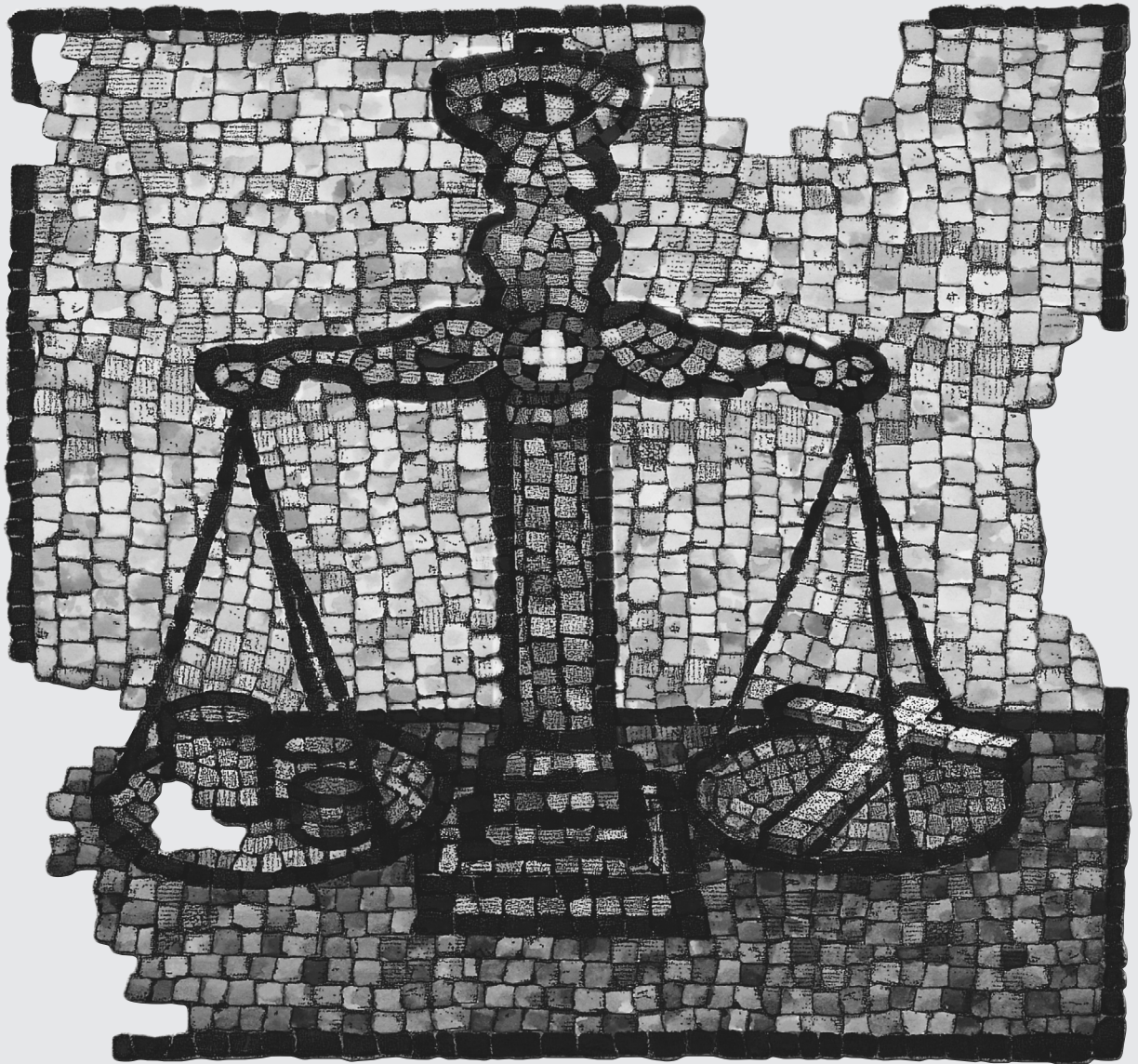


Study Guide



Paul, Apostle of the Lord

Distribute before session 1 for use in session 1.

Romans 1:1–17

Resources for Worship

Use these resources for your daily study and at the week's assembly.

Hymn

The Gospel shows the Father's grace,
Who sent His Son to save our race,
Proclaims how Jesus lived and died
That man might thus be justified.

It sets the Lamb before our eyes,
Who made atoning sacrifice,
And calls the souls with guilt opprest
To come and find eternal rest.

It is the pow'r of God to save
From sin and Satan and the grave;
It works the faith, which firmly clings
To all the treasures which it brings.

May we in faith its tidings learn
Nor thanklessly its blessings spurn;
May we in faith its truth confess
And praise the Lord our Righteousness.

Matthias Loy

Prayer

Thanks, Lord, I got the message—the Good News of Your suffering and death to erase my sins and make me a saint. Continue to send Your Spirit to guide my study. Amen.

Something to Think About

God creates out of nothing. Wonderful, you say. Yes, to be sure, but He does what is still more wonderful: He makes saints out of sinners.

Søren Kierkegaard

Digging Deep

My Personal Study for Week 1

Day 1 • Read Romans 1:1–7

1. Scan the entire Book of Romans. What portions are already familiar to you?

2. a. How does Paul identify himself (v. 1)?

b. his Lord (vv. 3–5)?

c. his readers in Rome (vv. 6–7)?

d. The Greek for servant may mean one who belongs to a master and has no freedom to leave or one who willingly chooses to serve his master. In what way does *servant* apply to Paul? You may wish to review how Jesus called Paul (a Greek name; among Hebrews the apostle was known as Saul) by reading Acts 9:1–6, 15–16. To see how Paul regarded himself as Christ's servant, read 1 Corinthians 3:4–9.

e. In what way does *servant* apply to you?

c. Explain why you would (or would not) like to belong to such a congregation.

3. The word *gospel* means “good news.” Key to understanding the word *gospel* (v. 2) are the words *promised* and *prophets*. How did Jesus explain the relationship between Old Testament prophecy and promises and His ministry in Luke 24:25–27, 44?

6. a. For what is Paul praying (vv. 8–10)?

4. How can Paul call us *saints* when we are obviously such *sinners* (v. 7; Romans 3:23–24; 1 Corinthians 1:2)?

b. Why is Paul anxious to see the people in Rome (vv. 11–13)?

.....

Day 2 • Read Romans 1:8–13

5. a. For what is Paul so thankful (v. 8)?

c. What opportunities do you have to be “mutually encouraged by each other’s faith” (v. 12)?

b. How does this compare with the church in 1 Thessalonians 1:2–10?

d. *For personal reflection. Sharing optional.* Think about a time when you experienced encouragement by someone else’s faith. In the quiet of your own heart, thank God for that now.

Guilty as Charged

Distribute after session 1 for use in session 2.

Romans 1:18–2:24

Resources for Worship

Use these resources for your daily study and at the week’s assembly.

Hymn

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
 Let me hide myself in Thee;
 Let the water and the blood,
 From Thy riven side which flowed,
 Be of sin the double cure:
 Cleanse me from its guilt and pow’r.

Not the labors of my hands
 Can fulfill Thy law’s demands;
 Could my zeal no respite know,
 Could my tears forever flow,
 All for sin could not atone;
 Thou must save, and Thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring;
 Simply to Thy cross I cling.
 Naked, come to Thee for dress;
 Helpless, look to Thee for grace;
 Foul, I to the fountain fly;
 Wash me, Savior, or I die.

While I draw this fleeting breath,
 When mine eyelids close in death,
 When I soar to worlds unknown,
 See Thee on Thy judgment throne,
 Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
 Let me hide myself in Thee.

Augustus M. Toplady

Prayer

Dear merciful Judge and Father of us all, I hear the courtroom gavel ring out in judgment of my guilt. Each stroke is a sin pounding home nails in the cross of death that should have been mine. Thank You for the hammer that pounded the nails in Jesus’ cross, shattering the chains of my sins. Free at last! Let my life praise You! Amen.

Something to Think About

The church is not a place for saints, but a hospital for sinners.

The day I did not sweep the house there came to it one I did not expect.

Digging Deep

My Personal Study for Week 2

Review question: Why did Paul expand the customary greeting—particularly in identifying himself—when writing to the Christians at Rome?

Day 1 • Read Romans 1:18–32

1. In the previous two verses Paul emphasized the theme of the entire book: God’s righteousness revealed in the Gospel. He now addresses the sinful nature of man, which makes God’s gift of righteousness necessary.

- a. List some of the sins mentioned in these verses.
- b. Which of these sins commonly make headlines today?

c. What sin is the common denominator of them all?

d. How does verse 32 summarize the situation?

4. a. What can we know about God from nature (v. 20)?

2. These verses speak of the Gentiles who knew God only through creation. How did they respond to the knowledge gained through nature (vv. 21–23, 25, 27)?

b. What is studying God from nature alone unable to tell us (John 3:16; John 14:6)?

3. a. How did God react (vv. 24, 26, 28)?

b. **Challenge question.** Explain the phrase “God gave them over.”

c. **Challenge question.** What was God’s purpose in dealing with them in such a way (1 Corinthians 5:5)?

.....

Day 2 • Read Romans 2:1–8

5. In Nathaniel Hawthorne’s novel *The Scarlet Letter*, Hester Prynne is sentenced to wear the letter A in scarlet on her clothing to mark her as an adulteress. Like members of Hester’s community we may be more willing to point out the sins of others than our own. Compare verses 1–4 and Matthew 7:1–5 with 1 Corinthians 5:9–13 and Galatians 6:1. Summarize what these texts say about when and how to judge and when and how not to judge.