?

Read Psalm 14 and note how it relates to this section of Romans

By Faith Alone

Read Romans 3:21-4:25

Why does Paul say that no one has the right to boast before God?

List words or phrases in the passage that describes what God has done.

Why does Paul make a point to state that Abraham was justified before being circumcised?

What is the purpose or effect of God's law?

What incidents from Abraham and Sarah's life does Paul use to prove salvation is from divine power?

How do you explain God's law and his mercy? How can the two co-exist?

What is wrong with trying to earn salvation through good deeds? Why is it never enough?

What is the proper response to salvation that comes from grace?

Read Galatians 3:6-25 and note how it relates to this section of Romans

Assurance of Salvation

Read Romans 5:1-21

Have you ever had doubts about your salvation?

What does Paul say about salvation coming from faith being preserved by good works?

What evidence does he give for salvation being unconditional?

How does Paul illustrate that unbelievers are actually at war with God?

Contrast how Adam's actions and Christ's actions affected mankind.

Read Hebrews 10:1-4, 12-14, 19-23

How does Jesus' sacrifice compare to the old sacrificial system?

Why do both of these passages emphasize our access to God?

How does the Hebrews passage echo the idea that salvation is permanent?

How does knowing your eternal salvation is secure affect your daily life? How does it make you feel?

Have you ever experienced God's love being poured out? When?

Have you learned anything new in this passage about God?

New Life in Christ

Read Romans 6:1-23

How has God helped you in your struggles with sin in your life?

How did Paul react to the notion that believers in Christ will continue to live as unbelievers?

What does Paul say happened to our old selves?

What do believers need to know? How does knowing differ from reckoning? (v. 11)

What are three things that are the process of sanctification? (vv. 6, 11, 13)

Read Colossians 3:1-11

Why should we “put on” and “put off” certain things?

If we are truly dead to sin and alive to God, why do we still struggle with temptation?

Discuss how God is the one who changes us by His grace, and what things we should do and not do as part of the sanctification process?

What does it mean to come to Jesus on “His own terms”? Are you willing to relinquish your sinful desires to be transformed from the inside out?

What are some barriers in your life to becoming holy? What are some things in your life contributing to you becoming more holy?

In the three-part sanctification process, what area do you struggle the most? Do you struggle more with understanding these tenets, or choosing to live them out?

Deliverance from the Law

Read Romans 7:1-25

Would you describe yourself as a rigid 'rule keeper'? Why or why not?

How does Paul explain that believers are 'dead to the law'?

What does Paul say we will wrestle with for the rest of our lives? (v. 1)

How do you reconcile Paul's teaching in chapter 6 of believers being 'dead to sin' with the huge struggle with sin described in chapter 7?

Read Psalm 19:7-11

What are the benefits of knowing and obeying God's word?

Is there a contradiction between Paul's observation that the law is a commanding, demanding, unyielding code of condemnation and David's affection for the law in Psalm 19? Why or why not?

Read 1 Peter 2:11 How does this command echo the internal struggle described by Paul in this passage?

Where did Paul find hope in his struggle to live as God commands?

In what areas are you frustrated by your sinful inclinations? Based on chapter 7, how effective is legalism in fighting the flesh?

What have you learned in this passage that convicts you? Comforts you? Why?

What is one thing that you should be doing that you are not? What is one thing that you are doing that you should not be? Write them down below and pray about it this week.

Let's Get Spiritual

Read Romans 8:1-39

Jesus told his followers he would send the Holy Spirit. What comes to mind when you think of the Holy Spirit?

List the names Paul uses for the Holy Spirit:

In this text, what acts/ministries does the Holy Spirit perform in us, through us and for us?

How does the Holy Spirit's presence and work change our nature?

What does Paul mean by the references to “growing” in this text? (vv. 22-23)

Read John 14:15-17

What more do you learn about the Spirit from this?

How does the promise in John 14:17 relate to the promise of Romans 8:35-39?

Read Galatians 5:22-23. How can the presence of these qualities in your life bring hope and expectation?

Why is it important to read and know God’s Word? How is this related to being led by the Spirit?

How can God’s indwelling Spirit empower you for victory over sin today?

On a scale of 1-10 with 1 being carnal and 10 being charismatic, how would you evaluate your “life in the Spirit” right now? What needs to change?

Meditate on Romans 8:35-39. How does this benediction about God’s love encourage you?

God's Chosen People

Read Romans 9:1-11:36

Professed Christians have committed some of the most atrocious acts of anti-Semitism in history. Others have been staunch supporters of Israel. What do you think accounts for the conflicting responses over the centuries toward Jewish people?

What is Paul's feeling toward Jews in this passage? What was his overall tone?

Name the main characters and events in Paul's history lesson?

What argument does Paul make for Israel's disobedience to be within God's plan?

What imagery does Paul use to illustrate that God's setting aside of Israel is not permanent?

Read Jeremiah 18:1-10

What does God want Israel to know about Him? Why?

How does Jeremiah explain God's sovereignty? Does this help you understand it better? Why?

Read Revelation 7:1-12. What does this suggest about the future relationship between Jews and Gentiles?

Given these passages, what should the modern Christian stance be toward the Jews?

Paul wished he could trade places with unsaved Jews, literally go to Hell in their place. How could this develop more compassion for those who don't know Jesus?

Paul ends with an amazing doxology. If you were to write a four-sentence tribute of praise to God for including you in His eternal plan of salvation, what would It say?

“Christ Like Life”

Read Romans 12:1-21

On a scale of 1-10 (1 is Virtually Non-Existent and 10 is Almost Perfect) how would you rate Bar Cross Cowboy Church’s “body life” – how people serve and relate to each other in the Body of Christ? Why?

What do you wish was different in the church body?

Read the main text.

According to Paul, what is involved in giving yourself fully and completely to God (body, mind, and will)?

What can you conclude from this passage about living life in isolation?

What has God given each of us for service with one another?

If keeping God's law is impossible, how can we live out the list of commands in verses 9-21?

Read 1 Peter 4:7-11

What insights does Peter add to the doctrine of spiritual gifts presented in Romans 12? Who has the gifts and what is their purpose?

What attitudes and actions glorify God and build the body of Christ according to Paul? What attitudes and actions dishonor God and tear down the body of Christ?

Why is the metaphor of the human body a good one for the church?

“Seeing that so many preach Christ and so few live Christ, I will aim to live Him.” - Robert C. Chapman

What principle or truth have you learned from this passage that you want to stop talking about and start doing?

What do you think your spiritual gifts are? How are you using these God given gifts to serve the body of Christ?

Write out a verse from this passage that you will memorize and meditate on to help you renew your mind.

“Christ Like Life”

Read Romans 13:1-14

Do you think it is important to be a good citizen? Why?

Is there ever a time when you would not obey the law? Explain.

Read the main text.

How does Paul contrast Christians from the world?

What consequences does God ordain for those who defy governmental authority?

How does Paul employ some of the 10 Commandments to illustrate love is the fulfillment of the law?

What does Paul use to motivate believers in rom to turn from sin and live righteously? Why are we to submit?

Read Daniel 3:14-30

How did the public stance of these Hebrew men enhance God’s reputation?

Read Acts 5:28-29. What exception, if any, is there to the divine command to “be subject to governing authorities”?

What does it mean to “put on the Lord Jesus Christ”?

What happens to the message of Christ and God’s reputation and His people when Christians are angry and disrespectful toward public servants?

Considering your current elected officials (federal, state, and local governments), is it easy for you to want to subject yourself to their authority? Do you resent paying taxes to the current administration? Why or why not?

What if an official is corrupt, unlikable, or disreputable? What are our options as believers?

Write down the names of 3 government officials from your opposite party affiliation for whom you can pray this week. Bonus credit if you write them a note expressing your support and gratitude.

“Stumbling Blocks”

Read Romans 14:1-15:13

Have you ever been offended by another Christian? How did you handle it? What was the result?

Read the main text

What was happening between believers in Rome? Why do you think they were judging each other?

In areas where the Bible neither condemns nor encourages behavior, what advice does Paul give for how to behave?

Regarding the different convictions and behaviors, what does Paul suggest should be our ultimate goal when confronting issues not addressed by Scripture?

Read 1 Corinthians 8:1-9

What was Paul's solution to whether believers should eat the meat sacrificed to idols?

Read Galatians 5:13. For what purpose does Paul say we should use our freedom in Christ?

How does the diversity of the men Jesus chose to be his disciples serve as a model for the unity the modern church should enjoy?

What command or principal from this passage in the Bible is most helpful to you as you think about relating to others in church?

When dealing with differences between people, four things are necessary.

1. Recognizing the differences
2. Working to understand the differences
3. Learning to appreciate the differences
4. Wisely utilizing the differences

Which of these steps do you have the most difficulty with and why?

What are some behaviors in today's culture that are okay for Christians to participate in? What are some that should be avoided? Ask God this week to give you the wisdom to honor Him and love others in all that you do.

“Ministry Teamwork”

Read Romans 15:14-16:27

Thinking back over the lessons learned in Romans, what have you learned about God? About yourself?

Read the main text

What did Paul ask his brothers and sisters in Christ to pray about? What plans did Paul mention he had once he was released?

Underline the actions and adjectives Paul uses in 15:14-33 in reference to his labor to the Lord.

What did Paul ask his brothers and sisters in Christ to pray about? What plans did Paul mention he had once he was released?

Circle the names Paul mentions in chapter 16. What can we learn about the first century church from Paul's personal greetings?

What specific instruction does Paul give in grave warning against harmful teachings and practices?

Read Acts 28:11-16

How does this passage show mutual affection between Paul and his brothers and sisters in Christ at Rome?

Read 2 Timothy 1:16-18. What is Onesiphorus remembered for?

Read 2 Corinthians 1:16-18. What principle or instruction for giving does Paul share with the church at Corinth?

Modern day Christians say “Why should I get involved in Ministry? Isn’t that what we pay church staff for?” How do you think believers in Romans 16 respond to this attitude?

If you had been at the church in Rome when Paul’s letter was read for the first time, how would his words have affected you and your brothers and sisters? Why?

Now that you've completed this study in Romans, write a short doxology of your own, expressing thanks to God for all He has done in your life through Christ.

What did you appreciate most about this study? Name one thing you think could have been done better:
