

Walking Through Romans to Christ

Romans chapter 1 “Sin and Salvation”

Righteousness by Faith Series

Introduction: Written from Corinth around A.D. 57, near the end of Paul’s third missionary journey, Paul is now planning to go to Jerusalem, but hopes to go into Spain, stopping in Rome along the way (Romans 15:22-26). Evidently, this epistle or letter was written during a three month stay Paul had in Greece (Corinth, specifically). Paul was staying at the house of one named Gaius (16:23; and 1 Corinthians 1:14). The collection of money for the saints in Jerusalem which Paul had been working on was now complete and needed to be delivered (16:25, 26).

Paul did not found (start) the church in Rome. It is likely though, that some of the Christians from other churches Paul had raised up in Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Greece settled in Rome and led other people to know and serve Jesus Christ! The City of Rome had been founded in 753 B.C. By the time of Paul, this city had become arguably the greatest city in the world with over one million inhabitants (one source says over 4 million).

The book of Romans is the book that fueled the Reformation. It is also the most systematic and detailed account of righteousness by faith in the entire New Testament! Romans is a very essential and yet little understood book for our time. It must be studied and lived more!! Martin Luther once said, *“This epistle is the chief part of the New Testament and the very purest gospel...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.”*

The book of Romans presents the foundational message of Seventh-day Adventists—*The Everlasting Gospel!* (See Revelation 14:6, 7) All the elements of the 1st Angel of Revelation 14 are presented in the book of Romans. They are especially touched on in the first three chapters of Romans; *The Everlasting Gospel, the Creator and His plan, a message to all peoples, give glory to Him (honor His plan).*

The **crux** or central point of Romans can be found in chapter **1:17**, *“The just shall live by faith.”* Verses like these have brought great hope to people throughout history, like Martin Luther, who was trying desperately to get right with God. He never felt accepted no matter how hard he tried—**You ever feel like that?** *It was only after Martin understood the message of Romans that he found true peace!*

1. Greetings in the Name of Christ (v.1-4, 5-7)

- a. *The message of Messiah was long promised in the prophecies of the Old Testament (for thousands of years). The message of Christ was a prophetic message—**Jesus was the fulfillment of all the hopes of the ages** (v.2). Christ was **“declared to be the Son of God with power”** (v.4). Through the prophetic message of God’s word and the **“power”** of God being revealed from Heaven upon Jesus Christ, this man was determined to be **more than a mere man**. He was the Christ, the Savior, God incarnate, the fulfillment of the hopes and desires of all ages! **Conqueror over death—Victorious over the grave!***
- b. (v.5-7) We, as followers of Christ, are to obey the Lord and be faithful to Him, for the glory of His name! We are **“called to be saints”** and to receive God’s grace and peace.

2. Paul’s desire to visit Rome (v.8-12, 13-15)

- a. Paul made prayers continually for the Roman Christians (v.9), and was thankful for their well spoken of faith! Certainly, we should have such a spirit to offer prayers to God for each other as well. Paul longed to come to them, but only if it was **“in the will of God”** (v.10). (v.12)—great encouragement can come from those of mutual, like-minded, and fervent faith gathering together! (v.11-15)—*It is evident from these verses that Paul had never visited the Roman Christians before, but he did greatly desire to meet them!!*

3. The Gospel of Christ—the “power of God unto salvation” (v.16,17)

- a. This is the central message of the true Christian. It is the **“gospel”**—the good news of God’s plan to save mankind from sin and death! Satan has tried to corrupt and pollute the true gospel of Jesus in many ways throughout the ages and much in our day as well! However, as we stick closer to what the Bible is actually

saying, and humbly seek God, and not the things of men, then we shall not be off from the truth—for it is a simple, righteous, and powerful truth.

- b. **“The just shall live by faith” (v.17).** *This is the central message of Romans, the Bible itself, and the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ!! We must START by Faith, and we must CONTINUE by faith! Faith leads us to the foot of the Cross of Jesus Christ, and it brings us back there every day! It leads us to be overcomers at last (1 John 5:4). God rewards the faithfulness and diligence of those who seek Him sincerely (Hebrews 11:6); we “must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”*
 - c. **(starting by faith) FAITH—YOU’RE NOT BORN WITH IT (must be born again)** (Oh, but I’ve been to Christian schools all my life...My Parents...) (That makes you no more of a Christian than does putting sticks in a flower garden make them flowers)
 - d. “But I’m an Adventist...or a faithful church goer...” Knowing doctrines is one thing. Knowing Jesus is another (John 5:39). You could search the Scriptures just like many Jews did, and argue points of faith even. But, if you missed a personal relationship of faithfulness with and to Jesus Christ, then you missed the whole point.
 - e. **(continuing by Faith)** Not every Corner of our Christian Experience is sure to be filled with RAINBOWS. (Sometimes you have to wrestle w/God, when you DON’T FEEL right with Him. Hang on by Faith to the PROMISES (Proverbs 2:1-5; Jeremiah 29:13). *If we wandered from Christ, even little by little, the Gospel provides a way for us when we’ve slipped. 1 John 1:9 and 1 John 2:1, 2 (we don’t have to run in fear when we slip up. Just Confess and forsake your sins to God. (Jesus does not abandon you)*
 - f. **This Gospel “saves us FROM sin,”** not only from the consequences of sin (Matthew 1:21). “...to everyone who believes” (16). This is the key. “As a man thinks in his heart, so is he” (Proverbs 23:7). *Your thoughts, and your faith in God will surely be a molding influence upon your life; and the power of God, when you trust IN HIM (not merely your own self) will transform you. God’s righteousness is revealed in this gospel (v.17).—there is NO NEED to be ashamed of it at all!!*
4. **God hates sin and loves righteousness (v.18,19)** *God will pour out His wrath upon sin and sinners (who continually cling to their sins). God especially hates it when people who hold the truth choose to misrepresent His character to others by living unrighteous lives. If we are living by faith, then a righteous life should be revealed in and through us (John 15:5; Galatians 2:20).*
5. **The Creator revealed His glorious character in the work of Creation, but men have forgotten (v.20-25).** *This was especially true before the curse of sin entered, but it is still true today, so that men are without excuse. But the sad thing is that people have worshiped the Creation (and Creatures) more than the Creator!! The minds of men were darkened by their own foolishness. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped the work of men’s hands! Therefore, God “gave them up” to their sinful ways, because they “gave up God” purposely and desired to forget about Him. Men received their choice. People’s experience goes no higher than their concept of God.*
6. **Vile passions and sins of every kind have polluted the human race since men forgot about the Creator (v.26-32)** *We should be “ashamed” of these sins, and not the gospel of Jesus Christ! (v.27). What a reproach to humanity and to God these things are! Men and women dishonor their bodies between each other. Homosexuality defaces the “image of God” from mankind, dishonors, and reproaches our Creator who designed our bodies as male and female (Genesis 1:27; 2:24; Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Jude 1:7). In sinfulness, people have lost all respect for life and each other. The world is filled with sinfulness of every kind, and only Jesus Christ and His eternal gospel can redeem us from this fallen condition.*

Today’s Appeal: *If you haven’t accepted this Jesus who saves, it’s very simple. He’s waiting. He stands at the door of your heart knocking, if you’ll only let Him in (Revelation 3:20). Will you invite Him into your life today? _____ (It’s that simple. Just trust His Promises. Not feelings, but FAITH. Feelings can follow faith, but they are not the same. Faith trusts God’s promises and takes Him at His word no matter what).*