

ROMANS

GOD'S PLAN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS



1

INTRODUCTION

- "Romans is all about the God who, as Paul says, unveils His power and grace through the good news about Jesus. And, as Paul insists again and again, this power and grace is available for everyone who believes." — N.T. Wright
- As we opened our study, we tried to examine the physical and social context of the letter because of the change the gospel would bring to this church and its surrounding areas.

2

PAUL AND THE GOSPEL (1:1-6)

- The author is Paul and he says he is set apart to preach the gospel as an apostle of Jesus Christ
- Six-point analysis of the gospel
 - The origin of the gospel is God
 - The evidence of the gospel is Scripture
 - The substance of the gospel is Jesus Christ
 - The scope of the gospel is all the nations
 - The purpose of the gospel is the obedience of faith
 - The goal of the gospel is the honor of Christ's name

3

PAUL AND THE ROMANS (1:7-13)

- Paul loves this church even though he did not plant this church. He speaks of them being loved by God, called to be saints, and recipients of God's grace and peace.
- Paul's feelings about them in four points:
 - He thanks God for them all
 - He prays for them
 - He longs to see them and he tells them why
 - He has often planned to visit them

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PAUL AND EVANGELISM (1:14-17)

- The gospel is a debt to the whole world, God's power for salvation, and reveals God's righteousness
- **3 Personal Statements:**
 - "I am bound..."
 - "I am... eager..."
 - "I am not ashamed..."
- Remember the power of the gospel, remember the goal of the gospel, and remember the call of the gospel.

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SIN: THE NEED FOR GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

ROMANS 1:18-3:20

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GENTILES (1:18-32)

- What is the wrath of God?
 - It is NOT neutrality towards sin or the equivalent of human anger.
- Against what is God's wrath revealed?
 - The simple answer: evil (or sin)
- How is God's wrath revealed?
 - Freewill choices made by people that brings on the wrath of God.
- Is God's wrath just?
 - The simple answer: YES

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CRITICAL MORALIZERS (2:1-16)

- God's judgment is inescapable
 - It will be for everyone, everywhere
- God's judgment is righteous
 - It will be correct in every situation
- God's judgment is impartial
 - God is no respecter of persons, nor is He partial to a certain person
- Conclusion: God's judgment and God's law
 - It belongs to Him and it is righteous in all ways

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SELF-CONFIDENT JEWS (2:17-3:8)

- The law
 - What happens when you do not practice what you preach
- Circumcision
 - The Jews held confidence in this Old Testament command and Paul is trying to bring them forward to the gospel
- Some Jewish objections
 - Is there an advantage to being a Jew? Did the faithlessness of some nullify God's faithfulness? If I do wrong and this shows God's grace more, then why should God be upset with me? If my falsehood makes God's truth shine brighter, why condemn me as a sinner?

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UNIVERSAL SIN (3:9-20)

- Paul already proved that both groups (Jews and Gentiles) are under sin
 - For the Jews? The heart/faith matters more than the name or genealogy
 - For the Gentiles? Having received hope, a heavy responsibility now waits
- The universality of sin is shown by the Scriptures
 - Sin is ungodly. Sin is pervasive, affecting every part of us. Sin is universal.
- The law condemned all and justified none
 - The law brings knowledge of sin, but does not fix it.

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JUSTIFICATION: THE PROVISION OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

ROMANS 3:21-4:25

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GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS REVEALED IN THE CROSS OF CHRIST (3:21-26)

- The righteousness of God is apart from the law for all who believe
 - The righteousness of God is a divine activity
- The source of justification: God and His grace
 - We attend church services and connect with fellow believers because we love and appreciate God
- The ground of justification: Christ and His cross
 - Redemption – Propitiation – Demonstration
- The means of our justification: faith
 - "...through faith" repeated multiple times in this section alone

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GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS DEFENDED AGAINST CRITICISM (3:27-31)

- Where, then, is boasting?
 - Justification is through faith which should put a stop to boasting
- Is God the God of Jews only? Is He not the God of Gentiles too?
 - All who believe and obey God are family and belong together at the table
- Do we, then, nullify the law by this faith?
 - The law shows you what is wrong, so it serves a purpose, but it cannot clean you up

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GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS ILLUSTRATED IN ABRAHAM (4:1-25)

- Abraham was not justified by works
- Abraham was not justified by circumcision
- Abraham was not justified by the law
- Abraham was justified by faith
- Conclusion: Abraham's faith and ours

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SANCTIFICATION: THE EFFECT OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

ROMANS 5:1-8:39

15

FREE FROM WRATH (5:1-21)

- The blessings of justification
 - We have peace with God – We are standing in grace – We rejoice in our hope of the glory of God – We rejoice in our sufferings – We shall be saved through Christ – We also rejoice in God
- The two humanities, in Adam and in Christ
 - Natural transition to move from a discussion about the life we are privy to through the justification found in obedient faith to a visual aid/example of how sin entered and how it was dealt with.

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FREE FROM SIN (6:1-23)

- United to Christ – Shall we sin that grace may increase?
 - Baptism unites us to Christ through His death, so we know that persistent sin cannot continue
- Enslaved to God – Shall we sin because we are not under law?
 - Whatever we yield ourselves to, we are slaves to (2 Peter 2:19)

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FREE FROM LAW (7:1-25)

- Release from the law: A marriage metaphor
 - Those who were married to the law became dead to it through the death of Christ
- A defense of the law: A past experience
 - Paul had a tremendous respect for the law and is teaching that sin in its evil deception is to blame
- The weakness of the law: An inner conflict
 - I know the law, I trust the law, I need the law, but I cannot succeed in keeping every part of it... so I desperately need the blood of Jesus on a daily basis

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FREE FROM DEATH (8:1-39)

- The ministry of God's Spirit
 - Salvation is ours if we are in Christ – How do we get into Christ? (Galatians 3:23-29)
- The glory of God's children
 - Paul speaks to the future glory of God's children and the suffering that comes with it
- The steadfastness of God's love
 - Unshakeable convictions, undeniable affirmations, and unanswerable questions

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JEW AND GENTILE: *THE SCOPE OF GOD'S* *RIGHTEOUSNESS*

ROMANS 9:1-11:36

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REJECTION OF ISRAEL NOT A BREACH OF FAITH (9:1-29)

- Israel's plight is a matter of grief to Paul
 - I speak the truth in Christ – I am not lying – My conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit
- God is not unjust
 - There is no moment where God has been unfair or unjust
- God foretold that He would reject all but a remnant and would call the Gentiles into relationship
 - There are countless places throughout the Old Testament where God outlines His children being those who obey and do His will

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REJECTION OF ISRAEL NOT ARBITRARY (9:30-10:21)

- Rejection because Israel refused to accept Christ
 - The Jews who pursued righteousness through the law/through works did not reach it, but the Gentiles who did not pursue it in that way found it by their pursuit of faith
- Rejection because Israel refused God's righteousness
 - Zeal and knowledge = Good and pleasing before God
- Rejection because Israel rejected the gospel message
 - Was it because they did not hear? Was it because they did not understand? Is it because they were stubborn? YES

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REJECTION OF ISRAEL NOT TOTAL (11:1-10)

- Personal evidence
 - Paul explains his experience and his appreciation for God's acceptance
- Theological evidence
 - Foreknowledge and rejection are mutually incompatible
- Biblical evidence
 - There have always been remnants when disobedience seemingly takes over
- Contemporary evidence
 - God is giving these who choose rebellion up to their own stubbornness and it has blinded them

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REJECTION OF ISRAEL NOT IRREVOCABLE (11:11-24)

- A chain of blessing
 - Salvation coming to the Gentiles will lead to Israel's restoration and will bring great riches to the world
- The allegory of the olive tree
 - Paul warns the Gentiles not to become arrogant and warns the Jews of their need to repent and draw near

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*REJECTION OF ISRAEL NOT
PERMANENT (11:25-36)*

- The mystery of Israel's salvation
 - The explanation is needed for those who are curious about the Jews
- God has a future for His people
 - God's election is irrevocable, and God is merciful, so those who obey God will be shown mercy and be one of His children
- Doxology
 - A wrap-up of the theological teaching section

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*SERVICE: THE FRUIT
OF GOD'S
RIGHTEOUSNESS*

ROMANS 12:1-15:13

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OUR RELATIONSHIP TO GOD (12:1-2)

- Brothers and sisters
 - Unity in mind and spirit
- Mercies of God
 - Our aim is to please God, not ourselves
- What does the appeal consist of?
 - Presenting our bodies to God and the transforming of our minds

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OUR RELATIONSHIP TO OURSELVES (12:3-8)

- Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought
 - See yourself properly – Understand the descriptions of spiritual gifts (Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4)
- What about prophesying?
 - That which is clarified beforehand – it must land in a spot that can be verified according to the faithful words of God

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OUR RELATIONSHIP TO ONE ANOTHER (12:9-16)

Love in the family of God:

- Sincerity
- Discernment
- Affection
- Honor
- Enthusiasm
- Patience
- Generosity
- Hospitality
- Good will
- Sympathy
- Harmony
- Humility

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OUR RELATIONSHIP TO OUR ENEMIES (12:17-21)

Not retaliation, but service:

- Do not curse
- Do not repay anyone evil for evil
- Do not take revenge
- Do not be overcome by evil

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OUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE STATE *(13:1-7)*

Conscientious citizenship:

- The authority of the state
 - The church and state should be partners
- The ministry of the state
 - The state serves a purpose in the plan of God

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OUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE LAW *(13:8-10)*

Neighbor-love as its fulfillment

- Love is an unpaid debt
 - No room to claim we have loved 'enough'
- Love is the fulfillment of the law
 - Love needs the law
- Love does no harm to its neighbor
 - This love should be the agape, unconditional love

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OUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE DAY *(13:11-14)*

Living in the 'already' and the 'not yet'

- Understanding the time
 - God's time is not our time, and we must live like it
- Understanding what is appropriate to the time
 - It is not enough to merely know that time is running out, we must live like we respect that knowledge

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OUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE *WEAK (14:1-15:13)*

Welcoming, and not despising, judging or offending them

- Identifying the weak and the strong
 - Important to know who you are dealing with when trying to help build up the Lord's church
- The positive principle
 - Accept him whose faith is weak without qualification and be respectful of their opinions on matters that are not eternal in nature
- The negative consequences
 - Do not despise or condemn or become selfish

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*CONCLUSION: THE
PROVIDENCE OF GOD
IN THE MINISTRY OF
PAUL*

ROMANS 15:14-16:27

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PAUL'S APOSTOLIC SERVICE (15:14-22)

- Paul's ministry was a priestly ministry
 - Paul is able to offer the Gentiles to whom he was sent as living sacrifices
- Paul's ministry was a powerful ministry
 - Every conversion was/is a power encounter
- Paul's ministry was a pioneer ministry
 - One who lays the way

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PAUL'S TRAVEL PLANS (15:23-33)

- Paul plans to visit Rome
 - Been hindered numerous times before, but now will visit
- Paul plans to visit Jerusalem
 - Already headed out, but wants the trip to go smoothly
- Paul plans to visit Spain
 - The next frontier for the pioneer missionary
- Paul requests prayer for his visits
 - Paul was praying for them and now asks for them to pray for him

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PAUL'S COMMENDATION AND GREETINGS (16:1-16)

- A commendation
 - Phoebe and her family are great examples for others to follow
- Greetings
 - The list of people consists of females, males, Jews, and Gentiles – Paul sees this as a great opportunity to encourage fellow members of the church

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PAUL'S WARNINGS, MESSAGES, AND DOXOLOGY (16:17-27)

- Paul's warnings
 - Vigilance – Separation – Discernment – Questions to ask – Assurance
- Paul's messages
 - Acknowledgement of workers and supporters
- Paul's doxology
 - Closing with the focus on God

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THE MAJOR THEMES OF PAUL'S LETTER

- The power of God to save and establish
- The gospel and the mystery, once hidden and now revealed (Christ crucified and risen)
- The Christ-centered witness of Old Testament Scripture
- The commission of God to make the good news universally known
- The summons to all the nations to respond with the obedience of faith and the saving wisdom of God, to whom all glory is due forever

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