
Romans

Author of Romans: Paul

The book of [Romans](#) is Paul's letter to the church at Rome. Though Paul had not yet been to Rome, he prayed constantly for the church ([Rom 1:8-9](#)), planned to visit ([Rom 1:10-15](#), [Rom 15:28-33](#)), and knew many people by name ([Rom 16:3-15](#)).

Paul is deeply concerned for his Jewish brethren and more concerned about their welfare than his own. If it were possible, he would be willing to spend eternity in Hell separated from Christ rather than see his fellow Jews reject Christ.

Theme of Romans

The theme of Romans is the Gospel (or "good news"). One possible title is "God's Righteousness Revealed by the Gospel." The key verse says that the Gospel is the power of God ([Rom 1:16](#)).

High-Level Outline

Rom 1-8	how the Gospel saves and frees the sinner
Rom 9-11	how the Gospel relates to Israel, God is deeper than we can possibly comprehend
Rom 12-16	how the Gospel affects our conduct, attitude, and relationships

Highlights

The first five chapters of Romans explain how the **Gospel saves the sinner**: how the Gospel is the power of God ([Rom 1](#)), how God deals with our sin ([Rom 3](#)), how God provides salvation ([Rom 4](#)), and how we can have strong faith ([Rom 5](#)).

It seems that Paul is in a courtroom bringing the case against humanity. His point? All have sinned and fallen short of God's standard ([Rom 3:23](#)). After setting the bad news, he offers the good news in [Romans 6:23](#)!

Chapters 6-8 explain how the **Gospel frees the sinner**: how to keep growing in grace ([Rom 6](#)) and what happens when we sin ([Rom 7](#)).

[Romans 10](#) offers a clear process for getting saved in verses [9-10](#) and [13](#).

Paul declares that God is deeper than we can possibly comprehend ([Rom 11:33-36](#)).

[Romans 12](#) begins the practical section of Romans. Whereas chapters 1-11 deal with doctrine, chapters 12-16 show the believer's response to the doctrine that Paul had given.

- our responsibility to society ([Rom 13](#))
- how we fit in with other Christians ([Rom 14](#))
- how we are to function in God's bigger plan ([Rom 15](#))

Personal Reflection and Application

Bad News/Good News. The bad news is that God will only let His sinless Son into heaven. The good news is that God will let anyone into Christ. Read [Romans 1:16-18](#).

Imagine a court case where the defendant was obviously guilty of murder. **What if the judge set the person free because the person didn't realize there would be punishment and would not have committed the murder had he known.** Does this seem just to you? In [Romans 3](#), how is Paul's description of God's law similar?

Could you make it through an entire day without one impure or selfish thought? Could you be kind and do everything with a correct heart all day? Could you do this every day without a single flaw until Christ returns? Paul says that even if you could it would not be enough to save you. Read [Romans 4:5-8](#). How does this reassure you?

Read [Romans 6:10-14](#). For God to deliver you from your flesh, you must count on His provision. This is a matter of faith. **Do you believe God can deliver you, that He is stronger than your flesh?** If so, submission is your next step. Obey God's Word and refuse to let your flesh control you. Finally, yield yourself to God's plan for you. Are you able to pray to God, offering your whole self to Him for whatever His plan is for you? The enemy, Satan, wants to defeat you. He wants to bring you down; however, [Romans 8](#) powerfully reminds us that we are more than conquerors! Are you living out this promise or are you becoming the victim instead of the victor? Take one or two areas of your life where you feel defeated and claim this promise over those areas. This one practice could change the trajectory of your life forever!

According to [Romans 9:31-33](#), what prevented Israel from attaining righteousness? **Reflect on your own spiritual state.** First, have you accepted Christ as Savior by faith alone ([Eph 2:8-9](#), [Rom 10:9-10](#))? If you have accepted Christ by faith, do you walk daily by faith ([2Cor 5:6-8](#))?

What do you want most for those you love ([Rom 10:1](#))? What sacrifices do you make for them ([1Cor 9:19-23](#))?

Using [Romans 10:8-13](#) as your guide, list the requirements to be saved. Is there anything about a person (race, gender, social standing) that **helps** or **hinders** a person in being saved?

What is the relationship between love and the law [Rom 13:8-14](#)? Are you inclined to follow the law for fear of punishment or because you want to do the right thing?

If your conscience tells you something is wrong and you go against your conscience, is that a sin, even if the Bible does not specifically prohibit the behavior? What does [Rom 14:14, 23](#) advise?

Read [Romans 15:19-25](#). Notice how Paul shares the gospel with those who have not yet heard it while he continues to teach those who have accepted Christ. If you are a Christian, are you telling others how you came to accept Christ as Savior? Are you also sharing what you learn from God with other Christians?

Small Group Conversation Guide

What was the **worst news** you heard in the past 12 months? How did you react emotionally, physically, and spiritually? What was the **best news** you heard in the past 12 months? What was your response? This discussion helps set the stage for the book of Romans, a book about the good news of Jesus Christ set against a backdrop of the worst news possible (rejecting Christ and being separated from Him).

Romans is the flagship book for **grace through faith**. What does God's grace mean to you? How would you describe grace to someone who is seeking? What does reflecting on and being grateful for God's grace do to your attitude and spiritual life?

Reading **Romans 1-2** brings a sober reality to light - apart from God, we are doomed to follow our own sinful desires, which leads to spiritual destruction. Why do you think Paul builds the case for the sinfulness of man **BEFORE** offering the solution of grace through faith?

One of our fears is that we will offend our friends if we "evangelize" them. We are desperate for them to know Christ, but don't want to chase away our friends from Him or us. Answer these questions as a way of lessening your fears.

- ▶ According to **Romans 1:1**, what is the origin of the gospel? How does that reassure you?
- ▶ According to **Romans 1:16**, what can the power of the gospel do? How does that increase your confidence?
- ▶ According to **Romans 1:16**, to whom is the gospel available? In what way does this encourage you to consider "unlikely" candidates as possible people with whom to share the gospel?

Using **Romans 2:11**, **Deuteronomy 10:17**, and **James 2:8-10**, discuss the ways in which God does not show partiality. Discuss the **challenges of remaining impartial** yourself.

The temptation in life is to believe that good works will get you into heaven. Many "religious" people actually teach and preach this; however, this couldn't be further from the truth. The Scriptures say that we are saved by a faith **that** works, not saved **by** works! **Romans 3:28** states clearly that "man is justified by faith apart from the **deeds** of the law." In other words, **you can't "good" your way into heaven!** Was there a time in your life when you believed this? What does knowing the truth do for you? Do you still struggle with this idea? Discuss this with your group.

One way to define faith is to be fully persuaded of God's promise so as to usher in God's performance (Rom 4:13-21). As a group, make a list of God's promises that one or more of your group members truly believes. As a group, pray to God and claim the promises He has made in His Word.

When you yield to something, it becomes your master (**Rom 6:15-23**). If you yield to your flesh, it will drag you down to its level. **Who do you want for a master, your flesh or your Savior?** What can we do to show our flesh who's the boss?

Flesh refers to the body you got at birth (**Rom 7:12-25**). Your flesh fights against the Spirit. **Perfection is not possible in this life.** If you are a believer, you are in a battle (**Mark 14:38, 1John 1:8-10**). Discuss what we can do to strengthen our minds for the battle.

There are 34 times when Paul says “**therefore**” in Romans. It could be a life-changing exercise to follow and discuss the times when Paul uses this powerful transitional word. To simplify the exercise, as a group look up **Romans 3:28, Rom 5:1, Rom 6:12, Rom 8:1, Rom 12:1, and Rom 15:17**. Discuss what these amazing implications mean to you, your family, and your current situation in life.

Have you ever felt that God abandoned you? Have you ever felt that God had stopped loving you? These feelings are real; however, **Romans 8:28-39** is your medicine! Individually, take some time to read through this passage slowly. Then, as a group, read the passage aloud. What stands out to you? What encourages you? What astounds you? If you had to explain this passage to someone else, what would you tell them? Let your word of advice to “them” be a blessing to you.

How can we learn to walk in the Spirit (Rom 8:3-6)? If we allow it to do so, our flesh will control us (**Rom 8:7-13**). What can help us turn control over to the Spirit (**Php 2:5**)? Filling our minds with God’s Word is the best way to give control to the Spirit. Discuss ways to fill your mind with God’s Word throughout the day.

How does Paul describe his compassion for his unsaved countrymen (**Rom 9:1-5**)? In your life, what people are the equivalent of your unsaved countrymen? Describe your concern for them. Compared to Paul’s concern, how fully do you care about them? On the gauge, add a needle to show how fully you care. What can we do to move our needles toward FULL?



Consider the three-part focus of Paul’s heart.

1. Focus on the **Truth (Rom 9:1)**. Paul said he was speaking the truth. It bothered him when people perverted ideas of God and Christ. Christ’s love compelled him to make sure people knew the truth (**2Cor 5:14**). How much does it bother you when others speak false ideas of who God and Christ are? Without being offensive and making people less receptive to Christ, what can we do when this happens?
2. Focus on **Those Without Christ (Rom 9:2-4)**. The Holy Spirit urged Paul’s conscience to take action in reaching the lost. Paul felt intense anguish knowing what would happen to them without Christ. He gave everything he had to reach them. What do you give of yourself to reach others for Christ?
3. Focus on the **Savior (Rom 9:5)**. Paul knew with certainty that Jesus is the only **one** who could die for our sins because He was the only one God counted as worthy to do so. Paul knew Jesus is our only **hope**. Paul knew Jesus is the only **way** we can spend eternity with God. How confident are you in your faith? How can you explain your belief in Christ to others?

God does not want us to think too highly of ourselves (**Rom 12:3-5**). He makes us different from one another; however, this does not make some better than others. To be complete requires us to use our gifts on behalf of others who also use their gifts on our behalf. Within your group, discuss the ways God has gifted different individuals (**Spiritual Gifts, Heart, Abilities, Personality, and Experiences**). How are you **SHAPEd** for service?

Romans 13:11-14 gives amazing contrasts and instructions. As a group, discuss what Paul is telling us to “cast off” and what he is encouraging us to “put on.” Imagine if we lived our lives practicing these truths!

In **Romans 13**, Paul tells us that God puts authorities in place. This includes within the family, the church, the workplace, and the government. Discuss the challenges of submitting to authorities in each of these

environments. What does Paul say is the danger of fighting against authorities?

In **Romans 14**, Paul tells us not to judge. We must still be able to tell right from wrong. Discuss how we can personally identify and confront what is wrong while keeping ourselves from judging other Christians.

“We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves” (**Rom 15:1**). The word for “bear” here means “to pick up and carry a weight.” The stronger (more mature) believer shouldn’t just tolerate the weaknesses of the less mature. Rather, they should help shoulder their burdens by showing loving

and practical consideration for them. As a group, how can you help others carry their weaknesses? If you open up and confess some weaknesses, you will give someone the opportunity to bless you by helping you in your weakness.

Discuss what members of your group can do to be like-minded (**Rom 15:4-7**). How is it possible to glorify God with one mind and one mouth?

What types of seemingly harmless behavior can cause “division and offenses” (**Rom 16:17-18**)? What or who should we avoid in light of Paul’s warning?

Leadership Principles from Romans

Caring for Those Under Your Care

Leader, how do you view your relationship with those under your care? Do you thank God for them (**Rom 1:8-12**)? Do you pray for them (how often)? Do you long to strengthen them spiritually? Does your mutual faith with them comfort you? Can you honestly say the following to them?

- **I appreciate you** (**Rom 1:8**).
- **I pray for you** (**Rom 1:9**).
- **I want to serve you** (**Rom 1:11**).
- **I want to strengthen you** (**Rom 1:12**).

Is this your attitude? What are you doing NOW to ensure that it becomes and remains your attitude?

Why Suffer?

How mature are you as a leader (**Rom 5:1-5**)? **If you are running from tribulation, you may be running from the people God wants you to reach.** Afflictions are God’s method of developing patience in you. You might not like it at the time, but God’s timetable is different from yours! Get used to it. Embrace it. Anticipate it. Dare to love it.

Life Interrupted

Eternity in Hell cannot make up for what Christ endured (**Rom 5:14-16**). Hell is not an equal punishment for an equal crime. **God interrupted His own existence to make a way for us into Heaven.** Sometimes we don’t serve God properly because we don’t appreciate what happened on Calvary. If God was willing to interrupt His existence for you, to what degree are you willing to interrupt your life for those under your care?

Your New Identity

Does your view of yourself, your new identity in Christ, align with how God sees you (**Rom 6:1-14**)? “When you see as God sees, you’ll do as God says.” When you see your identity as God sees it, what will that do to your confidence, hope, and witness? What can you do to help others recognize their new identities?

Target on Your Back

It takes a lifetime to build your character and a second to destroy it. As a leader, it is vital that you keep yourself close to Jesus. Why? Because, if you are influencing others and making waves for the Kingdom, you have a giant **target on your back**. It is because of this that you need to master your struggles by being willing to bring them out into the light. Paul did that. He was humble enough to admit his shortcomings. Does **Romans 7:15-25** remind you of your struggles? Ask a friend to hold you accountable. Your leadership and legacy might depend on it!

More Than a Conqueror

Paul said in **Romans 8:37** that, "in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us." This is a powerful reminder for leaders. If you continue to "seek first the Kingdom and His righteousness" (**Mat 6:33**), you will be amazed at how your life and leadership will exemplify this truth about being more than a conqueror!

Don't Be a Stumbling Block

You can define spiritual leadership as "moving people from where they are to where God wants them to be." As you mature spiritually, you come to better grasp the extent of your liberty in Christ. As a leader, you will interact with others of varying stages of spiritual development. In what way could your behaviors become a **stumbling block** to others (**Rom 14:19-22**)? If your behaviors are a stumbling block to others, how does this harm you spiritually? How are you moving people - at various stages - from where they ARE to where God wants them to BE?

Servant Leader Assessment

Using **Romans 12:9-21**, evaluate yourself as a servant leader. For each characteristic, to what degree does it describe you? How would others rate you?

vs	characteristic	not - - - high at all degree
9	sincerely loving	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
10	kind	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
11	hard-working	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
12	patient in trials	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
12	prayerful	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
13	giving	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
15	compassionate	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
16	agreeable,humble	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
17	forgiving	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

(For extra credit, have someone rate you. Then discuss the ratings.)

Your Prayer Requests

Read **Romans 15:30-33**. What types of prayer requests do you take to those closest to you? What types of prayer requests do you take to your church body? What types of prayer requests do you take to God?

Praise Them

In **Romans 16**, Paul asked that the Romans accept and acknowledge a specific list of people who have been faithfully serving alongside him. How often do you publicly praise those who faithfully serve with you? How often do you make requests on their behalf?

Something to Find in Each Chapter

As you read through the book, it may help to have something to find in each chapter.
Try these:

01. Why Paul said he was not ashamed of the gospel	02. Where God wrote the Law to make it available to all
03. Who is counted as righteous before God	04. Why Abraham was counted righteous by God
05. How God demonstrated His love for us	06. What enables believers to escape their slavery to sin
07. How believers have two natures which battle over sin	08. What cannot separate a believer from the love of God
09. Why Israel was unable to attain righteousness	10. What Paul says people do to be saved
11. How God grafts Gentiles into Israel's "tree" spiritually	12. How to respond instead of taking revenge
13. Why people are to submit to the government	14. How to treat disagreements which are non-essential
15. What Paul asked the church at Rome to pray for	16. How the church is to treat people who cause division