

New Testament Survey—Romans

A friend of mine (Frank V.) became a Christian when he was a college student. He transferred to a Christian college (Cedarville). Christianity was so new to him that when he signed up for a class on the book of Romans, he thought it was going to be about the gladiators and such!

Romans is one of the best kept secrets in the world.

Discuss: What's the first thing that comes to your mind when you think of the book of Romans?

- **Who wrote the book?**

--Paul

Q: Who was the secretary that Paul used to pen this treatise? Tertius (16:22)

The composition and sending of an epistle usually involved four people: the author, the secretary or amanuensis, the messenger-mailman, and the recipient. Because of his poor eyesight, Paul used an amanuenses on several occasions (Gromacki, 183).

- **When was the book written?**

--in the early spring of A.D. 57

Paul was on his third missionary journey, on his way to Jerusalem with an offering for the poverty-stricken believers there from the mission churches.

See: 15:25-27

The writing of Romans must follow that of 1, 2 Corinthians (dated 55 A.D.) Paul probably wrote Romans from Corinth or Cenchrea (about 6 miles away).

- **Why was the book written?**

Q: Who received the book? Christians in Rome, predominantly Gentile, although there was a substantial minority of Jews in the congregation (NIV Study Bible).

The City of Rome

--located 15 miles from the Mediterranean Sea beside the Tiber River

--known as the "city of seven hills"

--by NT times the population was well over a million (some have placed it as high as four million), the majority of which were slaves

Discuss: Why was the book of Romans written?

Romans is perhaps the greatest doctrinal book in the Bible. It is a treasure house full of relevant teaching concerning what we believe. We need to be familiar with it...

Quiz: Where in Romans would you turn to answer the following questions?

1. Why are there so many religions in the world?

1:18-32

2. What happened to the Jewish people? Why are they often resistant to the gospel?

chapters 9-11

3. Is it normal to struggle in the Christian life?

chapter 7

4. What does depravity mean?

chapter 3

5. What have we inherited from Adam?

5:12-21

6. What is justification? How is a person justified by God?

chapter 3

7. How do we know that God has a purpose for all things in our lives?

8:28

8. What is the Christian's responsibility to the government?

13:1-7

9. What should Christians do when they disagree over matters of Christian liberty?

chapters 14-15

10. What does it mean to be a living sacrifice for Jesus?

12:1-2

Q: What is the main theme of Romans?

A: See 1:16-17

Q: What is the big idea of the letter (it's what Paul wasn't ashamed of)? The gospel

Q: What's so special about the gospel? It produces salvation

Q: What do we need to be saved, acc. to v 17? Not faith, but righteousness

It is not our faith that saves us, but the gift of righteousness that God gives us. Faith is merely the means by which we receive this gift.

- **What is the outline of the book?**

(adapted from NIV Study Bible)

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 (chs. 6-8)

VI. God's Righteousness Vindicated: The Problem of the Rejection of Israel (chs. 9-11)

VII. Righteousness Practiced (chs. 12-15)

VIII. Commendation and Greetings (ch. 16)

- **What is the message of the book in one sentence?**

The book of Romans tells us what God did so we could be right with Him.

- **What contribution does the book make to biblical theology (that is, how does this book relate to the rest of the Bible)?**

1. *Romans teaches us that justification is by faith alone in Christ alone.*

Discuss: In our community survey, we have met many people who, when asked, "How can a person know he's going to heaven?", answered, "By believing in God, and by living a good life." How would you use Romans to help this person understand this is not what the Bible teaches about justification?

See: 3:21-26

2. *Romans makes it clear that doctrine is practical.*

How so? Note the transition in 12:1. The first eleven chapters present doctrine, the final five present duty. What we believe must influence how we live. If it doesn't, it reveals we really don't believe

it.

Discuss: Why do we need to study doctrine?

Discussion Questions:

1. Why does God include the list of names in chapter 16 in this book?
2. How would you use chapter 6 to help someone who was struggling with a sinful habit?