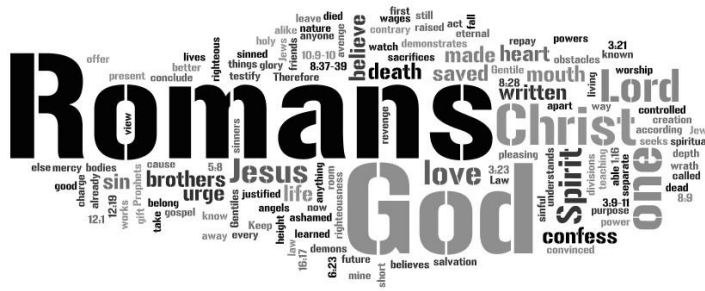


## Romans 1.8-17

Coming with Great News!



I am so GLAD you are STUDYING  
 MOST STUDIED Book of All Time  
 BIBLE Most Popular Book in World

Letter of Paul to ROMANS may be MOST Studied Book of Bible > All World

Romans: DOCTRINAL TREATISE wrapped up IN A PERSONAL LETTER

PAUL Never Been to Rome / knew many people there, chapter 16

APOSTLE OPENS HIS HEART > Reveals longing for BROTHERS in Rome

v. 8 “I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world.”

ROME – like Beijing – Capital City of Largest Empire on Earth

People Traveled thru heard of Some who Claim – JESUS – Not Caesar – is Lord!

Paul told Romans he was praying for them:

vs. 9,10 “God...is my witness how constantly I remember you in my prayers at all times...I pray that now at last by God's will the way may be opened for me to come to you.”

Chapter 15 Paul gives REASON for Letter > Asks their SUPPORT for Mission

Now that there is no more place for me to work in these regions, and since I have been longing for many years to visit you, I plan to do so when I go to Spain. I hope to see you while passing through and to have you assist me on my journey there, after I have enjoyed your company for a while. Romans 15.23,24



WRITING from CORINTH > Reveals Ministry Plans for Next Decades

v. 23 "I have been longing for many years to see you"

PAUL'S PLANS FOR THE ROMAN BELIEVERS

v. 24 "Spain...I hope to visit you while passing through and to have you assist me on my journey there, after I have enjoyed your company for a while."

Letter > Paul's Business Card > Important ID of Asian Businessman

YOU READ MY CARD? What do you think? Missionary Raising Support

Paul sending his BUSINESS CARD to Roman Church / FORMAL Introduction

Give Business Card / Want something from Someone / phone? job? money?

v. 24 "have you assist me" > PAUL DOES NOT HESITATE TO ASK HELP

Wants to GIVE something

v. 11 I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong—

Wants to GET something

vs. 12,13 that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith. I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that I planned many times to come to you (but have been prevented from doing so until now) in order that I might have a harvest among you, just as I have had among the other Gentiles.

NOT SURE of Paul's AGE > Mature Older Man with Physical Aches and Pains  
 NOT EVERYONE IS PAUL > but everyone needs Paul's Comprehensive Vision  
 RESTLESS \ NOT CONTENT with Success > Eager for ALL TO KNOW HIM

Paul Wants to GET Rome's SUPPORT to go to Spain to share Christ  
 LETTER / Impeccable Evangelical Credentials / Apostle to the Gentiles  
 IMMENSELY WORTHY OF THEIR FULL SUPPORT

This morning we GATHER as Protestant Christians

FATHER of Reformation – Martin LUTHER – profoundly Influence by Romans



1505 Martin Luther left Law  
 School > ENTERED  
 MONASTERY age 21  
 NOT to Study Theology >  
 but to SAVE HIS SOUL

Boyhood trembled > Frowning Face of Jesus in Church > Righteous Judge

ALL HIS YOUTH / Feared Death > FEARED JUDGMENT

DEVOTED SELF to Augustinian Orders / Fasted, Prayed, Confessed Sins

CONFESSED MOST TRIVIAL SINS / TOOK MANY HOURS at a Time

Superiors banned him from Confession Box UNTIL he has Something Serious

Wise Spiritual Father / Vicar General of the Congregation / John Staupitz

“Why are you so sad brother Martin?”

“I do not know what will become of me,” Luther deeply sighed.

STAUPITZ “...Trust in the Mercy of God and the Love of Christ”

With those SURPRISING WORDS / Staupitz sent Luther to study Scripture

TEXT WHICH JUMPED OFF THE PAGE TO LUTHER WAS Romans 1.17

1. God's Righteousness – what is the message?

GREAT THEME of this LETTER to the ROMANS > Good, Right, Just

a. Who God is – quality, characteristic, attribute

LUTHER SAW CLEARLY in STERN FACE of JESUS on CHURCH WALL  
UTTERLY CONSISTENT, COMPLETELY FAITHFUL, ALWAYS RIGHT

HOLY – “Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrong”

VERY NATURE OF GOD IS RIGHTEOUS > He Cannot DO WRONG

“You love righteousness and hate wickedness” Ps 45.7

b. What God does – activity, behavior

Learn this from Abraham “The Judge of all the earth will DO RIGHT”

Gen 18.25

ROMANS – God's Righteousness SUPREMELY SEEN in Cross of Christ

v. 17 “For in the gospel a righteousness from God IS REVEALED”

JESUS PERFECTLY RIGHTEOUS “I always do what pleases Him” Jn 8.29

WAS BAPTIZED “to fulfill all righteousness” Matt 3.14

c. What God gives – status, position

GOD MAKES US RIGHTEOUS – THIS IS THE GOOD NEWS OF GOD!

FIRST 2 ALONE –God is Righteous, God Acts Righteously – NOT Good News

TERRIFYING NEWS – WE'RE IN TROUBLE – WE ARE UNRIGHTEOUS

“Rescue me and deliver me in your righteousness” Ps 71.2

“In your righteousness bring me out of trouble” Ps 143.11

What made Luther love God he previously hated / GOD GIVES Righteousness

JOHN STAUPITZ TO LUTHER “Look at the wounds of Jesus Christ, to the blood that he has shed for you; it is there that the grace of God will appear to you. Instead of torturing yourself on account of your sins, throw yourself into the Redeemer’s arms.”  
John Staupitz to Luther

“My mouth will tell of your righteousness, of your salvation all day long”  
Psalm 71.15

HOW DOES GOD GIVE THIS RIGHTEOUSNESS? – by faith from first to last

Three Elements – Knowledge, Heart Response, Commitment

KNOWLEDGE – Faith in something or someone NOT EMPTY FEELING

Content of our Faith recorded in Bible, Revealed in Christ

HEART RESPONSE – Expressed in LOVE for God, His Son, His Word

COMMITMENT – Not just Savior for others, MY SAVIOR, My Lord, My God

“It is like putting the infinite moral capital of the Lord Jesus Christ into our empty bank account”  
James Boice

“from faith to faith” or “faith from first to last”?? / quote from Habakkuk

1. By Faith entirely
2. From the faith of the OT to the faith of the NT
3. From faith of the Jew to faith of the Gentile
4. From weak faith to stronger faith
5. From God’s righteousness revealed by faith to our faith in that righteous God

IT IS ALL GOOD / AND CONSISTENT WITH BIBLICAL TEACHING

"At last meditating day and night, by the mercy of God, I began to understand that the righteousness of God is that through which the righteous live by a gift of God, namely by faith. Here I felt as if I were entirely born again and had entered paradise itself through the gates that had been flung open." Martin Luther

## 2. Gospel Recipients – who is the message for?

GOOD NEWS of God's Righteousness is for ALL PEOPLE / PLACES

a. Religious – v. 16 "Jew First"

v. 13 "other Gentiles" – Roman Church largely a GENTILE CHURCH

v. 16 "Jew First" - THEOLOGY and CHRONOLOGY

THEOLOGY - "The people of Israel, Theirs is the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises" Romans 9.4

REMINDS THEM – Gospel is FROM the Jews and FOR the Jews

OT – Jewish Book / Jesus and the Apostles – Jewish

CHRONOLOGY/Time – Jesus to Samaritan woman "Salvation is from Jews"

Paul in Synagogue at PISIDIAN ANTIOCH to Jews

"We had to speak the word of God to you first. Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life we now turn to the Gentiles"

Acts 13.46

TRAGIC REJECTION BURDENED THE HEART OF JESUS

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, BUT YOU WERE NOT WILLING" Luke 13.34

SURPRISING Religious People, those who were promised Messiah REJECTED  
NOT SURPRISING – No Religion – NOT EVEN Christianity – CAN SAVE US

RELIGION OFTEN INFLUENCES ONE to TRUST SELF – Ex. Paul/Saul  
 Christian Gospel is about FULLY TRUSTING CHRIST, CHRIST ALONE  
 GOD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS IS FOR RELIGIOUS / often too proud to ask for it

b. Advantaged – “Greeks” / “wise”

PRIORITY for Jews Does NOT MAKE Gospel LESS RELEVANT for Gentiles  
 “Greeks and non-Greeks” OBVIOUS REFERENCE TO NATIONALITY  
 ADDITION of Phrase “wise and foolish” SOMETHING MORE MEANT

Greeks were the people of EDUCATIONAL PRIVILEGE & OPPORTUNITY

Greeks – Hellenists / Philosophers / GOOD NEWS FOR EDUCATED

CONTRARY TO MODERN IDEAS – Higher Education Largely Secular  
 RELIGION PLAYS LITTLE OR NO PART IN MOST ACADEMIC CIRCLES

ACADEMIC World – Produces REASONS WHY should IGNORE RELIGION  
 EX - RELIGIOUS IDEAS RELATIVE – formed by CULTURAL FORCES

QUESTION – What about claims of Christ and the Bible? ARE THEY TRUE?

Paul to Athenian philosophers / Greek academics – BRUSHED OFF IDEAS

“He seems to be advocating FOREIGN GODS” Acts 17.18

TRUE – Few in Athens HEARD GOSPEL of JESUS of NAZARETH / Foreign!

PAUL “what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you”  
 Acts 17.23

QUESTION NOT – Is it Foreign? // REAL QUESTION – Is it True?!

EVERY TRUTH comes from SOMEWHERE /

GOSPEL of Jesus Christ Foreign to All / JESUS Came from Heaven

“Faith is not a blind thing, for faith begins with knowledge. It is not a speculative thing: for faith believes facts which are sure. It is not an unpractical, dreamy thing; for faith stakes its destiny upon the truth of revelation...Faith...is the eye which looks...Faith is the hand which grasps...Faith is the mouth which feeds upon Christ”  
 Charles Spurgeon

c. Disadvantaged – “non Greeks” / “foolish”

Anyone who was not Greek was a BARBARIAN / MOST OF US!

WITHOUT Knowledge of GREEK / Cut off- Cultural & Academic Storehouse

PERHAPS YOU FELT Disadvantaged, Limited, Cut off from Opportunities

NOT ENOUGH EDUCATION, MONEY, CONNECTIONS WITH POWER

DANGER – Feel that Christianity is NOT FOR YOU / DO NOT QUALIFY

Jesus Christ NOT go ONLY to Wise, Wealthy, Influential Citizens of His Day

ALSO to EVERYDAY PEOPLE – Whoever and Wherever they Were

“Friend of Sinners” – carpenters, fishermen, tax collectors, prostitutes

Peter to Cornelius – “God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him”  
 Acts 10.35

Rom 2.11 “For God does not show favoritism”

CHURCH IS NOT A CLUB FOR “Our Kind of People” / WE DON’T OWN IT

Not American, Chinese, Korean, Russian – CHURCH of LORD JESUS X

v. 15 “you who are at Rome” / MULTI-Cultural City /4 million from all World

DIVERSE Family of Faith at Faith in X - “Jesus, only Jesus, Savior of World”



### 3. Godly Response – what must we do?

#### a. Debt “obligated” – an obligation that must be discharged

v. 14 I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish.

UNDER DIVINE OBLIGATION TO PREACH GOSPEL TO ALL PEOPLE

“Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!” 1 Corinthians 9.17

2 Kinds of Debt – 1. Taken something for Self /

2. Given something for Another\*\*

SEMINARY STUDENT – Mission Trip to Uganda / Country at War / Collapse  
Staying in Orphanage / Given Package to Carry / Difficult Travel

FINALLY PRESENTED \$30,000 TO DIRECTOR OF ORPHANAGE

I was DEBTOR / NOT MY MONEY / Given that money for the Orphanage

NOT OUR GOSPEL – From God – Must faithfully give Gospel to All People

NOT ALL HAVE THE GIFT OF EVANGELISM, or OFFICE EVANGELIST  
BUT ALL BELIEVERS are RESPONSIBLE to SHARE GOOD NEWS of Jesus

v. 16 “the gospel, because it is the power of God for salvation”

MORE THAN JUST TELLS ABOUT – or Announces – God’s Saving Power  
THE GOSPEL ITSELF IS THE POWER

#### b. Delight “eager”

v. 15 That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel...

SEEMS A STRANGE RESPONSE TO A DUTY – Very UnAmerican

Characteristic Response of Americans / Not Me / Nobody tells me what to do!

Paul NOT YET COME to Rome – NOT DUE to any RELUCTANCE of His  
ON THE CONTRARY – he is EAGER TO PREACH IN ROME

Everyone WANTED to Visit Rome at Least ONCE – Look, Stare, Wonder

Paul did not want to Visit as a TOURIST but as EVANGELIST – preach Christ

BIBLICAL PARADOX – Believer WANTS to do WHAT HE HAS TO DO  
TRUE IF HE IS WISE – AND WANTS JOY AND PEACE OF GOD

TRUTH DISCOVERED by Psalmist “I rejoice in following your statutes as one  
rejoices in great riches...I delight in your decrees, I will not neglect your word”

c. Determination “not ashamed”

STRANGE TO HEAR – Apostle who GLORIED in the Cross / BOASTED!

HONEST WORDS – even an Apostle of God is part Sinner, part Saint

WRITING TO ROME – EPICENTER OF WORLDLY POWER

GOD saves through Lifeless, Broken, Naked, Bleeding Man / CRAZY NEWS!

WORDS OF CONVICTION / DETERMINATION – thought and reflection

HE KNOWS CRITICISMS, Intellectual ATTACKS, MOCKING LAUGH

FELT LIKE AN IDIOT – Porcius Festus – Roman Government Official said  
“You are out of your mind, Paul! Your great learning is driving you mad”

Acts 26.24

ABSENCE OF SHAME is a PROOF of FAITH

JESUS “If anyone is ashamed of me and my words....the Son of Man will be  
ashamed of him”

Mark 8.38

## LOGICAL PROGRESSION

1. He is ready to preach the Gospel
2. He is not ashamed of the Gospel
3. Because it is the Power of God for Salvation
4. Because in the Gospel the Righteousness of God is Revealed

GOD'S SAVING POWER is Operative through the GOSPEL ALONE

Word of God living and active / Sword of the Spirit / Life Giving Good News

OPERATION – not UNCONDITIONAL or UNIVERSAL

v. 16 “everyone who believes” SALVATION APPLIED THROUGH FAITH

TO SAY “I am NOT ASHAMED” – BOLD DETERMINATION

“I have suffered ridicule, counted the costs, I stand for Jesus & Him crucified”

1510 > 5 yrs as a Monk > 2 years Teacher of Bible Univ of Wittenburg

FULFILLED LIFE LONG GOAL > Visit to the Holy City of Rome

EAGER TOURIST > saw Shrines, Relics, Churches, heard Legends

Church of St. John Lateran in Rome / Medieval Stone Stairs

ALLEGEDLY original Staircase from home of Pontius Pilate in Jerusalem

FAITHFUL climbed “Holy Stairs” on their KNEES, praying at each point

KISSING STAINS on Stairs / Claimed to be from the Blood of Jesus

DURING this Painful Devotion / Our Text filled Luther's mind

“The just shall live by faith” / Realized he lived by FEAR not FAITH

OLD SUPERSTITIONS fought against NEW BIBLICAL FAITH IN HIM

REAL BEGINNING OF REFORMATION / in heart of Martin Luther

few years Change of Heart / swept across Europe / eventually World

Luther echoed Paul “I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God”

Romans 1.8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world. 9 God, whom I serve in my spirit in preaching the gospel of his Son, is my witness how constantly I remember you 10 in my prayers at all times; and I pray that now at last by God's will the way may be opened for me to come to you. 11 I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong— 12 that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith. 13 I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that I planned many times to come to you (but have been prevented from doing so until now) in order that I might have a harvest among you, just as I have had among the other Gentiles. 14 I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish. 15 That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are in Rome. 16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. 17 For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."