

Romans
Lesson 1
Introduction

We do not study Romans as a mere academic, intellectual or religious exercise. Paul says that the gospel that he teaches in Romans is the "power of God for the salvation" (Romans 1:16). For this reason we study Romans a living book that gives us power to possess salvation. A real comprehension of the book will takes us many time in prayer before God asking that he change our lives, attitudes and dedication before Him.

Let's meet Paul the author of Romans

In Philippians 3:4-6 Paul himself shares part of his curriculum with us.

Philippians 3

4 though I myself have reasons for such confidence.

If anyone else thinks he has reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: 5 circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; 6 as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless.

1. How did Paul rate his curriculum in relation to other people's curriculum?

2. What were Paul's credentials in relation to Judaism?

3. How did Paul feel about his relationship to the law?

Acts 7

57 At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, 58 dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.

59 While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." 60 Then he fell on his knees and cried out, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he fell asleep.

Acts 8

1 And Saul was there, giving approval to his death.

On that day a great persecution broke out against the church at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. 2 Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him. 3 But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off men and women and put them in prison.

4. What is Paul (Saul) doing the first time we see him in the book of Acts?

5. What did Paul (Saul) begin to do after the death of Stephen?

Acts 9

1 Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest 2 and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. 3 As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. 4 He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"

5 "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked.

“I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,” he replied. 6 “Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.”

7 The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. 8 Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. 9 For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.

10 In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, “Ananias!” “Yes, Lord,” he answered.

11 The Lord told him, “Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. 12 In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight.”

13 “Lord,” Ananias answered, “I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your saints in Jerusalem. 14 And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name.”

15 But the Lord said to Ananias, “Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. 16 I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.”

17 Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” 18 Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, 19 and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. 20 At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God. 21 All those who heard him were astonished and asked, “Isn't he the man who raised havoc in Jerusalem among those who call on this name? And hasn't he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests?” 22 Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ.^[a]

6. Why did Paul (Saul) go to Damascus?

7. Who did Paul meet on his way to Damascus?

8. What purpose did God tell Ananias he had for Paul?

9. What did Paul prove to the Jews in Damascus?

Acts 19

8 Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God. 9 But some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way. So Paul left them. He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. 10 This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord.

11 God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, 12 so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them.

10. How long did Paul teach in the school of Tyrannus?

11. Are we told what it was that Paul taught in the school of Tyrannus?

12. In what geographical region was the word of God spread as a result of Paul teaching in the school of Tyrannus?

13. According to this passage did Paul travel through out this entire region?

14. How did the people living in the province of Asia hear the word of God?

1 Thessalonians 2

1 You know, brothers, that our visit to you was not a failure. 2 We had previously suffered and been insulted in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in spite of strong opposition. 3 For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. 4 On the contrary, we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts. 5 You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed—God is our witness. 6 We were not looking for praise from men, not from you or anyone else. As apostles of Christ we could have been a burden to you, 7 but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children. 8 We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us.

Acts 16

22 The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten. 23 After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully.

15. What afflictions did Paul have in Philippi?

16. What personality characteristics did Paul display by daring to tell about the Gospel in Thessalonica?

17. What personality trait did Paul display to the believers in Thessalonica by being like a mother to them?

18. Would we normally expect to find both of these personality traits in the same person?

19. Whom does Paul say that the gospel he shared in Thessalonica belonged to?

Romans 2

16 This will take place on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares.

20. Paul says that what he writes describes what future event?

21. What does Paul call what he is writing?

2 Peter 3

15 Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. 16 He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

22. Peter says that Paul writes with what kind of wisdom?

23. What does Peter compare Paul's writings to?

Letter or Doctrinal treatise?

We say that Romans is a letter written to the Romans. While it is true that there is an introduction to a letter at the beginning and a conclusion of a letter at the end, the main part of Romans is an orderly treatise on Christian doctrine.

24. What is it we find in Romans 1:1 to 1:15?

25. What is it we find in Romans 15:13 to 16:27?

26. What is it we find in Romans 1:16 to 15:12?

27. Fill in this diagram with the names of the sections:

Romans 1:1-15

Romans 1:16 to 15:12

Romans 15:13 to 16:27

Introduction to the Letter

Romans 1

1 Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God— 2 the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures 3 regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David, 4 and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. 5 Through him and for his name's sake, we received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith. 6 And you also are among those who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.

7 To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints:

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

28. If Romans is a letter, What part do we find in Romans 1:1?

29. If Romans is a letter, What part do we find in Romans 1:7?

30. Normally we brag as believers of being set apart from what things?

31. What activity was Paul set apart for?

32. What had God promised through his prophets?

33. How was Jesus declared to be the Son of God?

34. Which people should come to obedience through faith?

35. Who was Romans written to?

36. What were the Romans that Paul wrote to, called to be?

Romans 1

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world. 9 God, whom I serve with my whole heart in preaching the gospel of his Son, is my witness how constantly I remember you 10 in my prayers at all times; and I pray that now at last by God's will the way may be opened for me to come to you.

11 I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong— 12 that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith. 13 I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that I planned many 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.

14 I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish. 15 That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are at Rome.

37. What does Paul give thanks for?

38. In what way does Paul say he serves God?

39. Was there something that the believers in Rome could do for Paul? What was that?

Romans 15

20 It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation. 21 Rather, as it is written: "Those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand." 22 This is why I have often been hindered from coming to you. 23 But now that there is no more place for me to work in these regions, and since I have been longing for many years to see you,

40. What was it that had often hindered Paul's trip to Rome?

41. Paul mentions two divisions of humanity in verse 14. What are they?

42. Based on these divisions of humanity to which one is the book of Romans directed?

All of this brings us to what we could consider as the central theme of the book of Romans:

Romans 1

16 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

43. Here Paul mentions another division of humanity. Which division is that?

44. Why did Paul first mention the other division of humanity and why does he wait to mention this one?

45. Write here what you understand as salvation. (Later we will compare this to what you consider salvation to be after studying the book of Romans.)
