

Romans 1-2

Begins with a pretty standard greeting from Paul.

Written to all who are in Rome.

Paul's Desire to visit Rome.

Romans 1:15 So, as much as is in me, *I am* ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also.

- This sets out the purpose of this letter.
- The first 8 chapters of Romans is a great presentation of the Gospel.
- We will see why we need to be saved. How we get saved. What happens when we get saved. And how to live as saved.

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

- **Paul is not ashamed of the Gospel.**
- In a sophisticated city like Rome, some might be embarrassed by a gospel centered on a crucified Jewish Savior and embraced by the lowest classes of people – but Paul is not **ashamed**.
 - It is the power of God to salvation.
 - It is the answer to what people need.
 - Jesus is the answer to the problems of the world.
 - That may sound churchy, but it is true.
 - If you have lived by the power of God, you know it is true.
 - In Christ we are saved – delivered, healed, set free
 - Why would we be ashamed or hesitant to share actual transformative power with people who are hurting?
 - Unbelief.
 - Fear of man.
- The Gospel that we present, that we live, the good news of Jesus Christ – has inherent power. We do not give it power, It is powerful.

- The gospel is certainly news, but it is more than information; it has an inherent power. “The gospel is not advice to people, suggesting that they lift themselves. It is power. It lifts them up. Paul does not say that the gospel brings power, but that it is power, and God’s power at that.”
- **For the Jew first and also for the Greek**
 - Rome is a mixed cultural place. Both Jewish people and Greeks live there together.
 - The Jew should have been the first to receive the Gospel. The plan had been shown to them throughout the Old Testament.
 - The Greek, or Gentiles, are now able to receive salvation – but looking at the Old Testament, this actually was always true.
 - **Isaiah 49:6** Indeed He says, “It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.’ ”
 - **Amos 9:11-12** “On that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down, and repair its damages; I will raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as in the days of old; ¹² That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and all the Gentiles who are called by My name,” Says the LORD who does this thing.

Romans 1:17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “*The just shall live by faith.*”

- The Gospel will reveal how we actually obtain righteousness.
- Paul gives a sneak peek here. It is revealed by faith.
- Not the works of a law.
- We are saved by faith. Not by works.
- This may seem like it changed from the Old Testament. That the law was the way to salvation. But we will eventually get to Paul proving that the way of salvation is and always has been through faith. God did not change.

- That is why Paul quotes from Habakkuk 2:4 Where God outright tells them that those who are just are just because of their faith.
- But we are not just saved by faith. It is from faith to faith – meaning faith is the starting point, but is also the finishing point. And every point in between.

Why we need salvation

Romans 1:18-23 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, ¹⁹ because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown *it* to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world His invisible *attributes* are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, ²¹ because, although they knew God, they did not glorify *Him* as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Professing to be wise, they became fools, ²³ and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.

- What are we saved from? Primarily from the wrath of God.
 - The wrath of God is not against people. It is against ungodliness and unrighteousness. If we choose those, then we are partakers of the wrath. But we have a choice.
 - The wrath was not against Adam and Eve, wrath did not enter until disobedience entered.
- There is no point in talking about salvation if we don't need saving.
 - We don't have conversations about lifeboats if we aren't going to go near water.
- We sometimes object to the idea of the **wrath of God** because we equate it with human anger, which is motivated by selfish personal reasons or by a desire for revenge. We must not forget that **the wrath of God** is completely *righteous* in character.
- We love to focus on the love of God. Which is good and true. But God has more than one quality to Him.
- God is also righteous. And He requires righteousness of His creation.

- But people have purposefully suppressed the truth.
- God has revealed Himself through so many ways. All of creation speaks to the glory and majesty of God. The complexities of this universe scream that there is a Creator – then we decree the Big Bang theory and teach a billions of years old universe when there is no concrete evidence for that (yes, I am aware of radio-isotope dating, strata layering, erosion principles – but when viewed from a Biblical worldview, those evidences can easily be interpreted to point to Creation and young earth – and scientists regularly cover up problems that they face, like mis-dating by hundreds of millions of years newly formed magma, or finding fossils with tissue still attached that date millions of years old).
- God has revealed Himself by making us in His image – and we came up with evolution – something currently being debunked by mainstream science.
- All throughout history, people have made gods in other images. Worshipping idols, false religions, self, or even nothing.
- This is the professing to be wise they became fools part.
- When we abandon a Biblical worldview in pursuit of human reasoning and logic apart from God, we will never discover the deep truths of the universe or Creation – because it all points back to God as Creator.
- We may look at the story of the Golden calf and think how stupid Israel was, and then go study evolution or origins of the universe, or look at the healing power of crystals or whatever.
- The problem was not ignorance of God – it was a rejecting of God.
- People today are more spiritual than ever. Yet they also reject the God of the Bible more than ever.

Romans 1:24-25 Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, ²⁵ who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

- When we reject God we are left with nothing but our sin.

- When we are born, we are born into sin, with a sin nature. This is because of Adam's original sin. We inherit that. That's why the Bible refers to us as slaves to sin before salvation. (Romans 5 will deal with this).
- We cannot obtain righteousness and avoid the wrath of God apart from God.

Romans 1:26-32 For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. ²⁷ Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. ²⁸ And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; ²⁹ being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; *they are* whisperers, ³⁰ backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, ³¹ undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; ³² who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

- This is a partial, definitely not exhaustive, look at what happens when we reject God.
- You may not see all these traits in any one individual that rejects God, but you will in a society that rejects God.
- I know Christians that believe there is nothing wrong with sex outside of marriage – that have advised people to live and sleep together before marriage to make sure.
- Currently the world is defending most of these behaviors as not just ok, but in many of them traits to be admired.
- Many believers are not repulsed by witchcraft, sorcery or things with evil in them.
- We as a society have traded the truth of God for a lie, and many believers are getting their knowledge from the world!

But I am not that bad!

Romans 2:1-3 Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things. ² But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things. ³ And do you think this, O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God?

- Maybe you feel like a moralist. You are a good person. So therefore you can be saved because you are just that good.
- Yet in feeling superior to others you have sinned against God.
- And in fact, rejecting God is an act of unrighteousness. We cannot be righteous apart from God.
- Are we guilty of the same things? Jesus said hate=murder, lust=adultery

Romans 2:5-6 But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, ⁶ who *"will render to each one according to his deeds"*:

- Unbelievers will be judged according to their deeds.
- Ex - "The Good Place" - get to the good place by doing enough good. Found out at the end there no one is ever good enough.
- If we measure our righteousness against God's standard of perfection - we will always fall short.
- We cannot be saved by our actions - we need the righteousness of God or there is no hope.

Romans 2:7-9 eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; ⁸ but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath, ⁹ tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek;

- In the judgement, one would have eternal life if one was able to never sin.

- But if you have ever done any evil, then you have broken the law and are guilty before God.

This is why we need a Savior.

Romans 2:12-16 For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law ¹³ (for not the hearers of the law *are* just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified; ¹⁴ for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, ¹⁵ who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves *their* thoughts accusing or else excusing *them*) ¹⁶ in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

- People who have heard the law, but do not obey the law are guilty
- People who have not heard the law are still guilty. The morality of God is written into our very being. When people choose to do good, this proves this. We do not choose good without that because of our sin nature.
- **Their thoughts accusing or else excusing them:** In theory, a man might be justified (“excused”) by obeying his conscience. Unfortunately, every man has violated his conscience (God’s internal revelation to man), just as every man has violated God’s written revelation.
- **So even our own conscience is not enough to save us.**

Romans 2:17-29

Being a Jew is not enough to save you

- **Romans 2:25** For circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep the law; but if you are a breaker of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision.
- **There is no outward salvation.**

- Going to church does not make you saved. Wearing a cross, getting baptized, telling people you are saved – none of this is salvation.