

## I am not ashamed of Jesus!

Intro. Romans is the Mt Everest of truth.

Written by Paul from Corinth, at the end of his 3<sup>rd</sup> missionary journey in Ad 58. Jesus had trained Paul in the Arabian desert for 3 years (Galatians 1). It is Jesus' love letter to the human race explaining His gospel and how to gain righteousness from God and display the righteousness of God.

### It will change you for time and eternity

**Aurelius Augustine was saved reading it. He lived in N. Africa. Former prof. in Milan Italy**

in his 30s having been in bondage to sexual sin for 15 years, living with woman. In September a.d. 386, sat weeping in the garden contemplating his sinfulness, he heard a child singing, "Take up and read. Take up and read." the book of Romans lay beside him, and the first passage that caught his eye read, "*Not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts*" (13:13–14). He said later: a light, as it were, or security infused into my heart,—all the gloom of doubt vanished away" How sweet all at once it was for me to be rid of those fruitless joys which h I had once feared to lose . . .! You drove them from me, you who are true, the sovereign joy. You drove them from me and took their place, you who are sweeter than all pleasure. . . o lord my god, my light my wealth, my salvation' – confessions p. 181 (IX, 1) *Confessions* Book 8, Chapter 12). He went on to become one of the church's outstanding theologians and leaders.<sup>1</sup>

### Martin Luther was saved 1000 years later studying it.

Before his conversion he had said, "If I could believe that God was not angry with me, I would stand on my head for joy" p. 20 Piper's *The legacy of sovereign joy*, 2000.

He was teaching the book of Romans to his students at the University of Wittenberg, Germany. He said,

I greatly longed to understand Paul's Epistle to the Romans, and nothing stood in the way but that one expression, "the righteousness of God," because I took it to mean that righteousness whereby God is righteous and deals righteously in punishing the unrighteous.... Night and day I pondered until ... I grasped the truth that the righteousness of God is that righteousness whereby, through grace and sheer mercy, he justifies us by faith. **Thereupon I felt myself to be reborn and to have gone through open doors into paradise. The whole of Scripture took on a new meaning, and whereas before "the righteousness of God" had filled me with hate, now it became to me inexpressibly sweet in greater love. This passage of Paul became to me a gateway to heaven.** (Cf. Barend Klaas Kuiper, *Martin Luther: The Formative Years* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1933], pp. 198–208.<sup>2</sup>

**John Wesley** was saved hearing Romans taught. On the evening of **May 24, 1738**, he wrote in his journal, I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for my salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death

<sup>1</sup> MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1991). [\*Romans\*](#) (Vol. 1, p. ix). Chicago: Moody Press.

<sup>2</sup> MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1991). [\*Romans\*](#) (Vol. 1, pp. ix–x). Chicago: Moody Press.

### **Romans will not only change your life it answers life's toughest questions:**

What is the good news of God? Is Jesus really God? What is God like? How can God send people to hell? Why do men reject God and His Son, Jesus Christ? Why are there false religions and idols? What is man's biggest sin? Why are there sex perversions, hatred, crime, dishonesty, and all the other evils in the world, and why are they so pervasive and rampant? What is the standard by which God condemns people? How can a person who has never heard the gospel be held spiritually responsible?

Is there any spiritual advantage to being Jewish? How can a person know he is a sinner? How can a sinner be forgiven and justified by God? What is the importance of Christ's death? What is the importance of His resurrection? Where can men find real peace and hope? What is grace and what does it do? How important is obedience in the Christian life? Why is living a faithful Christian life such a struggle?

What does the Holy Spirit do for a believer? Why is there suffering? Will the world ever be different? What are election and predestination? How can Christians pray properly? How secure is a believer's salvation? What is His future plan for Israel? What is the Christian's relationship to the world in general, to the unsaved, to other Christians, and to human government? What is genuine love and how does it work? How do Christians deal with issues that are neither right nor wrong in themselves? What is true freedom?

### **The church of Rome.**

- Founded by Jewish converts from Acts 2
- Paul had never visited there and longed to. The Lord would eventually lead him there under completely different circumstances. . . in chains. Paul would come to Rome and eventually be executed by Roman Emperor Nero.
- The converts grew and caused uproar among the other 50,000 Jews in Rome. Emperor Claudius expelled all Jews in AD 49. Mostly Gentile church but some Jews had returned to Rome. When Paul wrote them this letter in AD 58 at the end of his 3<sup>rd</sup> missionary journey, their faith had become known around the world from those who visited Rome. Paul had for a long time wanted to visit them. He had completed his work in the eastern regions (v. 15: 23), "from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum" (v. 19). "he planned to go west to Spain to preach the gospel where Christ was not known" (v. 20), and visit the church in Rome as he passed through (v. 24). There he would enjoy their company and receive from them some help for his journey. First, however, he had the responsibility of taking the contribution from the churches in Macedonia and Achaia to the poor saints in Jerusalem (vv. 25–26). When that task was over, he would go to Spain and visit there on the way (v. 28). He wanted to be "mutually encouraged by each other's faith" (1:12). and was "eager to preach" the gospel to those who lived in the capital city (1:15).

### **Outline of His letter**

#### **Theme: Justification by faith**

- It is necessary. Chap 1-3
- It is scriptural. Chap. 4. Eg. Of Abraham
- It is transformational. Chapter 5-8
- It is international. To Jews, Greeks and Barbarians. 9-11
- It is practical. 12-16

### **Outline of 1:1-15. Why was Paul so driven to spread the gospel?**

Why wasn't he ashamed of the gospel, though Roman culture mocked it and persecuted Christians for it?

**Illustration: I caused my kids to get "embarrassitis". They wanted to distance themselves from me. Why do Christians today get embarrassitis regarding the gospel? It is offensive to our culture. Yet Paul never was ashamed of it for the following reasons in Romans 1:1-15:**

1. **He knew Jesus had called him to serve Him.** v. 1

- a. **Willingly.** He was a 'bond-slave' which meant one who willingly serves his master out of love. Exodus 21:5

Paul was Compelled by an awe, love and desire to glorify Christ

"For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen" (Rom. 11:36; cf. also 1 Cor. 10:31). He admonished his readers to have that same desire and purpose: "With one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (15:6). As the specially-chosen apostle to the Gentiles, his great yearning was for them "to glorify God for His mercy" (15:9). The closing words, in effect, dedicate the epistle "to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ," to whom will "be the glory forever" (16:27).

- o Donald Grey Barnhouse observed, "Paul could never forget the pit from which he had been digged" (*Man's Ruin: Romans 1:1-32* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952], p. 8).<sup>3</sup>

- b. **Formally.** He served because Jesus formally called him to the office of an apostle. There was only 12 men called to this office, each attested to by the Lord through signs and wonders (2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:1-3). They were the ones commissioned by Christ to lay the foundation of truth for the Church which became the New Testament (Ephesians 2:20). This is in distinction from the gift of apostle (1 Cor. 12:28-29), which meant literally, "one sent with a message" and probably refers to church planters. Those who today claim the office of apostleship, whereby they speak with divine authority and are to be followed like the 12 apostles, are unbiblical.

- c. **Exclusively.** Paul said he had been "set apart for the Gospel". No other calling. He was laser focused on spreading the gospel

2. **He knew the historical truthfulness of the gospel.** V. 2.

- a. OT pointed to it. Paul said the gospel "was promised beforehand through the prophets in the holy scriptures." Luke 24:27,44. Jesus said the OT pointed to Him
- b. Over 300 OT prophecies were fulfilled by Christ. Jesus said not the least part of the OT promise would be left unfulfilled. He would fulfil them all. Matthew 5:17-18
- c. God promised to the human race a Messiah to rescue them. He told us hundreds of years beforehand where the Messiah would be bore (Bethlehem), where he would grow up (Nazareth), How he would die (crucifixion) where he would be buried (rich mans' tomb); how much money would be paid to his betrayer (30 pieces of silver).

3. **He knew the incomprehensible person of Christ.** V. 3-4 He was THE Son who became A son and then was raised to prove He was THE Son.

- a. The gospel concerns God's' Son Jesus Christ. V. 3. There is no Gospel apart from Christ, specifically the Christ who is both man and God as described in the rest of verse 3-4.
- b. He Was the SON of God. – equal, eternal, creator, sustainer, revealer of God. Ps 2:5-8
- i. The Son eternally preexisted with the Father. John 17:5,24

**Hebrews 1:1-3**

<sup>2</sup> [a] in these last days has spoken to us [b] in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the [c] world. <sup>3</sup> [d] And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and [e] upholds all things by the word of His

<sup>3</sup> MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1991). *Romans* (Vol. 1, p. xxii). Chicago: Moody Press.

power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

ii. The son reveals the father and the full revelation of God. John 14:9

c. He was born A son of David

i. He was both God and man. The Holy child shall be called the Son of God.

4. **He knew the purpose of Christ.** To reach all nations 1:5-7. Luke 24:47; Mt 28 Paul says in verse 5 the purpose of his ministry, *“to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles”*. The laser focus of ministry is to bring the gospel of Christ to all people. It is not social reform, psychological healing, relationship building. All of these are peripheral. All happen as a byproduct of What Jesus does in the heart of those who obey his gospel by believing in Christ and following Him.
- His purpose would be accomplished through His grace not man’s ability
  - His purpose would be through his calling to apostleship – sent ones
  - His purpose would be fulfilled through his calling and using ALL Christians. V. 6

5. **He experienced the heart of Christ. V. 8-15. Paul experienced a change of heart! Before knowing Christ he hated Christians, NOW in these verses he reveals a heart changed by Christ that now loves, longs for and seeks to minister to Christians in Rome. This heart is displayed in several ways:**

- He thanked God for the church’s gospel ministry 1:8**
  - Pres. Act. Indi. Constantly, not sporadic
  - it went viral! The whole world heard of it. Cp. 1 Thess.

Through (dia – agency) Jesus Christ – It was Jesus who made him thankful

Because your faith is being proclaimed – what excited Paul was what excited Jesus: the witnessing of the Christians in Rome despite opposition (other Jews rioted against them)

- Implication: what pleases Christ is what pleases Paul. It is not the excitement of growth numerically but boldness and love spiritually.
- Implication: God WANTS the gospel preached to those whose culture and religion are contrary to it.

- He served with all his heart in the gospel 1:9**

For God . . . is my witness – he was serving under the witness of God

- Witness Is first in the sentence for emphasis

**Whom I serve continually (Greek: latreuo = spiritual worship) in my heart**

- Paul served because he worshipped
- Paul served because he had a heart for the gospel

**In the preaching of the gospel of His Son- exclusive focused ministry**

- Evangelizing and witnessing is spiritual worship

- He constantly prayed for the church. 1:9**

- He longed for mutual ministry. 1:10-11.** There is no isolation, but humble recognition that he longed for and needed the ministry of believers in His life. If Paul needed mutual ministry, WE

certainly do. Jesus commands us to commit to small group/ personal ministry to one another.  
Acts 2:42; Hebrews 3:12-13; Ephesians 4:14-16

**e. He felt the obligation and compulsion of God to share the gospel. 1:13-14**

- Not motivated by money, people, fruitfulness, but the lord. 1 Peter 5: 2-3

**f. He was burdened and ministered to all kinds of people. 1:14**

- He didn't focus on one people group. All nations
- Even barbarians (Greek: 'barbar' unintelligent, pagan, outside culture, vulgar, violent),
- Jews – Greeks, Hellenized culture; barbarians – outside world culture, pagan

**g. He was eager to minister the gospel. 1:15**