



ROMANS

FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH

Timeline: Rome Intersects with Christianity

800 - 450 BC

- ❖ **753** - Mythical founding of Rome by Romulus and Remus.
- ❖ **753-509** - Rome ruled by seven kings.
- ❖ **509** - King Tarquin the Proud ousted and the Roman Republic founded.
- ❖ **494** - Plebian struggle with patricians results in greater voice in the governance of Rome.
- ❖ **460-438** - Lucius Quinctius Cincinnatus, farmer, general, and consul of Rome.

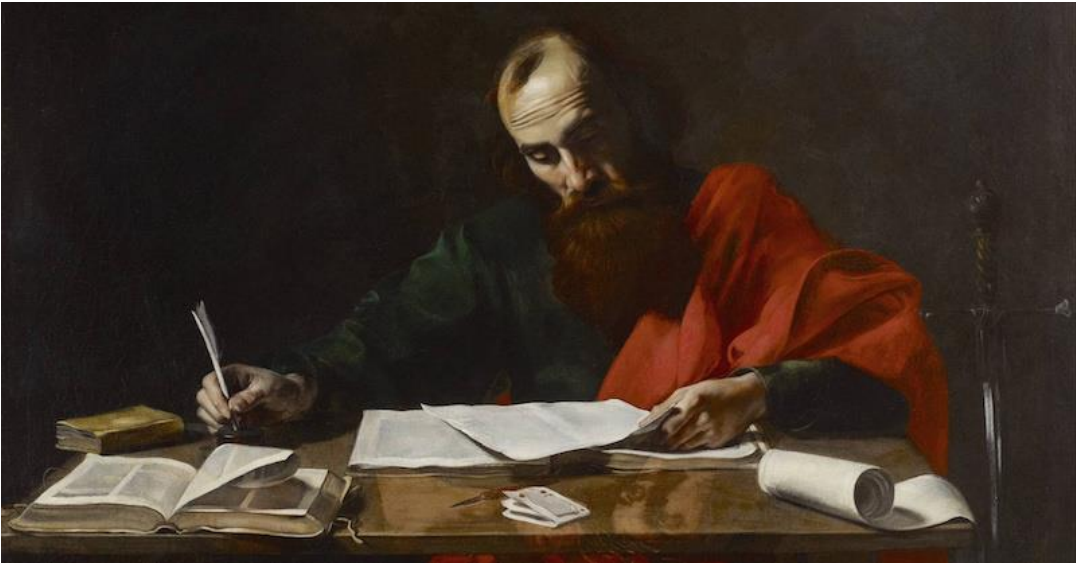
450 - 250 BC

- ❖ **451** - A Decemviri, committee of ten men, is commissioned to draw up Rome's first code of law, The Twelve Tables, binding on both patricians and plebeians.
- ❖ **312** - The Via Appia, first of an unparalleled system of roads in the ancient world, is begun by Appius Claudius Caecus running southwesterly out of Rome.
- ❖ **275-272** - Rome gains control of the entire Italian peninsula as a prelude to far greater expansion and a series of wars with other peoples.
- ❖ **264** - The first recorded gladiatorial games in Rome during the funeral of Junius Brutus. Three pairs of gladiators fought to the death.

100 BC – AD 33

- ❖ **100-44 BC** - Life of Julius Caesar.
- ❖ **27 BC-AD 14** - Life of Octavian (Augustus), Rome's first emperor.
- ❖ **5 BC** - Birth of Jesus.
- ❖ **AD 14-37** - The reign of Tiberius Caesar.
- ❖ **AD 27** - Jesus' crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension.
- ❖ **AD 33** - Conversion of Saul on the road to Damascus.
- ❖ **AD 57** - From Corinth, Paul writes a letter to the Christians in Rome.
- ❖ **AD 58-60** - Paul travels to Rome and is imprisoned there for 2 years.
- ❖ **AD 64** - Emperor Nero blames Christians for the great fire in Rome.

Author: Paul

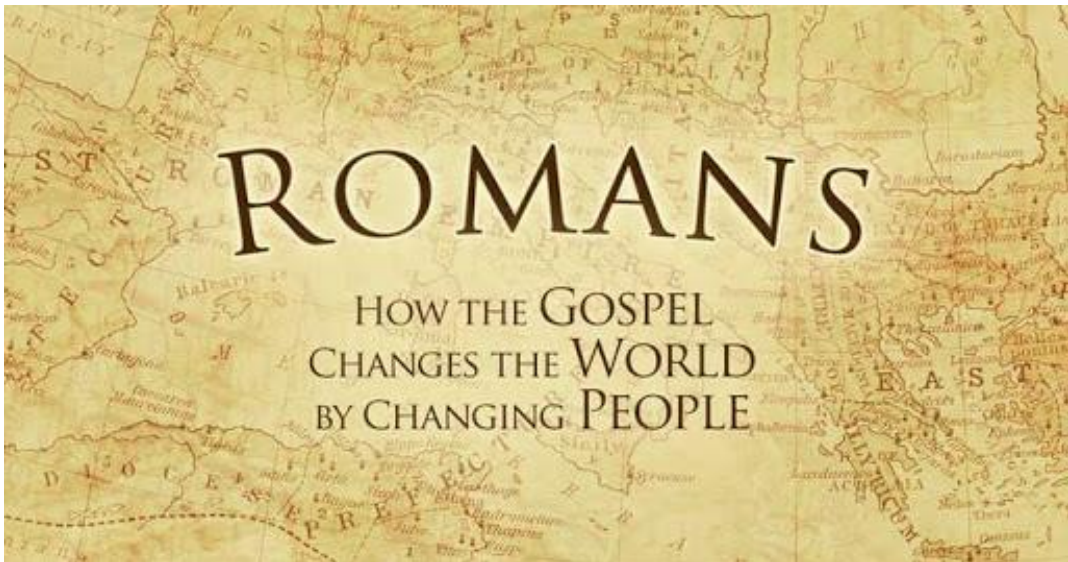


The author of this epistle is Paul, originally known as Saul of Tarsus. Trained at the feet of Gamaliel, an eminent teacher in Jerusalem, Saul was a Pharisee and an avowed enemy of Christianity (**Acts 8:1-3; 9:1-2,13-14,19-21**). In his zeal for traditional Judaism he persecuted Christians in Jerusalem and outlying regions. In the course of a raid on Christians in Damascus, Saul was confronted in blinding light by the risen Christ, who demanded of him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" (**Acts 9:4**). He was converted and baptized and then immediately began teaching and proving that Jesus is the Messiah, the Savior (**Acts 9:17-22**). In approximately 25 years of ministry, Paul would write nearly half of all the New Testament books of the Bible and bring the Gospel to countless people, suffering greatly to do so. (**2 Corinthians 11:22-33**)

Date & Place of Writing: Corinth

The book was probably written in the early spring of AD 57. Very likely Paul was on his third missionary journey, ready to return to Jerusalem with the offering from the mission churches for poverty-stricken believers in Jerusalem. In **Romans 15:26** it is suggested that Paul had already received contributions from the churches of Macedonia and Achaia, so he either was at Corinth or had already been there. Since he had not yet been at Corinth (on his third missionary journey) when he wrote to that church (cf. **1 Corinthians 16:1-4**), 1 Corinthians and the collection issue had still not been resolved when he wrote 2 Corinthians (**2 Corinthians 8-9**), the writing of Romans must follow that of 1 & 2 Corinthians, which are dated to c. AD 55).

The most likely place of writing is either Corinth or Cenchrea (about six miles away) because of references to Phoebe of Cenchrea (**Romans 16:1**) and to Gaius, Paul's host (**Romans 16:23**), who was probably a Corinthian (see **1 Corinthians 1:14**). Erastus (**Romans 16:23**) may also have been a Corinthian (see **2 Timothy 4:20**).



Audience: Romans

The Roman congregation consisted primarily of Gentiles, but also had some Jews. The origin of the Roman house churches is unknown. The founding of the Roman church likely goes back to the "visitors from Rome," "both Jews and converts" who came to Jerusalem at Pentecost (**Acts 2:10**). Many of these visitors converted to Christianity (**Acts 2:41**), some of whom very likely hailed from Rome. In **Acts 18:2** Luke mentioned Aquila and Priscilla, who left Rome because emperor Claudius had ordered all Jews to leave the city (AD 49). This exodus was caused by strife among Jews over "Chrestus" (Christ). The remaining Christians in Rome would be from a Gentile background. The Jewish-Gentile tensions in Rome had a long history. These tensions are somewhat reflected throughout the letter, most specifically in **Romans 2; 11; 14-15**. Incidentally, speaking of a Roman Christian community may be a more appropriate use of terminology than speaking of a Roman Christian church, for there does not seem to have been a central organized congregation there. Rather, the readership of Paul's letter seems to have consisted of a series of smaller groups meeting in private homes. Call them house churches, if you will. A number of such groups seem to be discernible in Paul's section of greetings (**Romans 16:5,10,11,14, & 15**).



Outline of Romans

- I. Introduction (**1:1–15**)
- II. Theme: Righteousness from God (**1:16–17**)
- III. The Unrighteousness of All Mankind (**1:18–3:20**)
- IV. Righteousness Imputed: Justification (**3:21–5:21**)
- V. Righteousness Imparted: Sanctification (**6–8**)
- VI. God's Righteousness Vindicated: The Mystery of Israel (**9–11**)
- VII. Righteousness Practiced (**12:1–15:13**)
- VIII. Conclusion (**15:14–33**)
- IX. Commendation and Greetings (**16**)



Romans 1:1-7

Throughout Paul's letter to the Roman Christians, there are a number of words that are worth defining. For our study, we will call them "**Key Theological Terms.**" Using the context of these first seven verses, write a definition for the following **Key Theological Terms.** Feel free to work on your own or talk with someone at your table.

APOSTLE:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

PROPHET:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

SCRIPTURES:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM



SPIRIT OF HOLINESS:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM



HUMILIATION:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM



EXALTATION:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM



GENTILES:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM



GRACE:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM



FAITH:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM



SAINT / HOLY:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM



PEACE:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

In **verse 4**, the title “Jesus Christ our Lord” is given. What significance do each of these words have?

- Jesus =
- Christ =
- Our =
- Lord =

GOSPEL:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

Define the **Gospel** using these first 7 verses. How are each of the concepts stated here vital in understanding what the Gospel is?



Based on these first seven verses from Romans, write a tweet of what the Gospel is that you could share with someone who has never heard the Gospel before. (Tweets are limited to 280 characters – and, yes, spaces count). **Bonus:** If you do use social media, post your tweet this week use #LOTVRomans, screenshot it, & email it to Pastor Klein.

Romans 1:8-17

Paul says that the faith of the Roman Christians is “being reported all over the world” (**verse 8**). How would this have been done in the first century AD? Write down a modern example of someone’s Christian faith being reported all over the world. How might your faith be reported around the world?

Paul says that he constantly remembers the Roman Christians in his prayers. How might we do the same – remembering Christians we have never met in our prayers?

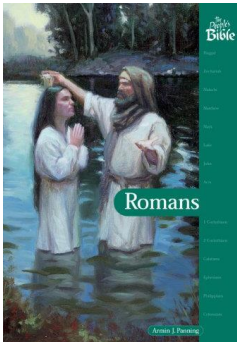
Paul says he longs to impart to the Roman Christians “some spiritual gift to make you strong” and then goes on to explain that this gift is to be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith. What are some ways that you find your faith mutually encouraged and made stronger by other Christians? How might you personally prompt such mutual encouragement?

According to **verses 14 & 15**, who is Paul’s target audience and why does this make him eager to come and preach the Gospel? How might we apply this to ourselves?



Compare your previous definition of this **Key Theological Term**. How has it changed?

PEOPLE'S BIBLE COMMENTARY: First for the Jew, then for the Gentile?



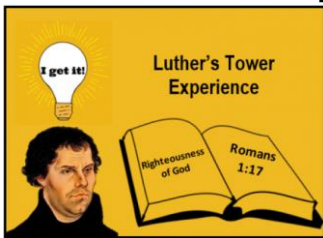
Historically and chronologically, one could make a case for the priority of the Jewish nation in God's plan of salvation. God chose Abraham from all the families of the earth and made of him a special nation from whom the Savior was born. Jesus' earthly ministry was largely limited to his Jewish compatriots, as he explained to the Canaanite woman (**Matthew 15:24**). To the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, Jesus said, "Salvation is from the Jews" (**John 4:22**). One could therefore say that God's plan of salvation was "first for the Jew." But salvation was never intended only for the Jewish nation. Inclusion of Gentiles was always in God's plan (**Isaiah 60:1-9; Acts 15:13-18**). Wholesale conversion of

Gentiles, however, did not happen until the arrival of the New Testament Christian church and the apostles' carrying out Christ's commission to preach the gospel to all nations (**Mark 16:15**). The gospel was "first for the Jew," but then also "for the Gentile." The same gospel works for all.

Repurposing an Old Testament Quote

Read **Habakkuk 1:1-2:4**. Habakkuk is a contemporary of Jeremiah and prophesies around 600 BC. In what sense did the "righteous live by faith" in Habakkuk's day? How does it compare or contrast with Paul's usage?

Martin Luther's Tower Experience



Martin Luther, the man credited with sparking the Reformation with his 95 Theses and fueling it with over 130 volumes of theological writings from sermons to confessional documents and from commentaries to catechisms, once quipped in a sermon, "I did nothing; the Word did everything."

There was a time, however, when Luther wrestled mightily with the Word, when the Word was opaque and closed to him, a time when He even despised and resented the God who had spoken that Word. That was until the Spirit opened that Word to him to reveal its truth and sweetness. The following paragraphs are excerpts from Luther's personal account of his struggle, a struggle that centered in one particularly significant passage: **Romans 1:17**. It reads: "For in [the gospel] the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, 'The righteous shall live by faith.'" Let's listen to Luther:

"I had indeed been captivated with an extraordinary ardor for understanding Paul in the Epistle to the Romans. But up till then... a single word in Chapter 1[:17], "In it the righteousness of God is revealed," ... stood in my way. For I hated that word "righteousness of God," which, according to the use and custom of all the teachers, I had been taught to understand philosophically regarding the formal or active righteousness, as they called it, with which God is righteous and punishes the unrighteous sinner.

"Though I lived as a monk without reproach, I felt that I was a sinner before God with an extremely disturbed conscience. I could not believe that he was placated by my satisfaction [penance]. I did not love, yes, I hated the righteous God who punishes sinners, and secretly, if not blasphemously, certainly murmuring greatly, I was angry with God, and said, "As if, indeed, it is not enough, that miserable sinners, eternally lost through original sin, are crushed by every kind of calamity by the law of the decalogue (Ten Commandments), without having God add pain to pain by the gospel and also by the gospel threatening us with his righteousness and wrath!" Thus I raged with a fierce and troubled conscience. Nevertheless, I beat importunately upon Paul at that place, most ardently desiring to know what St. Paul wanted.

"At last, by the mercy of God, meditating day and night, I gave heed to the context of the words, namely, "In it the righteousness of God is revealed, as it is written, 'He who through faith is righteous shall live.'" There I began to understand that the righteousness of God is that by which the righteous lives by a gift of God, namely by faith. And this is the meaning: the righteousness of God is revealed by the gospel, namely, the passive righteousness with which merciful God justifies us by faith, as it is written, "He who through faith is righteous shall live." Here I felt that I was altogether born again and had entered paradise itself through open gates. There a totally other face of the entire Scripture showed itself to me. Thereupon I ran through the Scriptures from memory. I also found in other terms an analogy, as, the work of God, that is, what God does in us, the power of God, with which he makes us strong, the wisdom of God, with which he makes us wise, the strength of God, the salvation of God, the glory of God.

"And I extolled my sweetest word with a love as great as the hatred with which I had before hated the word "righteousness of God." Thus that place in Paul was for me truly the gate to paradise..." (LW 34, 336-337).

Please share a similar "tower experience." It may be yours or one that you have heard.

Romans 1:18-32

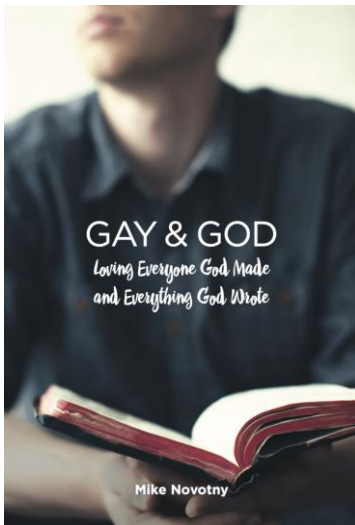
How is what may be known about God made plain to all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness?

Simply through observing nature, what do people have? What are they left with?

How was God's wrath revealed against all godlessness and wickedness?

How do we see the same things in our modern day that the Christians had to fight against in Rome? What evil have you seen invented?

A Christian Response to Homosexuality



Paul brings up homosexuality as one way that God's wrath is being revealed in our world. There is much more that can be said on this topic. WELS Pastor Mike Novotny wrote a short book wrestling with how to respond and graciously minister to homosexuals. Here is the description: Jesus wanted his people to be known for their love. But sadly, love is often the last thing homosexuals find in the church. This popular resource from Time of Grace called *Gay & God* shows you the deep meaning and true significance of Jesus' words, "Love your neighbor as yourself." It also teaches you what the Bible actually says on the topic of homosexuality—and empowers you to show practically the love of Christ in a culture where being gay is the new normal. Use this link to receive a free e-book version from the WELS Time of Grace Ministry: timeofgrace.org/download-gay-and-god/

Romans 2:1-16

Use this section to define the following **Key Theological Terms**.

JUDGMENT:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

REPENTANCE:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

LAW:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

SIN:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

At the beginning of this section, it sounds like Paul is reinforcing **Matthew 7:1**'s "Judge not lest ye be judged." Read **Matthew 7:1-5**. How does the context of what Jesus said about judging relate to what Paul is saying in this chapter of Romans?

How does someone show contempt for the riches of God’s kindness, his tolerance, and his patience? (**verse 4**)

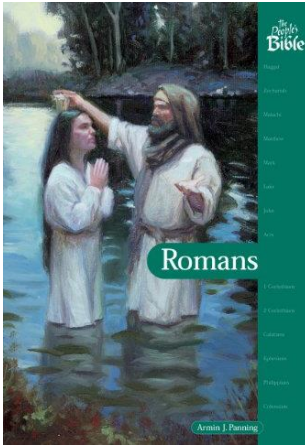
How does Paul show that God does not show favoritism in this section?

Even though some people don’t have God’s written Word (his law), what do they have? (**verses 14-15**)

What is the “gospel” of **verse 16**?



PEOPLE'S BIBLE COMMENTARY: First for the Jew, then for the Gentile with the Law?



The Jewish nation obviously had significant advantages, leading Paul, when he earlier spoke of the power of the gospel for salvation, to say, “first for the Jew, then for the Gentile” (**Romans 1:16**). That same pattern, first for the Jew and then for the Gentile, however, also holds true in God’s final verdict. The Jews had great advantages, but greater advantages means greater obligations. Of his unbelieving compatriots, Jesus said, “If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin. Now, however, they have no excuse for their sin” (**John 15:22**). Jesus states the principle clearly when he declares, “From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked” (**Luke 12:48**).

Romans 2:17-29

What do the Jews perceive is their superiority when compared to the other two groups that Paul has written about?



As the Jews claim their “superior” place as God’s chosen people, how should they be examining themselves?

Read **Genesis 17:1-16**. What was the original point of circumcision? How were many people using circumcision in Paul's day?



How is it "worse" when the Jews break God's laws? How about for us Christians?



Romans 3:1-8

With his arguments in chapter 2, Paul has pressed the Jewish legalist into a corner. He anticipates that the Jewish person will come back at him with various arguments. Analyze these eight verses and find the Jewish arguments and Paul's responses.

Argument #1 (verses 1-2)

Paul's response to Argument #1

Argument #2 (verses 3-4)

Paul's response to Argument #2

Argument #3 (verses 5-6)

Paul's response to Argument #3

Argument #4 (verses 7-8. This is a continuation of the third argument.)

Paul's response to Argument #4

What are the advantages of being a Jew if you are still judged as a lawbreaker?

If having the Word of the Lord is such a great blessing, why are so many still going to be judged and condemned as lawbreakers?

What is the meaning of **verse 8**, that people are slanderously reporting and claiming that Paul and the other ministers of the gospel say, "Let us do evil that good may result"? How might we hear that same slanderous report today?

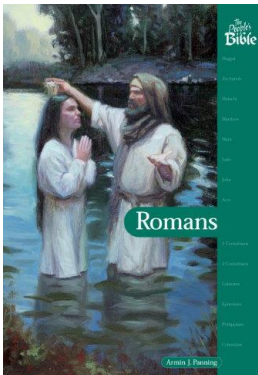
Romans 3:9-20

Use the footnotes in your Bible and list each Bible reference that Paul quotes from in these verses. Why do you think Paul would use so many quotations from the Old Testament like this?

What is the point of the law?

Romans 3:21-31

PEOPLE'S BIBLE COMMENTARY: Which Law?



A word Paul uses very frequently in Romans is the Greek word *nomos*. Basically it translates as “law,” but it allows for considerable variation in how it is used and what it means... The term “*a law*,” without a definite article, can refer to any system or pattern of laws. With the definite article, “*the law*” very often refers to the Mosaic Law given to God’s chosen people on Mount Sinai. “*The law*” may, however, also refer to the five books of Moses—the Pentateuch, Genesis to Deuteronomy. And “*the Law*” is also used to refer to other books of the Old Testament as well. This latter use is less common than the others, but there are some clear examples of it (e.g. **John 10:34; 15:25; 1 Corinthians 14:21**).

Let's tackle some more **Key Theological Terms**. Some of these terms have already come up. Use this section to define or refine the following **Key Theological Terms**.

RIGHTEOUSNESS:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

FAITH:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

JUSTIFY:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

GRACE:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

REDEMPTION:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

ATONEMENT:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

GLORY:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

OBJECTIVE JUSTIFICATION:

The fact that everyone's sins are paid for by what God has done.

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

SUBJECTIVE JUSTIFICATION:

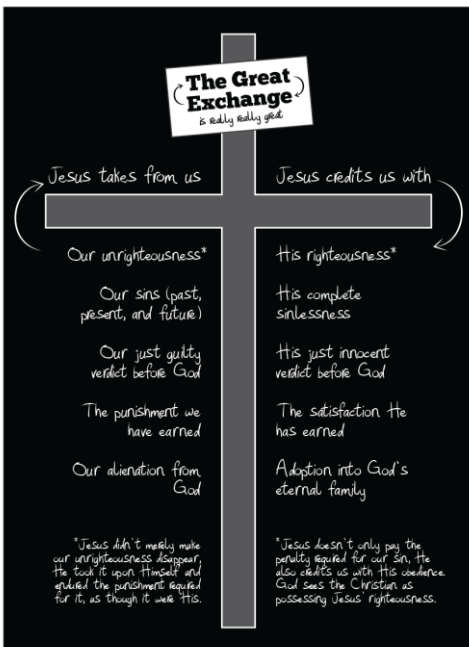
When God has created faith in an individual's heart to believe that he has paid for their sins.

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

As Paul has proved from the Bible in the previous section, everyone is guilty of sin before God. How is anyone spared of this guilt?

The Gospel, as outlined here, is impartial, meaning that the righteousness God offers he offers to everyone free without any difference. As theologians, we call this “objective justification.” (See definition on **page 21**.)

- How is this a comfort?
- How might someone perceive that teaching negatively?
- How would Paul answer the person who perceives the impartial Gospel as a negative?
- List other passages that teach that the Gospel is impartial and for everyone.



How can you use this section to show that people before Jesus died on the cross were also forgiven because of Jesus' sacrifice of atonement?

Sometimes the teaching through this section is called “The Great Exchange.” How does “The Great Exchange” demonstrate God’s justice?

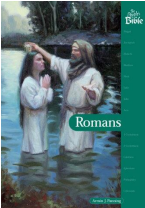
How do we know that Paul is **not** teaching “universalism” in this section – the idea that all people will go to heaven regardless of what they believe or how they live?

This is why we celebrate. This is why we love.

This is why we live.

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As this section wraps up, knowing that people obtain God’s righteousness apart from any work of the law, how is the law not nullified? How is the law still upheld?



PEOPLE’S BIBLE COMMENTARY: Alone!

Romans 8:28, incidentally, is the verse where Luther in his German Bible inserted the word *alone*. While that word is not in the Greek text, the context overwhelmingly supports the sense that justification is by faith *alone*, apart from law-works of any kind.

Romans 4:1-25

Define the following **Key Theological Terms** to help understand this section.

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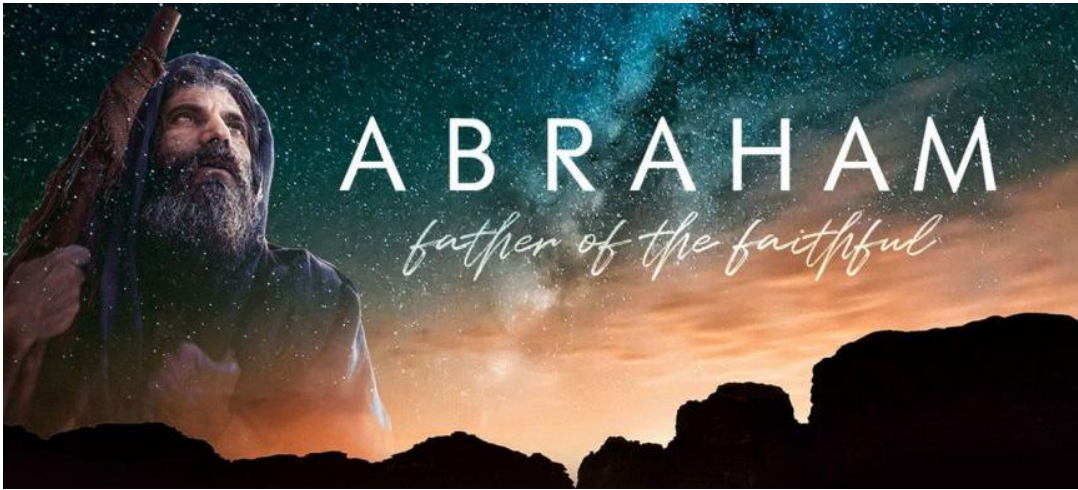
KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

TRANSGRESSION:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

FAITH:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM



Paul uses the life of Abraham as a case study to prove that a person is justified by faith and not by works. What was relayed from this case study that makes this point?

How is it that “where there is no law there is no transgression”? (**verse 15**) What is Paul’s point in writing this? How should we use this phrase?

How is Abraham the father of all believers?

Our faith stands on the foundation of these four pillars: promise, faith, grace, guaranteed. Explain why they must *all* be present or *none* will be present.

Romans 5:1-5

Define more **Key Theological Terms**.



Not only do we have peace with God through our God-given faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, but what also do we have?

What does it mean to rejoice in the hope of the glory of God?

How do sufferings produce perseverance? (c.f. **James 1:2-4; 2 Peter 1:5-7**)

How does perseverance produce character?

How does character produce hope?

What does it look like to rejoice in our sufferings?



Discuss at your Table: When have you experienced suffering that has been a blessing in your spiritual life?

Take it Home: Who do you know who needs to be told that their suffering is not without purpose?

Romans 5:6-11

Define the following **Key Theological Term**.

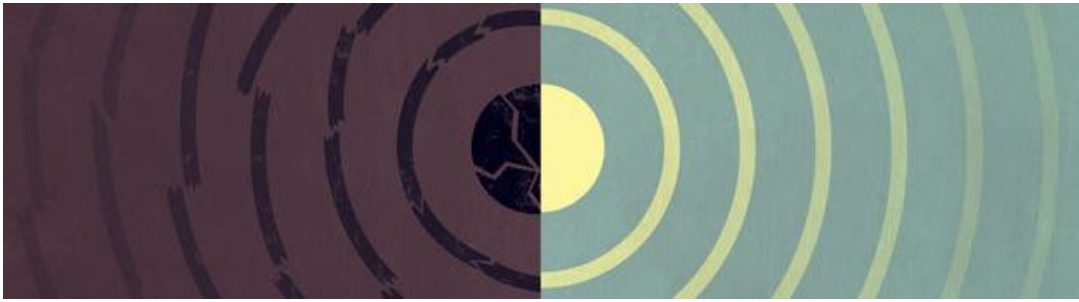
RECONCILIATION:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

What do these verses add to our understanding of the Gospel?

GOSPEL:

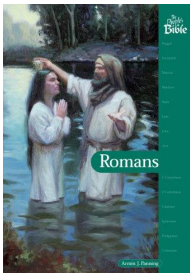
KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM



Romans 5:12-21

Who are the two Adams? What is the correlation between the two?

PEOPLE'S BIBLE COMMENTARY: All Sinned Like Adam?



At this point [**Romans 5:13-14**], Paul is sidetracked by an objection he anticipates. Someone is going to say, Did everybody really sin like Adam? What about those people who lived “from the time of Adam to the time of Moses”? At that time there was not yet a Mosaic Law given from Mount Sinai. Wasn’t there a difference between Adam, who had a specific command from God, and those who came after? Could one say of them that “all sinned”? Paul answers in the affirmative: “Before the law was given, sin was in the world.”

He then follows with, “But sin is not taken into account when there is no law.” To be sure, the record-keeping is different when there are no specific laws to measure people’s disobedience. Recall Paul’s similar evaluation at **4:15**: “Where there is no law there is no transgression.” But quite apart from the individual infractions of specific rules, there was something else at work after the fall. That something is what has come to be called inherited sin, or original sin. With his sin Adam gave sinfulness to all people, so that all people are born in a sinful condition. King David finds it necessary to confess, “Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me” (**Psalms 51:5**).

True, before the Mosaic Law was given, the record of individual sins may have looked different, but even so, all people were sinners. We can be sure of that, Paul argues, because all died—the penalty for sin. “Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come.” [**Romans 5:14**]

Romans 6:1-14

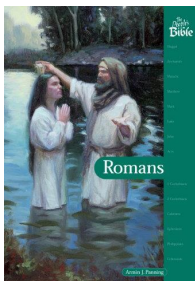
Define the following **Key Theological Term**.



According to these verses, what effect does baptism have in our lives?

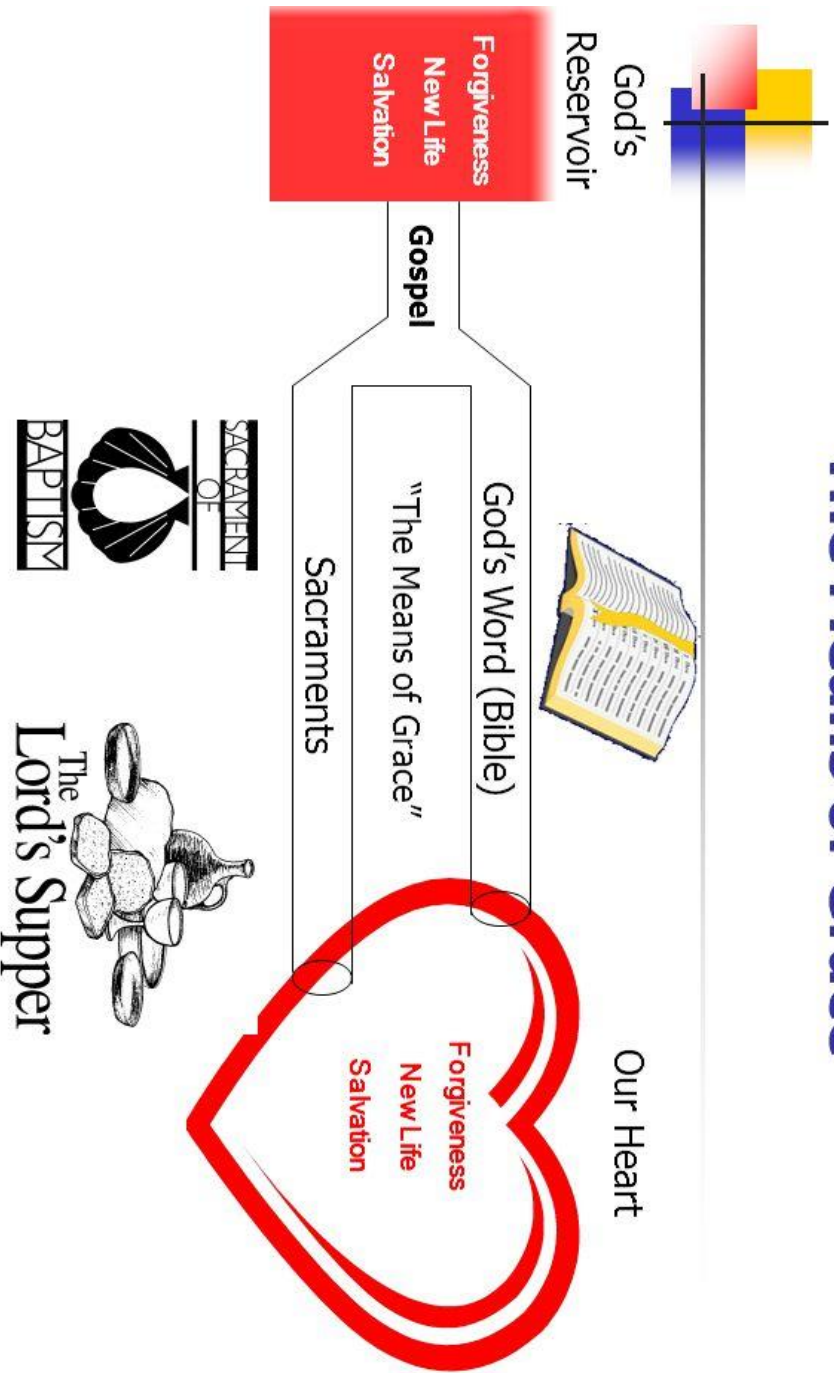


PEOPLE'S BIBLE COMMENTARY: **Baptism is a Means to Convey God's Grace**



Note the major assumption on Paul's part that Baptism is a means of grace. Baptism is effective in doing something. It accomplishes something. What Baptism does is put the baptized person in touch with Christ, or, to be more specific, it makes the baptized person a partner in Christ's death and burial. "We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death." This close connection with Christ through Baptism is a theme that will be repeated throughout this section. In fact, the prepositional phrase "with him" occurs five times in verses 4 to 8. A second major assumption on Paul's part is that being connected "with him [Christ]" makes a difference. Through Baptism we were buried *with him* into death "in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life." Recall that Christ's death and resurrection were the basis of the righteousness that the Father credited to us to make us children of God, fit for his kingdom.

The Means of Grace





Romans 6:15-23

Using this section, define the following **Key Theological Terms**.

SLAVE TO SIN:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

SLAVE TO RIGHTEOUSNESS:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

How does all of chapter 6 prove that those who are forgiven by God's grace do not purposefully continue to sin?

How are believers slaves to righteousness? Why do we want to be slaves to righteousness?

Romans 7:1-6

Define the following **Key Theological Term**.



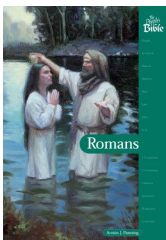
In **verse 1**, what kind of “law” is Paul talking about?

What do **verses 1-3** teach us about how long marriage lasts?

To whom (or what) had we been “married” before we came to faith in Christ? What was the result of that marriage?

What freed us from that marriage? Who is our new spouse? How does this new marriage shape how we want to live?

PEOPLE’S BIBLE COMMENTARY: Death Releases from the Law



As indicated by Paul’s illustration, the only release from the law is the one provided by death. But the marvel of God’s plan of salvation is that it provided a way that did not require the sinner to die. Rather, God provided a substitute, his sacrificial Lamb, to die in the sinner’s place. This substitute’s death was credited to the sinner. Sinners themselves do not actually die, as they rightly deserve for their sins, but instead die “through the body of Christ” on Calvary.

Sinners & Saints

Romans 7:7-25

Define the following **Key Theological Terms**.

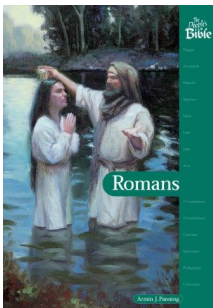
SINFUL NATURE / OLD ADAM:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

SPIRITUAL NATURE / NEW SELF:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

PEOPLE'S BIBLE COMMENTARY: **Apart from Law, Sin is Dead**

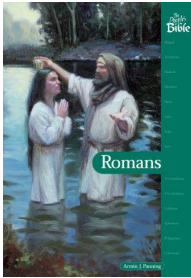


Paul says, "Apart from law, sin is dead." Twice previously Paul has expressed a similar thought (**4:15; 5:13**). His point is not that sin is totally lacking or nonexistent when the law isn't spelled out. Rather, the activity of sin is different when there is no specific commandment to transgress. We might paraphrase the verse as follows: Apart from law, sin is *dormant*. Sin is there, but it needs a line in the sand to step over in order to show itself as sin. The law draws that line in the sand, and sin incites the sinner into stepping over it. In a manner of speaking, the law, or commandment, provides the "opportunity." It did that in Paul's life, and he has to admit,

"Sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire."

Why is the law holy, righteous, and good, and not a bad thing? How is it spiritual?

PEOPLE'S BIBLE COMMENTARY: I Do Not Understand What I Do



The translation “I do not understand what I do” is perhaps a bit misleading. Paul understood full well what he was doing—or rather *not* doing. The problem in translating this verse lies in the fact that we’re again dealing with a verb that allows a number of meanings, depending on its context. Literally, the apostle wrote, “I do not know what I do.” The verb for “know,” however, is not restricted simply to having knowledge about something. Very often the word contains the idea of knowing by personal experience, of knowing intimately, of knowing with affection and approval. Hence we might translate here, “I do not *approve of* what I’m doing, because what I want to do, I don’t do, but what I don’t want, that I keep right on doing.”

Paul looks into his heart and sees a terrible struggle going on. Even as a Christian, he sees his sinful nature using God’s good commandments for its own evil purposes. Examine this struggle by putting an “O” or “N” in each blank to designate whether Paul is referring to his old sinful nature / Old Adam (O) or his new self / spiritual nature (N) created in him by the God through the gospel.

We know that the law is spiritual; but I (___) am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. I (___) do not understand what I (___) do. For what I (___) want to do I (___) do not do, but what I (___) hate I (___) do. And if I (___) do what I (___) do not want to do, I (___) agree that the law is good. As it is, it is no longer I myself (___) who do it, but it is sin living in me. I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I (___) have the desire to do what is good, but I (___) cannot carry it out. For what I (___) do is not the good I (___) want to do; no, the evil I (___) do not want to do—this I (___) [or the Christian view as a whole] keep on doing. Now if I (___) [or the Christian viewed as a whole] do what I (___) do not want to do, it is no longer I (___) who do[es] it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

Determine from context what each use of the word “law” means in **verses 21-23**.

Throughout this section, is Paul talking about his life before becoming a Christian or life as a Christian? How do you know? (**Hint:** pay attention to when Paul uses the first-person pronouns “I, me, my” and when he doesn’t. Also, c.f. **Galatians 5:16-25**)

Even though every believer wrestles with both a sinful nature and a new self (between being a slave to sin and a slave to righteousness), what is the final word on this struggle? (See also **Romans 8:1-2**.)



Discuss at your Table: When might you bring up or when have you brought up the understanding of our two natures with someone?

Take it Home: Who do you know needs to hear about every Christian’s struggle between the sinful nature and the new self? When will you share this with them?



Romans 8:1-4

Why is there now no condemnation?

Romans 8:5-8

What do these verses tell us about the sinful nature?

What do these verses tell us about those who live in accordance with the Spirit?

Romans 8:9-17

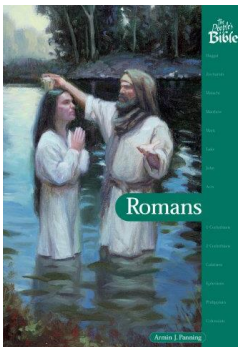
How might you redefine the following **Key Theological Term**?



For this section, do prefer to use "spirit" or "Spirit"? Explain your reasoning.

How do you know that you are controlled by the Spirit?

PEOPLE'S BIBLE COMMENTARY: Abba



Now they have the heart and mind not of a slave, but of a son. Paul tells them, "You received the [s]pirit of sonship. And by [it] we cry 'Abba, Father.'" Abba is simply the Aramaic word for "father." It is the type of address a child would use to go up to a parent and ask for something. Children don't stop and wonder whether this would be a convenient time to interrupt what their parents are doing. No, they confidently ask for whatever they need whenever they want it. That is the kind of confidence the Holy Spirit instills in believers, so that they approach God "as boldly and confidently as dear children ask their dear father," to use Luther's comparison.

Romans 8:18-39

Using this section, define the following **Key Theological Terms**.

FIRSTFRUITS OF THE SPIRIT:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

HOPE:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

PREDESTINATION / ELECTION:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

What are our present sufferings? What do we groan for? Why are these not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us?

The Holy Spirit also groans. Why does he groan? How does that help you in your prayer life?

What amazing promise does God give us to help get us through our suffering? What is one reason in context that Paul gives as to why we can be certain of this promise?



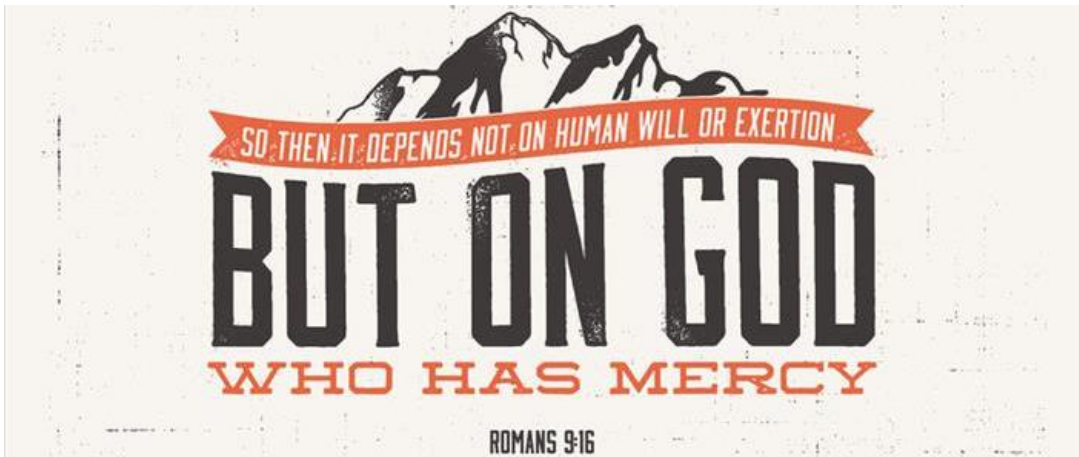
Discuss at your Table: When do you find yourself quoting **Romans 8:28** to people?

Take it Home: Who do you know really needs to hear **Romans 8:28**? Set a time this week to share this comforting Bible verse with them.

How does the doctrine of predestination help us get through our present sufferings? (c.f. **Ephesians 1:3-5**)

Using **verses 31-39**, list the things that cannot separate us from God and why they can't.

Take it Home: What is your favorite comforting quote from Romans chapter 8? With whom will you share it this week?



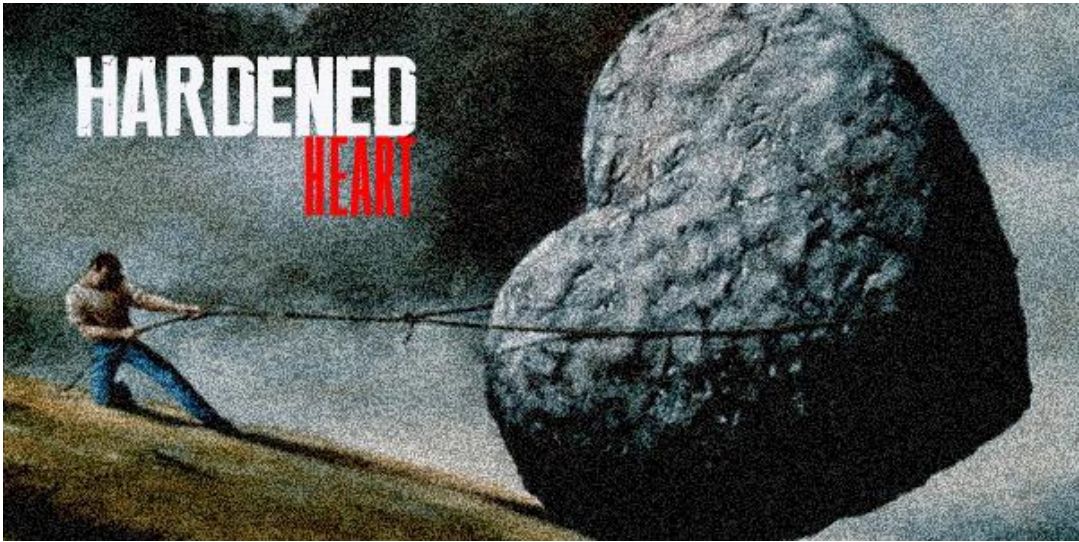
Romans 9:1-33

Verse 3 is maybe a sentiment that we have shared. Who else in the Bible has shared that sentiment? What is God's response to that sentiment?

In **verses 4-5**, what are the many blessings that the Jewish people experience and have to their name?

What does Paul mean when he says that not all descended from Israel are Israel?

How do we understand **verse 13**?



If someone takes **verse 18** by itself, it would make sense to teach that God operates with “double” predestination – that he both chooses people to go to heaven and chooses people to go to hell. However, the Bible has more to say about hardening a heart.

Consider first the case study of Pharaoh in the book of Exodus. The hardening of Pharaoh’s heart comes up at least 18 times in **Exodus 4-14**. Note the subject (God or Pharaoh) and tense of the verse (future, present, past) each time the phrase comes up.

<i>Exodus</i>	<i>4:21</i>	<i>7:3</i>	<i>7:13</i>	<i>7:14</i>	<i>7:22</i>	<i>8:15</i>	<i>8:19</i>	<i>8:32</i>	<i>9:7</i>
<i>God</i>	future	future							
<i>Pharaoh</i>			present	present	present	present	past	present	past

<i>Exodus</i>	<i>9:12</i>	<i>9:34</i>	<i>9:35</i>	<i>10:1</i>	<i>10:20</i>	<i>10:27</i>	<i>11:10</i>	<i>14:4</i>	<i>14:8</i>
<i>God</i>	present			past	present	present	present	future	present
<i>Pharaoh</i>		present	past						

What’s the takeaway? God says that he will harden Pharaoh’s heart, but it was Pharaoh who actively hardened his heart 6 times before God hardened it. Eventually, as people harden their heart to God, God gives them what they are asking for – to their damnation. Some theologians make this distinction by dividing God’s will into antecedent and consequent.

GOD'S ANTECEDENT WILL:

What God does regardless of what other people think or do.

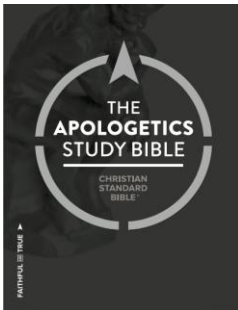
KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

GOD'S CONSEQUENT WILL:

What God does when taking into account what other people think or do.

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

CHRISTIAN STANDARD BIBLE APOLOGETICS STUDY BIBLE: **Hardening the Heart**



The Bible teaches that human beings are free to make choices (**Genesis 2:19; 4:7; Ezekiel 18:2-32**). God is good and always acts consistently with his nature. Yet people can choose to rebel against God's goodness, and consistent rebellion can lead to their hearts being "harden[ed]." As the saying goes, "The same sun that melts butter also hardens clay." Egyptian pharaohs believed they were divine, and Pharaoh would never have been inclined to submit to the Israelites' God. Each time God placed a demand on him, he became more determined to resist. Thus it was both God's demands and

Pharaoh's own pride-motivated stubbornness (**Exodus 8:15, 32; 9:34**) that led to his hardened heart. God would use Pharaoh's stubbornness for a good end, to demonstrate his power and extend his reputation (**Exodus 9:16**).

Who actually resists God's will?

What else are we taught regarding the doctrine of predestination in this chapter?

What is the point of all the quotes Paul brings up in **verses 25-29**?

Romans 10:1-21

Define the following **Key Theological Term**.



Verse 4 states that “Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.” What does this mean?

In **verses 6 & 7**, what does Paul mean when talking about ascending into heaven or descending into the deep?

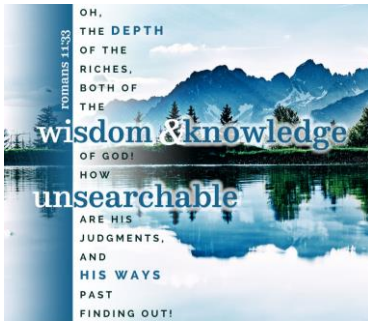
How does God bring salvation to all people?



Why is it not God's fault that there are people on earth who have not heard the Gospel? What beautiful picture does he give us of his extension of grace and salvation to all people?

How do **verses 14-17** spur us on towards verbally sharing our faith?

Romans 11:1-36



Recap: It is important to review Paul's line of thought. First, Paul said that God's Word did not fail. It called to faith everyone whom God chose to come to faith. Those who rejected it, like Pharaoh, were used by God to display his patience and power to those who would believe. That's Paul's argument in **chapter 9**. In **chapter 10**, Paul made it clear that God was serious about leading the Israelites to know him. For hundreds of years he called to them, imploring them to trust in him. But Israel refused. Now in

chapter 11, Paul arrives at his conclusion. In **verses 1-10**, Paul makes two points: (1) God always has his elect who will be saved. (2) Just as he did with Pharaoh, so he does to those who harden their hearts against him - he hardens them in turn.

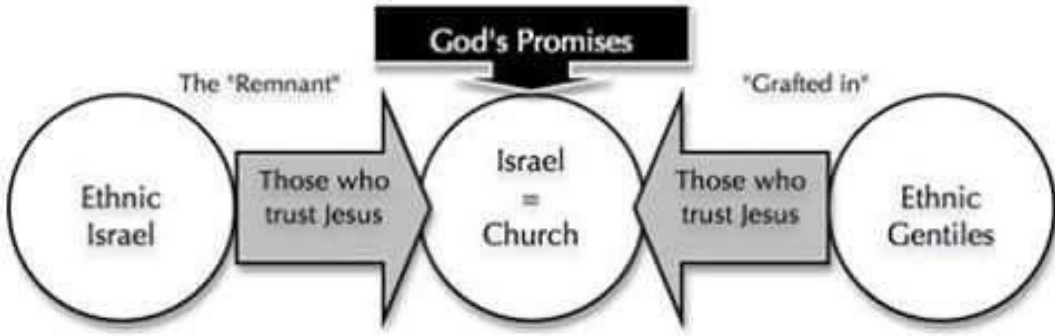
Why are some of Israel chosen and not others?

How does this section speak against "once saved, always saved"? How does this section speak against the idea that God destined people to hell?

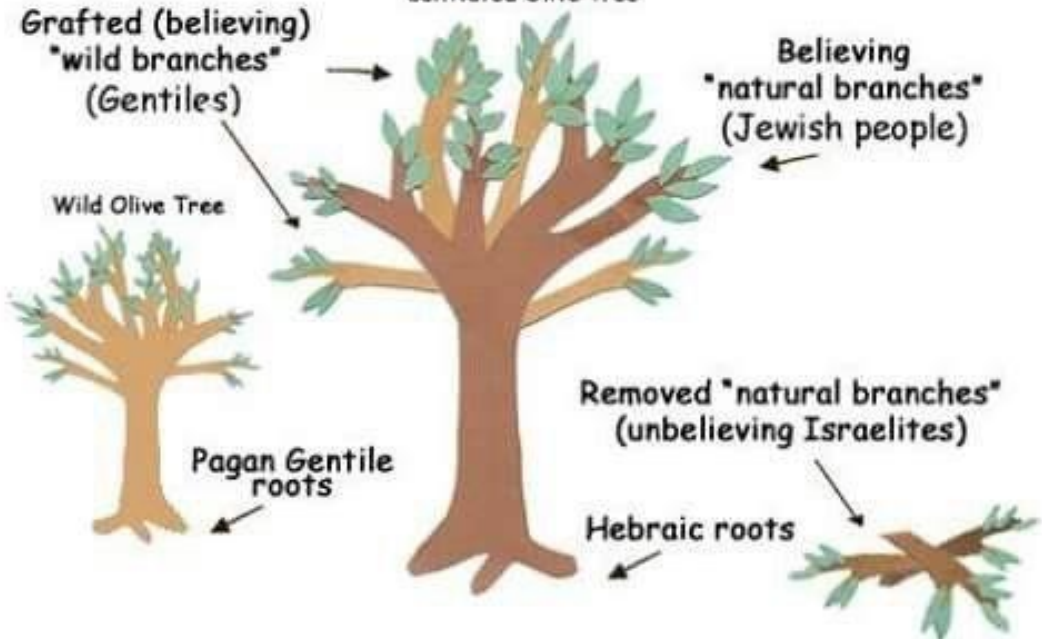
Is someone who hardened their heart against God unsavable? Why or why not?

What does it mean that "salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious"?

What is the meaning of **verse 16** that says, "If the part of the dough offered as first fruits is holy, then the whole batch is holy"?



ROMANS 11
Cultivated Olive Tree



How does the picture of the olive tree show God's justice and holiness as well as his gracious love and merciful heart?

What is this “mystery” of the “hardening in part” of **verse 25**?

Didn't Paul already establish that not all Israel will be saved? How are we to understand **verse 26** which says, “And so all Israel will be saved”?

God's gifts and his call are irrevocable. (**Verse 29**) How are we to apply these verses to our lives, particularly when it comes to predestination?

“God has bound all men over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all” (**verse 32**) How are we to understand and apply this troubling statement?

How do **verses 33-36** serve as a good closer to **chapters 9-11**, particularly in relation to the doctrine of predestination?

Romans 12:1-8

Using this section, define the following **Key Theological Terms**.

WORSHIP:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

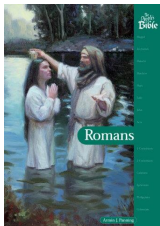
BODY OF CHRIST:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

SPIRITUAL GIFT:

KEY THEOLOGICAL TERM

What is your “spiritual act of worship”?



PEOPLE'S BIBLE COMMENTARY: Living New Testament Worship

Note the radical differences from the Old Testament: not something else brought as a substitute, but Christians bringing themselves; not a dead sacrifice, but living sacrifices that are able to respond to God's mercy with service that is "holy and pleasing" to him. Such service, done from the heart and not just in outward motions, Paul calls our "spiritual act of worship."



Self-Reflection: What patterns of this world do I find myself conforming to?

How does God's mercy transform and renew your mind?



Considering **verses 3-5**, how does the “body of Christ” help keep me humble?

Look again at the list of the spiritual gifts in **verses 6-8**. Are there any in this list that surprise you as being a spiritual gift? Why or why not?

Romans 12:9-21

The author of this Bible study counted 23 different commands in this section. List them here. How might you divide these commands? Which of these commands do you personally take to heart?

Where will you get the motivation to live these commands? (c.f. **Romans 12:1**)

What is the purpose of Paul quoting **Proverbs 25:21-22**?



Romans 13:1-7

Where does every single governing authority come from? Are any excluded? Who, then, is in control of every single government?

How does God use earthly authority for our good?

What do we owe to earthly authorities? Why do we owe that to them?

Balance the words of this section with **Acts 5:17-29**.

Politics can be very controversial and rile people up. Inevitably, after a presidential election, you will hear someone say, "He (or she) is not my president." How do you as a Christian respond to this?

Moving through similar thoughts, how do you respond to someone who objects to the idea of a good God allowing someone like Adolf Hitler into power?



Romans 13:8-14

How do you summarize God's commandments regarding how we treat other people? What urges us on to keep these commandments to others? (c.f. **John 13:34**)

How do you clothe yourself with Christ?

Romans 14:1-23

Using this section, define the following **Key Theological Term**.



Verse 1 mentions “disputable matters.” What are some disputable matters in the Church?

How should the Church (believers) go about addressing disputable matters?

How do you understand **verse 22** and would explain it to someone else?

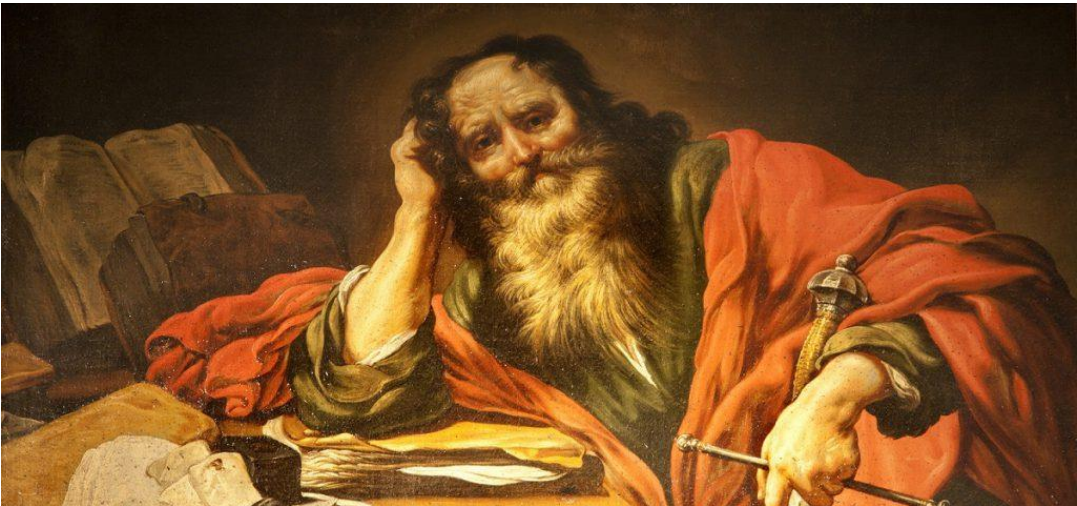


Romans 15:1-13

What else does God expect of the strong brothers and sisters in Christ?

How could you incorporate **verse 4** into your personal Bible reading plan?

What are ways that we can work towards unity in our church family?



Romans 15:14-33

What do you observe or gain out of this glimpse of Paul's heart and mind through these verses?

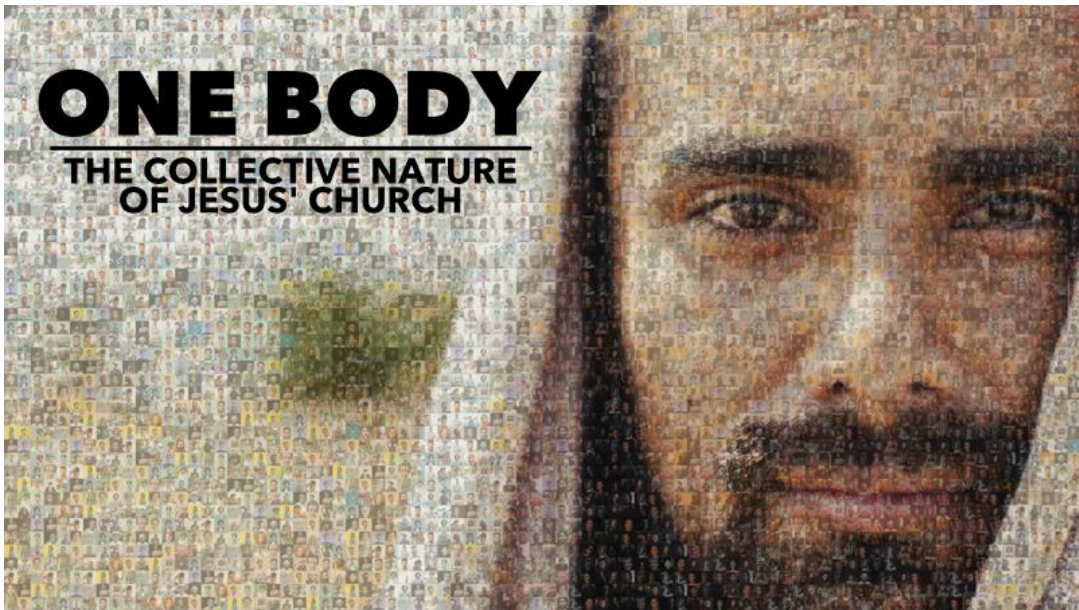
Imagine you are a member of the Roman congregation. A pastor you do not know writes a letter thoroughly explaining Christian teaching. You might have some concerns. Paul anticipated those concerns and answered them. Read the concerns. How did Paul answer them?

Verses 14-15 "We have pastors and teachers in our congregations. Why are you writing these things to us? Do you think we are ignorant?"

Verse 16 "What authority do you have to bypass our pastor and teachers and write to us directly?"

Verses 17-22 "Paul, why haven't you visited us before?"

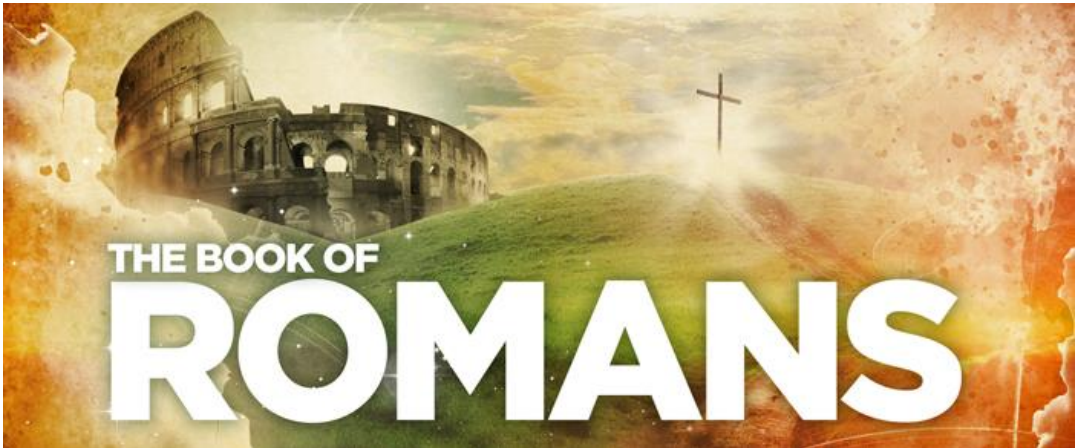
Verses 23-24 "If you have been hindered from visiting us in the past, will you ever be able to visit us?"



Romans 16:1-27

In God's great wisdom, he has a long list of names recorded in his Holy Scriptures for our benefit. Write down observations and thoughts you have while reading through the people Paul lists.

Why do you think so many specific people are listed here at the close of the letter? What might be an application that we make to our congregation?



How are **verses 25-27** a fitting end for the book of Romans?

How does this letter prepare us for mission work?



Discuss at your Table: What will you take away from your study of the book of Romans?

Take it Home: With whom will you share your take aways? How will you share them? When will you share them? Think about it. Write it down. Put it on the calendar. Do it!





PAUL'S LETTER TO ROMA

THE GOSPEL... 1-4 ...REVEALS GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

1-17 THE GOSPEL → **IS GOD'S POWER TO SAVE PEOPLE**

THE RISEN JESUS IS KING OF THE NATIONS

REVEALS GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

① HE ALWAYS DOES WHAT IS **JUST & RIGHT.**
 ② HE IS **FAITHFUL** TO HIS PROMISES

110-132 ALL NATIONS ARE TRAPPED **...ISRAEL IS TRAPPED TOO! 21-30**

SIN **IDOLATRY** **SIN** **IDOLATRY**

GUILTY! **MORE GUILTY!**

3-7-20 BUT...GOOD NEWS! ...SO WE COULD BECOME WHAT HE IS.

JESUS BECAME WHAT WE ARE... TRAPPED & GUILTY

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH TO DECLARE RIGHTEOUS

NEW STATUS: RIGHT WITH GOD & FORGIVEN
NEW FAMILY: INCLUDED IN GOD'S PEOPLE
NEW FUTURE: TRANSFORMED LIFE

"IN CHRIST"

4 WHO IS IN GOD'S COVENANT FAMILY?

DECLARED RIGHTEOUS BY HIS FAITH IN GOD'S PROMISE (GENESIS 15:6)

ALL NATIONS WILL BE BLESSED THROUGH YOU & YOUR OFFSPRING.

ABRAHAM (GENESIS 12:1)

THOSE WHO HAVE FAITH IN THE ONE WHO FULFILLED GOD'S PROMISE

THE CHURCH OF ROME (SEE ACTS 18:1-2)

EMPEROR CLAUDIUS

NON-JEWISH **JEWISH**

JESUS EXPELLED → **5 YEAR LATE**

5-8 ...CREATES A NEW HUMANITY

5 JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH CREATES NEW HUMANITY

SIN ADAM "HUMANITY" **JESUS "THE NEW ADAM"**

SLAVERY **FAITHFULNESS** **OBEDIENCE**

GOD'S JUDGMENT **DEATH** **LOVE** **LIFE**

6 LEAVE THIS HUMANITY!

DEATH **BAPTISM** **NEW LIFE!**

WE ARE JOINED TO JESUS - WHAT'S TRUE OF HIM IS TRUE OF US.

LIBERATED TO LOVE GOD & NEIGHBOR

7 WHAT WAS THE POINT OF THE LAW?

THE STORY OF THE TORAH **THE 613 COMMANDS GIVEN THROUGH MOSES**

GOOD & SHOW GOD'S WILL

DO NOT LIE
DO NOT STEAL
LOVE OTHERS
DO NOT COVET

THE PARADOX IS THE POINT!

MORE GUILTY!

6 THE SOLUTION: JESUS & THE SPIRIT

LAWS ABANDONED

MESSIAH

RENEWED CREATION!

LIBERATED TO LOVE GOD & NEIGHBOR

TO THE ANS

PAUL'S FULLEST EXPLANATION OF THE GOSPEL, THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT JESUS' LIFE, DEATH, & RESURRECTION



BLASPHEMY!!!

WE ARE FREE IN CHRIST!!

OH, WHAT?!

OH, YOU'RE BACK AGAIN...

YOU MUST EAT KOSHER!!

YOU NEED THE SABBATH!!

YOU NEED TO BE CIRCUMCISED.

GENTILE CHRISTIANS

JEWISH CHRISTIANS



SUMMARY OF CHS. 1-4

- ch.1 ALL HUMANITY IS TRAPPED IN SIN & NEEDS TO BE RESCUED
- ch.2 RESCUE WON'T HAPPEN BY TRYING TO OBEY THE LAWS OF THE TORAH
- ch.3 GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS HAS RESCUED THE WORLD THROUGH JESUS...
- ch.4 ...TO CREATE THE FAITH-BASED, MULTI-ETHNIC FAMILY OF ABRAHAM

9-11 ...FULFILLS GOD'S PROMISE TO ISRAEL

9 ISRAEL IN THE PAST

ETHNIC ISRAEL ≠ COVENANT MEMBER

GOD SELECTED A SUBSET OF THE FAMILY

ABRAHAM

ISAHAK

ISRAEL

ESAU

JACOB

THE GOLDEN CALF

PHARAOH'S REBELLION

PEOPLE'S REJECTION ACCOMPLISHES GOD'S PURPOSES

MY PEOPLE, ISRAEL!!

JESUS REJECTORS

JESUS FOLLOWERS

10 ISRAEL IN THE PRESENT

COVENANT RELATIONSHIP BASED ON LAWS

NEW COVENANT FAMILY BASED ON FAITH

11 ISRAEL IN THE FUTURE

Q: IS GOD DONE WITH ISRAEL?

A: NO!

JEWISH & GENTILE FOLLOWERS OF JESUS

REJECTORS OF JESUS

GOD'S COVENANT FAMILY

ONE DAY, JESUS WILL BE ACKNOWLEDGED BY HIS PEOPLE.

SOME GRAFTED ON

SOME BROKEN OFF

12-16 ...UNIFIES THE CHURCH

12-13 UNIFYING THROUGH LOVE & FORGIVENESS

SERVING ONE ANOTHER

HUMILITY & FORGIVENESS

I'M SORRY... I'VE BEEN A JERK.

SEEKING

LEADING

PROPHESYING

GIVING

TEACHING

Love fulfills the TORAH

14-15 SHOW GRACE TO EACH OTHER ON NON-ESSENTIAL ISSUES

HEALING ETHNIC DIVISION

GENTILE

JEWISH

16 HONOR PHOEBE! ...SHE'S LEGIT!

SAY HI TO THE GANG!

ROMANS

created by the Bible Project



LIGHT OF THE VALLEY

—LUTHERAN CHURCH—

SHINING THE LIGHT OF JESUS

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Mondays at 7:00 pm

Bible Study for All Ages

Sundays at 9:15 am

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