

Reveal Study: Romans

Introduction

Author: Paul

Date of Writing: 55-60 AD

- ✓ Written after Nero become Emperor in 54 AD
- ✓ Written before the Neronian persecution which began in 64 AD

Place: Romans was written in Corinth

- ✓ At the end of the Third Missionary Journey

Recipients:

- ✓ The Church at Rome—the churches in Rome
- ✓ Greek speaking church
- ✓ Established prior to the letter therefore, Paul had no personal involvement with the church
- ✓ The Gospel had come to Rome sometime in the early 30's possibly by Hellenistic Jewish converts
 - This could have occurred as a result of those returning from Jerusalem and had experienced salvation at Pentecost
- ✓ By 64 AD Christians were said to be an “immense multitude” in Rome

The Uniqueness of Romans

- ✓ Paul had no personal involvement with the Roman church prior to the writing of this letter
- ✓ This may explain why some have noted this letter appears to be more impersonal
- ✓ There are no specific problems addressed
- ✓ This letter is a systematic theological introduction of who Paul was to a church that did not know him
- ✓ Chapter 16 explanation—only two letters have so many personal greetings—Romans and Colossians. Both of which Paul had never visited. He is seeking to establish relationships prior to the visit.

Paul's Personal Purpose:

- ✓ Paul was about to deliver the benevolence offering to the church in Jerusalem. This offering was a part of the second letter to the church in Corinth.
 - He wanted the Roman church to pray for his protection as he delivered the offering. What better way is there to connect with a church than to trust them enough to ask them to join you in prayer.
- ✓ Paul wanted to stop in Rome on his way to Spain
 - He hoped to use Rome as a base of operations for his missionary efforts to the west.

Chapters 9-11: The Jews and Jesus

- ✓ The issue of unity between Jew and Gentile was very prevalent in Rome
- ✓ The Jews had been expelled from Rome in 49 AD
- ✓ The Gentile church had developed apart from a Jewish influence
- ✓ The Jewish Christians slowly began to return to Rome and entered the church
- ✓ Many of the Jewish Christians still observed a variety of the restrictions outlined in the Old Testament Law.
- ✓ One of the themes in Romans is that the new Israel is not racial in nature.

Theological Notes on Romans:

- ✓ Themes:
 - The Righteousness of God
 - Justification by Faith
- ✓ Theme verses: 1:16-17
 - *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "But the righteous man shall live by faith."*
- ✓ Righteousness is defined as a right relationship with God.
- ✓ Man's knowledge of God
 - Man has a general knowledge of God through the creation and human consciousness.

- A preparatory knowledge and revelation of God was given in the Old Testament which was fulfilled in the New Testament through Jesus Christ.
- Spiritually man can rise to have fellowship with God through Jesus Christ.
- Our deepest need is to be reconciled to God
- Prior to salvation, we are enslaved to sin.
- Jesus is our Redeemer who ransomed us and freed us from our bondage to sin and the penalty of sin.

One Possible Outline of Romans:

- ✓ Introduction
 - 1:1-17
- ✓ The Doctrine of Justification
 - 1:18-5:11
- ✓ The Doctrine of Sanctification
 - 5:12-8:39
- ✓ Parenthetical Section: The Jews
 - Chapters 9-11
- ✓ Practical Section
 - 12:1-15:13
- ✓ Conclusion
 - 15:14-16:27

The Theological Pattern in Salvation

- ✓ Atonement by God
- ✓ Peace with God
- ✓ Dedication to God

Quote: Martin Luther

- ✓ "It can never be read or pondered too much, and the more it is dealt with the more precious it becomes, and the better it tastes."

Reveal Study: General Considerations

Consider how we usually study the Bible and the percentage of our study that is actually done for us by someone else. We have materials used in Growth Groups, pastors who prepare messages, and a multitude of devotional guides written to direct our time in the Word. We are encouraged by reading plans to read the Bible through each year which necessitates taking in multiple chapters each day. And then, there are those who casually read the Word alongside of an array of other literature.

I am not suggesting that any of these Bible study routines are not valid ways for us to grow in the Word or to hear the Lord's voice. But do they truly promote "Bible study?" Recently, I made the statement on a Sunday night that we were going to "tear a passage apart" in order to truly understand what the Lord was saying. Someone asked, "How do you do that and how can we learn to do that?" What an awesome question and an even better opportunity for us to begin this journey together.

Everything we know about the Word of God has been revealed to us by the Holy Spirit. (John 16:13) We never discover anything about the Bible—it is always revealed by the Holy Spirit. So, our Bible study should position us for consistent revelations from God regarding the truth of His Word. Opening the Word should bring about an experience with Jesus that reveals transforming knowledge. This knowledge is then accepted into our lives as understanding and manifests itself as the wisdom of God applied to each day.

I have to admit that in my early years, I seldom got anything like that from a Sunday School lesson or a sermon. Even though the teachers and the preachers were great, I had no idea how to allow the Lord to reveal His word to me one-on-one in such a way that I was receiving transforming knowledge. I had the feeling there had to be more to my relationship with the Word than I was experiencing—and there was!

I won't go into all the details, but one day a pastor took me aside and shared with me how he personally studied the Word. What I found was not a method of study but the doorway into incredible intimacy with Jesus. The Bible truly became, "a living word" and one of the greatest spiritual joys of my life. I stopped listening to sermons and began experiencing a message. Bible study was transformed into intimacy with the Holy Spirit who revealed the very mind of God. The Word became personal.

Once again, I am not suggesting that your Bible study method is insufficient or inadequate. The one thing we all need to realize is that no matter what we are currently doing, we can do it better and we can dig deeper into the Word. This is what our Reveal study is all about—our getting into the Word intimately with our Savior. So, here are some of the guidelines you might want to consider:

- Don't expect a myriad of notes connected to each day's passage. This is time between you and the Lord so that He is the one speaking to you.
- There will be some items given to stimulate our thoughts and give a suggested direction of consideration. But don't be surprised if the Lord doesn't take you down an unexpected path.
- The daily passages are short. We will take small bites. But just because the bites are small, the taste is still rich and filling.
- Pray before you attempt to dive into the Word. Ask the Holy Spirit to be your guide and to open your mind and heart to what will be revealed to you. Expect revelation with each passage.
- Be excited. This is not a Bible book study—it is an experience and encounter with Jesus.
- Take notes on what is revealed. Circle words—mark phrases—record questions
- Know that you are not alone. Each Sunday night we will come together to share what the Lord revealed. No, the pastor will not be lecturing but we all will be teaching and sharing insights gained from the Holy Spirit.
- Stick with it. Realize that what is shared with you is personally given to you by your Lord. He will strike nerves, convict sin, enlighten, encourage, and edify. Enjoy what He does in your life through the Word.
- Don't let this be a habit you feel pressured to perform. Let this become a joyful practice where you experience a growing intimacy with Christ.

For the next sixteen weeks, we will be exploring one of the most theologically packed books in the Bible. Imagine what the Lord is going to show you. And just think, there are 65 books after Romans!