

THE BOOK OF ROMANS
Part 1 of 36
Introduction: A Life-Changing Letter

How are we going to get the most out of this study?

1. Be sure and bring a Bible.
2. Each week I will be providing Teaching Notes. I encourage you to purchase a three ring binder as a way of collecting all your notes. If you do, by the time we get through this study you'll have a complete commentary on the book of Romans.

When you study a book, you always want to ask at least six questions:

1. Who wrote it?
2. To whom was it written?
3. When was it written?
4. Why was it written? (Sitz im leben)
5. What's the main message?
6. What is being asked of you?

1. WHO WROTE THE BOOK? _____

Romans 16:22 *I, Tertius, who wrote down this letter greet you in the Lord.*

Tertius was Paul's _____.

Where was it written? (Romans 16:23) *"Gaius whose hospitality I and the whole church here enjoy, send you his greetings."* That tells us where the letter was written from. Gaius was a Christian business man and he lived in Corinth.

2. WHO IS PAUL? He is a product of three different cultures.

1) RELIGIOUSLY: Paul was a _____.

Before he became a Christian he was a _____. But in Acts 9, he was on the road to Damascus, getting ready to go persecute the Christians, and God spoke to him in a blinding light. The Lord said, *"Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"* Saul, who's name was later changed to Paul, said, *"Lord, what do you want me to do?"* At that point Paul was converted.

2) Paul, by CULTURE, was _____. He was born and raised in Tarsus.

3) POLITICALLY, Paul was a _____.

3. TO WHOM WAS IT WRITTEN?

Romans 1:7 *To all who were in Rome, who are loved by God and called to be saints.*

What does it mean to be a saint?

Paul is writing to the Christians at Rome. He has this overwhelming desire to go to Rome.

- v. 11 *I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift so that you may be strong.*
- v. 13 *I don't want you to be unaware, brothers, that I tried three times to come to you but have been prevented from doing so until now in order that I might have a harvest among you just as I have had among the other Gentiles.*
- v. 15 *This is why I'm so eager to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome. He had a strategy. He wanted to go to Rome but he wasn't able to go and so he wrote this letter.*

4. WHEN DID HE WRITE IT? (_____ A.D.)

5. WHY DID PAUL WRITE THIS LETTER?

- 1) There was a _____ reason. ch. 1:11-13, 15. The purpose was to introduce himself to the Romans. He was announcing his visit. He says I want you to know that I'm coming. v. 11 *I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong. That is that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith... That's why I am so eager to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome.*
- 2) There was an _____ reason -- to review and clarify the meaning and basis of Christian living. He wants to clarify the meaning of salvation. 15:15 *I have written to you quite boldly on some points as if to remind you of them again because of the grace of God that God gave me.* Romans has been called the Christian's constitution. How many of you have read the constitution of the United States? We believe it, we defend it, we'd die for it. Paul is writing the constitution of the Christian life and he's reminding us of basic doctrinal truths to know and understand.
- 3) There was a _____ reason. This is a fund raising letter. Paul wrote to the Romans to enlist support to his trip to Spain. 15:22 *This is why I have often been hindered in coming to you. But now that there is no more place for me to work in these regions and since I've been longing for many years to see you, I plan to do so when I go to Spain. When I go to Spain I hope to visit you and have you assist me on my journey there after I've enjoyed your company for a while.*

Did Paul ever make it to Spain? Probably not. We do know that he was killed in Rome.

How did the letter get there? 16:1-2 we find out how the letter got from Paul to the Roman church. *I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church in Cenchrea and ask you to receive her in the Lord in the way worthy of the saints and to give her any help she may need from you, for she has been a great help to many people including me.*

Evidently Phoebe was a wealthy widow that had some kind of personal business in Rome. So as she was coming, she handed this letter to the Roman church.

6. WHAT'S THE MESSAGE?

The message is the gospel. The theme of Romans is 1:16-17 *I am not ashamed of the gospel for it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes, first for the Jew and then for the Gentile. For in the gospel, the righteousness from God is revealed, the righteousness that is by faith from first to last just as it is written 'The righteous will live by faith.'*

God gives righteousness to the person who believes in faith. The good news has the power to change lives. It's the power of the Gospel that I'm not ashamed of. The word power is the word from which we get our word dynamite.

KEY WORDS:

The key words in any book are often the key that unlocks the book. There are some words in 1:17 that will be repeated over and over.

- _____ - is used 34 times in the book of Romans. It is used 92 times in the New Testament. It means "a right relationship to God".
- _____ - is used 153 times.
- _____ - is used 72 times.
- _____ - is used 65 times.
- _____ - is used 48 times.
- _____ - is used 40 times.

OVERVIEW:

1. INTRODUCTION (1:1-17)
2. SIN. Romans 1:18-3:20. Paul starts with the bad news. Why do we need to be saved?
3. SALVATION. Romans 3:21-5:21. How are you saved? Paul talks about how do we become a believer, how do we become a child of God.
4. SANCTIFICATION. Romans 6:1-8:39. How do I live the Christians life? He talks about the new life of a believer and what happens after we are saved.
5. SOVEREIGNTY. Romans 9:1-11:36 talks about the sovereignty of God. Why God saves us.
6. SERVICE. Romans 12:1-15:13. This is the practical part of Romans. It deals with what we're saved to do, our conduct and our character and how we are to serve God.
7. CONCLUSION (Romans 15:13-16:27)

CONCLUSION: Three things Paul stated about himself.

1. *"I am a servant, I'm a slave of Christ, I belong to Him."* That's what we ought to be able to say as believers, that Christ is our master.
2. *"I'm sent out..."* called to go. All of us are sent to go. We go to the people we work with, live with, the people in our neighborhood.
3. *"I am an apostle."* You have a gift. God wants you to use that gift to bless others.

My friends, God has always used this book to renew and refresh and revitalize the church. My prayer is that God will use the book of Romans in our church just as God used it so long ago with those early Christians who were stuck in a rut, those who had the blahs, those who feel frustrated — that God will use this book in our lives to make us what God wants us to be.

Image from Travel Atelier: Saint Paul – Life and Missionary Journeys

