

Lesson #30
Bible Overview
Romans

1. Romans Overview

a. Chapters 1-4

- i. Written by Saul i.e. Paul of Tarsus
- ii. Longest and most significant writings of Paul.
- iii. A Rabbi and a Pharisee.
- iv. Saw Christians as a threat before he was a Christian.
 1. He had a radical conversion.
 2. Jesus in his vision who commissioned him as an apostle to the Gentiles.
- v. It was written late in his career.
- vi. Written to the Church in Rome. Had both Jews and non-Jews in the congregation.
 1. Emperor Claudius expelled Jews out of Rome.
 2. 5 years later these Jews as well as Jewish Christians were allowed back into Rome.
 3. When they returned, they found a Church that was very non Jewish in practice and custom.
 - a. This created tension and divided the Church.
 - i. Sabbath, Kosher laws, Circumcision etc.
- vii. Paul wrote to unify the Church.
- viii. He hoped that the Church in Rome would become a staging ground so he could go to Spain.

b. These circumstances caused Paul to write out his fullest explanation of the gospel.

- i. Letter is designed to have 4 main movements. That said, there is a single explanation of the gospel.
 1. Ch. 1-4: Reveals God's righteousness.

2. Ch. 5-8: Creates a new humanity.
 3. Ch. 9-11: Fulfills God's promise to Israel.
 4. Ch. 12-16: The gospel unifies the Church.
- ii. Righteousness is revealing God's character and that God's always wants to do what is just and right.
1. He's also faithful to fulfill His promises.
- iii. How did God do both of these things.
1. 1:18-32 – Long retelling of first 3 chapters of Genesis.
 - a. All nations trapped in sin and selfishness.
 - b. Human heart and mind are broken.
 - i. Idolatry is finding ultimate significance in things NOT God.
 - c. Humanity stands guilty before God.
 - d. Jews then said, they are GOOD because they live according to the Torah.
 2. 2:1 to 3:8 – Paul says “not true”.
 - a. Israel is trapped too.
 - b. Israel ALSO morally trapped in sin and idolatry.
 - i. In fact even MORE guilty than Gentiles because they HAVE the Torah.
- iv. Jews and Gentiles hopelessly trapped and found guilty. But this is not final word.
1. 3:9-36 – Good news is God's response to our needs.
 2. Jesus died for ALL as a sacrifice for sin.
 3. Overcame by resurrection.
 4. His resurrection life is now available to others i.e. us.
 5. JESUS BECAME WHAT WE ARE SO THAT WE WOULD BECOME WHAT HE IS!
 6. This is how God JUSTIFIES those who have faith in Jesus.
- v. Justification by faith.
1. What Jesus did on our behalf.

2. New status before God i.e. right relationship with God.
 - a. We have a new family. We're given a place among God's covenant people.
 - b. Also have a new future i.e. transformed life.
 - c. ALL these things are a gift to those who are "IN CHRIST".
- vi. Ch. 4 – Paul explains the implication of all of this.
 1. Who is part of Abe's covenant family? He goes back to Gen. 15.
 2. Before circumcision, Abe declared righteous! How? BELIEVES IN THE PROMISE OF THE SON!

2. SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS 1-4 (FOUNDATION)

- a. Ch. 1 – All humanity in sin and needs rescue.
- b. Ch. 2 – Rescue is not by obeying Torah.
- c. Ch. 3 – God rescued world by Jesus' death and resurrection.
- d. Ch. 4 – Creates faith based multi-ethnic family of Abe as God's covenant people.

Romans Part 2

1. Romans 5-16

- i. Justification by faith in Jesus is the basis for our righteousness.
 - 1. 1. New status, 2. New Family and, 3. New Future.
- ii. How? Paul continues and explains how this truth shapes every part of our existence.

b. Ch. 5-8 – Creates and entirely new humanity.

- i. Paul refers back to Adam.
 - 1. Adam = humanity
 - 2. Life Adam, we all chose sin and selfishness.
 - 3. Now face God's judgement.
- ii. Then Paul contrasts Adam with Jesus, the NEW ADAM.
 - 1. Lived in faithful obedience to God as shown by His sacrificial love.
 - 2. Gives His life so others can be justified to God.
 - 3. Jesus now head of a new humanity.

iii. Ch. 6 – Must leave “old” humanity to follow in the “new Humanity” in which Jesus is the head.

- 1. Baptism was a symbol of that sacred transition.
 - a. We are joined to Jesus' life.
 - b. Liberated to truly love God and our neighbor.

iv. Ch. 7 – So then what is the point of God giving us the LAW?

- 1. Paul says that the Torah is good BUT rules made Israel more guilty.

v. Ch. 8 – Torah helped focus the problem of the human condition.

- 1. Now Jesus paid for all that.
- 2. Now we have the HS so we can fulfill the call of God for a new humanity.
- 3. Can love God and neighbors.
- 4. Renewing mankind is the FIRST step in renewing ALL of creation.

vi. Ch. 9-11 – What about Israelites that don't believe?

- 1. Fulfills God's promise to Israel
 - a. Paul is very upset about his fellow Israelites.

2. Ch. 9 – Being a physical descendant of Abraham is NOT enough.
ALL must believe in the Savior.
3. Ch. 10 – Israelites rejecting Jesus based on their good works. Don't recognize new covenant relationship.
4. Ch. 11 – God did not write them off. Many Jews, like Paul, do believe.
 - a. God uses their rejection to open door to the Gentiles.
 - b. Gentiles grafted into God's family.
 - c. God will not give up on His covenant people.
5. Ch. 12-16 – Unifies the Church.
 - a. Jews and Gentiles now come together to become the Church.
 - b. Unity is based on love and forgiveness.
 - c. Love i.e. use gifts and talents to serve one another.
 - d. Humility and forgiveness needed when various ethnic groups come together.
6. Ch. 14-15 – Healing ethnic divisions.
 - a. For example, Jewish food laws and the sabbath.
 - i. These things DON'T define who is in or out of the family i.e. the Church.
 - ii. Respect the differences and show grace.
 - b. LOVE will heal and unify Jesus' family.
7. Ch. 16 – Honor Phoebe.