

THE BOOK OF ROMANS

Introduction

Romans has repeatedly played important roles through the history of the church. Augustine, a theologian of the fourth century, was converted by reading Romans. Similarly, in the sixteenth century the book of Romans inspired Octtin Luther when he discovered in it the truth of justification by faith. Centuries later, John Wesley’s heart was “strangely warmed” when he heard Luther’s preface to this epistle read aloud.

Author

There is overwhelming agreement among scholars that the apostle Paul wrote this foundational New Testament book. The vocabulary, style, logic, and theological development are consistent with Paul’s other epistles. Paul dictated the letter to a secretary named Tertius (16:22), who was allowed to add his own greeting.

Date

That Paul himself had not yet visited Rome at the time Romans was written is apparent in 1:13. The epistle is to be dated during the third missionary journey when he engaged in the collection of a fund for the church in Jerusalem. When he wrote 2 Corinthians, traveling from Ephesus to Corinth, the collection was still incomplete (2 Cor. 8:1–9). At the time he wrote to the church at Rome, this collection seems to have been completed (15:26–28). Therefore, we assume Paul wrote the epistle to the Romans from Corinth where he stayed for three months in A.D. 57 at the end of his third missionary journey, before he traveled to Jerusalem (15:25; Acts 20:2, 3).

Themes and Literary Structure

The key phrase of this epistle is found in 1:17: “the righteousness of God.” This phrase encapsulates the very heart of the epistle. Romans is written, therefore, to show how sinful men and women can receive the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ. The theme of divine righteousness that runs through the book is reflected in the following outline: the revelation of the righteousness of God (chs. 1–8); the vindication of the righteousness of God (chs. 9–11); and the application of the righteousness of God (chs. 12–16).

Within the context of his overarching theme of the righteousness of God, Paul discusses the need of sinful humanity for God’s righteousness (1:18–3:20), the imputation of Christ’s righteousness to sinful human beings in justification (3:21–5:21), and the sanctification of the redeemed (6:1–8:39). In addition Paul discusses God’s righteousness as revealed in His faithfulness to His covenant promises to Israel (9:1–11:36), and the righteousness that Christians are to display before each other and before the world (12:1–16:27).

In his sweeping presentation of God’s plan of salvation, Paul moves from condemnation to glorification and from theological truth to practical behavior. Key words, such as righteousness, faith, law, all, and sin, each appear at least sixty times in this epistle.¹

¹Thomas Nelson, Inc. *Nelson’s complete book of Bible maps and charts: Old and New Testament [computer file]*, electronic ed., Logos Library System. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1996.

OUTLINE OF ROMANS

Part One: The Revelation of the Righteousness of God	1:1-2:21
A. Introduction	1:1-17
B. Condemnation: The Need For God's Righteousness	1:18-3:20
C. Justification: The Imputation of God's Righteousness	3:21-5:21
D. Sanctification: The Demonstration of God's Righteousness	6:1-23
Part Two: The Vindication of the Righteousness of God	9:1-11:36
A. Israel's Past: The Election of God	9:1-29
B. Israel's Present: The Rejection of God	9:30-10:21
C. Israel's Future: The Restoration by God	11:1-36
Part Three: The Application of the Righteousness of God	12:1-16:27
A. Righteousness of God Demonstrated in Christian Duties	12:1-13:14
B. Righteousness of God Demonstrated in Christian Liberties	14:1-15:13
C. Conclusion	15:14-16:27

Class Schedule

Class: Romans
Day & Time: Sundays from 9:30 am to 10:25 am
Beginning: October 2nd
Ending: March 26th

<u>Date</u>	<u>Week</u>	<u>Chapters</u>
Oct 2	1	Romans Introduction
Oct 9	2	Romans 1:1-17
Oct 16	3	Romans 1:18-32
Oct 23	4	Romans 2:1-29
Oct 30	5	Romans 3:1-20
Nov 6	6	Romans 3:21-31
Nov 13	7	Romans 4:1-12
Nov 20	8	Romans 4:13-25
Nov 27	9	Romans 5:1-11
Dec 4	10	Romans 5:11-21
Dec 11	11	Romans 6:1-14
Dec 18	12	Romans 6:15-23
Dec 25	13	Romans 7:1-12
Jan 1	14	Romans 7:13-25
Jan 8	15	Romans 8:1-17
Jan 15	16	Romans 8:18-39
Jan 22	17	Romans 9:1-29
Jan 29	18	Romans 9:30-10:21
Feb 5	19	Romans 11:1-18
Feb 12	20	Romans 11:19-36
Feb 19	21	Romans 12:1-21
Feb 26	22	Romans 13:1-14
Mar 5	23	Romans 14:1-23
Mar 12	24	Romans 15:1-13
Mar 19	25	Romans 15:14-33
Mar 26	26	Romans 16:1-27