

Romans

Purpose: “To present the basic system of salvation to a church that had not received the teaching of an apostle before” (edited from NIV Study Bible).

Outline: 1:1-17 – Introduction of the righteousness from God

1:18-3:20 – Unrighteousness of all mankind

3:21-5:21 – Righteousness imputed through Christ by faith (Justification)

6:1-8:39 – Righteousness imparted through power of the Spirit (Sanctification)

9:1-11:36 – Righteousness vindicated through salvation of Jews

12:1-16:27 – Righteousness practiced through the body of Christ

Author: Paul

Date: 57 AD while in Corinth near the end of his third missionary journey

Highlights:

At the time of this letter there were important recent events in Rome. Decrees from Claudius in 41 and 49 AD limited the right of assembly of Jews in Rome, and then expelled Jews from Rome. By 57 AD Roman Jewish Christians were returning to a largely Gentile church. Note especially, Paul’s repeated emphasis on there being “no difference” between Jew and Gentile, and his warning against Gentile arrogance (11:18, 25).

Paul was hoping to visit Rome, but could not go at this time because he felt he must personally deliver the collection taken among the Gentile churches for the poverty-stricken Christians of Jerusalem (see 15:25-28).

In lieu of visiting Rome, Paul writes this letter as a careful and systematic theological introduction to his hoped-for personal ministry.

This letter is a favorite of those who are trying to think theologically about the Christian faith. Paul’s systematic approach is very helpful in answering a ton of questions that most people have (or should have) about Christianity.

Chapters 1-4 is an exposition: The one who is righteous **by faith**...

Chapters 5-8 is an exposition: ...**by faith** shall live.

Chapters 9-11 compare human unbelief and divine faithfulness and mercy.

Chapters 12-15 explain right response to the mercy of God.

Romans 3:21-31 is the heart of Romans.

There is a great definition for faith in Romans 4:21.

Romans 5:12-21 compare the first Adam and the last Adam (Jesus Christ).

Chapter 5 is the transition from discussing justification to discussing sanctification.

Chapters 9-11 discusses the “big picture.” These are difficult topics to understand; and should only be pursued by those who are mature in faith and desire greater maturity in faith.

Chapters 12-15 are very practical in nature. It is difficult to practice what you preach. It is even more difficult to practice what you cannot preach. That is to say, it is difficult to do certain things, when you don’t understand – theologically – why you should. Maturity in faith means growing in your understanding of the faith in order to serve God more obediently.

Orthodoxy (right doctrine) must result in orthopraxy (right practice), and orthopraxy must find its roots in orthodoxy. The two are inextricably linked.

Romans is jam packed with important stuff. If you are able to submit to God’s revealed will in Romans, then you will discover a God more amazing than you had ever dreamed possible.

Note that this is a very short reading guide; rather than a very long reading guide. There is no in between ☺. It is best to find some solid commentaries to answer the important questions that should arise when reading Romans.