

# Romans

## Bible Study

### A Quick Trip Through Romans

To get an idea of where we will be going, it will help to take a quick flyover to see what the whole book of Romans is about. We have already studied how Paul has asserted His apostleship, meaning that he has personally been with Jesus Christ, has been given the ability to do miracles, signs and wonders, and has been given a special message by Jesus Christ. This special message is called the Mystery which was kept secret from creation and now revealed through the Apostle Paul (Romans 16:25; Ephesians 3:1—10).

Keep in mind the purpose for Romans being put at the head of all of Paul's writings. According to Romans 1:11, Paul wants to make sure they were (and we become) established. To be established is to be set firm and unmovable. Those who do not have a firm grasp of doctrine are like a ship driven by every wind of doctrine (Ephesians 4:14). By growing in our understanding of the doctrine presented by Paul for the Church, the Body of Christ, we will not be shaken and moved when we hear something contrary to what we have learned. If we are established in Pauline doctrine, we will be ready to face whatever comes our way.

It is so very important to understand that the book of Romans is a book directed to the Church, the Body of Christ, as are the 12 books of Paul following Romans. This is where we find our marching orders. They will not be found in the Old Testament, the four Gospels, or any books after Philemon. The whole Bible was written for our learning and instruction, but they are not our marching orders (Romans 15:4). The whole Bible was written for us, but only Paul's 13 books were written specifically to us.

Being grounded in Romans will give us confidence in evaluating false doctrines, or doctrine that does not fit within this dispensation of Grace. For instance, Romans gives us an understanding of the Mosaic Law and assures us that we are not under its constraints. We learn about Paul's apostleship and the formation of the Body of Christ. We learn how God has put Jews and Gentiles on equal footing. We see how closely we are identified with God through Jesus Christ. We come to learn about the role of the Holy Spirit in a believer's life. We see how we are totally secure in our salvation. We don't find these things outside of Paul's writings.

The knowledge we receive from Romans will give us the tools we need to evaluate not only biblical concepts, but dispensational concepts as well. Once established in the doctrine of Romans, you will not be confused by Matthew's doctrine of forgiving in order to be forgiven (Matthew 12:32), or of James lifting high the importance of works to prove faith (James 2:17), or by those using John 15:6 to show we can lose our salvation. These issues will have no effect because you will have become established and unmovable in the doctrine of Romans.

Those who reject that the book of Romans was written specifically to the Church, the Body of Christ will not be able to become established in sound doctrine. They will be easily uprooted and driven to believe wrong doctrine because they are not planted where they need to be planted. They will lose out on understanding the deep richness of God's blessings that being to us, in Christ. This is an introductory book for the Body of Christ, not an add-on to the Old Testament and Gospels.

#### Four natural divisions

Although Romans can be divided up into more or fewer divisions, it seems to comfortably fall into four sections:

Romans 1—5	Justification
Romans 6—8	Sanctification
Romans 9—11	Dispensation
Romans 12—16	Application.

#### Romans 1—5 Justification

The first section focuses on our justification, made possible through the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. To be justified means to be declared righteous. Many define justification to mean just as if I've

never sinned. Although true, it ignores that it was my sin that sent Jesus Christ to the cross. It wasn't that I didn't sin, it was about my sin being paid for by someone else.

Words related to justification (just, justified, justify, etc.) show up in 16 verses in the first five chapters of Romans. Since justification and righteousness go hand in hand, words related to righteous show up in 21 verses in the first five chapters of Romans (and an additional four times in chapter 6).

By the time we get to Chapter 3, it's obvious that we are not justified by performing any works of the Law (Romans 3:20), but by the grace of God through redemption that is available through Christ Jesus (Romans 3:24). Paul proves this to be so by using Abraham as an example, since he was justified before the giving of the Law (Romans 4).

Paul finishes up the section by showing us that the result of being justified is peace with God (Romans 5:1) and the promise of life (Romans 5:18).

### **Romans 6—8 Sanctification**

To be sanctified is to be set apart. The words holy and saint are also related to the word sanctification. Saint means holy one, one whom has been sanctified. The only time the word sanctify is used in Romans is in 15:16 where we are declared to be sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Paul affirms that we are set apart at the point of our salvation as confirmed by the indwelling Holy Spirit.

When Paul says we cannot be separated from God's love, it must be understood in light of sanctification. We have already been separated (made holy, sanctified) by the indwelling Holy Spirit, so it is impossible for anything else to separate us from the sealing work of the Holy Spirit.

Although we are positionally sanctified, we also need to strive to be sanctified in our daily lives. The emphasis in Romans 6—8 is on our position in Christ, and our response to be servants of righteousness (Romans 6:13). We have been freed from sin and now we need to live as the person God made us. This struggle is vividly portrayed in Romans 7 where we see Paul torn between obeying his old and new natures. Romans 8 confirms our position in Christ is secure, unrelated to our actions.

### **Romans 9—11 Dispensation**

It is in this section that Paul turns to the Jews to explain the truths of this new Dispensation of Grace. He explains how righteousness is obtained outside of the Law (Romans 10:4), and gives the plan of salvation in this new dispensation (Romans 10:9—10). It is Paul's desire to reach his people with the Gospel of Grace, and it was God's instruction for Paul to go to the Jews first with this new Gospel, giving them every possible opportunity to believe (Acts 13:46; 28:25—28; Romans 1:16).

Paul finishes up by making the case that God has not cast His people aside. He is a living example that a Jew can become saved, proving that any Jew is able to accept the same salvation that Paul has. Paul also speaks of their future when the wild olive branches will be broken off and the natural branches will be regrafted. This will happen after the Rapture when God once again completes all the promises given to Israel.

### **Romans 12—16 Application**

The last chapters of the book of Romans takes the doctrine being taught in the first part of the book and instructs us how to apply it to everyday living. Paul shows how we are to present our bodies a living sacrifice for the Lord. Much is said about living for the Lord and about living with each other. If we are truly living for the Lord, we will be able to live together in harmony.

Paul gives practical advice about our relationship with the government (Romans 13:1—7), with other believers (Romans 14) and with the unsaved (Romans 13:7—10).

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