

## **Romans: *From Guilt to Glory***

### **Introduction**

The epistle to the Romans is the longest of Paul's letters. It contains 7,114 words in the original. The original copy of this letter would have been written on an 11 ½ foot long piece of papyrus. However, Romans is not only Paul's longest epistle but is generally considered to be his greatest. The influence of this epistle in church history cannot be overstated. In A.D. 386, Augustine was converted to Christ suddenly and dramatically after reading Romans 13:13-14. Over one thousand years later the epistle to the Romans was the primary influence God used in the life of the Protestant Reformer Martin Luther. On Wednesday evening, May 24, 1738, a young Anglican clergyman named John Wesley was listening to a fervent sermon in Aldersgate, London. As the preacher read from Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans, Wesley trusted Christ alone for salvation. A young Swiss theologian named Karl Barth was steeped in liberal theology and had been carried away by the unbelief and anti-supernaturalism of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, in 1918 his commentary on Romans was published and was described as "falling like a bombshell on the playground of the theologians." Romans has been described in many ways by those who love God's Word.

*"When anyone gains a knowledge of this Epistle, he has an entrance opened to him to all the most hidden treasures of Scripture."* John Calvin

*"The chief part of the New Testament and the very purest gospel."* Martin Luther

*"The cathedral of Christian faith. . . in studying the Epistle to the Romans we find ourselves at every word face to face with the unfathomable."* Frederick Godet

*"The profoundest book in existence."* Samuel Taylor Coleridge

**I. The Author**—Paul is the author of this letter—Tertius served as his amanuensis (16:22). Paul wrote Romans from Corinth during his three month stay there near the end of his third missionary journey in the early spring of AD 58 (Acts 20:1-3).

**II. The Audience**—Romans was written to a network of house churches in the capital city of Rome (1:7, 15; 16:3-5). When Romans was written the church there had a world-wide reputation (1:8). The city of Rome at that time was the greatest city in the world with a total population of about 1-1.5 million people and a Jewish population of about 50,000 grouped in several synagogues.

**III. The Aim**—The purpose of Romans is to fully set before the church in Rome the gospel message that Paul proclaimed about how sinful men are brought into right relationship with God and then live out that relationship in everyday life.

#### IV. The Arrangement—

<b>ROMANS</b>							
<b>THE GOSPEL</b>							
Introduction—Personal (1:1–17)	<b>Saving the Sinner</b>		<b>Concerning Israel</b>		<b>Concerning Christian Conduct</b>		
	Depravity of humanity		Divine sovereignty and human will		Social		
	Grace of God		Past, present, and future of the nation		Civil		
	Justification by faith				Personal		
	Sanctification through the Spirit						
	Security of the saint						
	CHAPTERS 1:18–8:39		CHAPTERS 9–11		CHAPTERS 12:1–15:13		
	<b>Emphasis</b>	Doctrinal		National		Practical	
	<b>Response</b>	Faith		Hope		Love	
	<b>Doctrine of God</b>	Wrath	Righteousness		Glory	Grace	
<b>Doctrine of Humanity</b>	Fallen	Dead	Saved	Struggling		Freed	
<b>Doctrine of Sin</b>	Exposed	Conquered		Explained		Forgiven	
<b>Scope</b>	Dead in sin		Peace with God		Love for others		
<b>Theme</b>	God's righteousness is given to those who put their faith in Jesus Christ.						
<b>Key Verses</b>	1:16–17						

- I. The Great Exposition (1-11)      *Doctrine*
- II. The Great Exhortation (12-16)      *Duty*

- I. Doctrine (1-8)      *Explanation*
- II. Dispensation (9-11)      *Illustration*
- III. Duty (12-16)      *Application*

#### V. The Analysis

The theme of Romans is the gospel, which is God’s wonderful plan for dealing with human sin (its penalty, power, and presence) All of Roman is a description of the gospel. This becomes clear, in that, references to the gospel bracket the entire letter. The word “gospel” appears four times in the prologue (1:1, 9, 15, 16) and then again at the conclusion (16:25).

#### VI. The Application