

Outline of
Romans



Introduction

Authorship

All New Testament scholars accept this as a genuine letter of Paul. Churches naturally preserved letters of Paul; it would have been unnatural for anyone to have forged letters in his name during his lifetime or until long after his genuine letters had become widely known and circulated as authoritative. On the basis of letters clearly written by Paul to address specific situations of his day (e.g., 1 Corinthians) and other letters that share a common style with them, even the most critical New Testament scholars rarely dispute the Pauline authorship of particular letters (including Romans, Galatians, 1–2 Corinthians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians and Philemon).

Rome's Jewish Community

Rome may have had a million inhabitants; supported by its empire, it imported at least two hundred thousand tons of grain annually. Estimates of the Jewish community in this period range between roughly twenty thousand and fifty thousand, thus (by the usual educated guesses) perhaps five percent of the population. Rome's Jewish community was predominantly poor, although some groups of Jewish people there were wealthier than others and better educated. Different groups lived in different parts of the city (mostly in ethnically segregated communities) and had their own leaders. It is thought that many of the predominantly Jewish house churches existed in the Jewish ghetto across the Tiber, many Jewish residents working on the docks there. Rome included a community of Jewish Roman citizens, mostly descended from Judeans enslaved by Pompey and then freed by other Jews in Rome (Philo, *Embassy to Gaius* 155). More than half of the Jewish residents of Rome had Latin names.

The primary language of the Jewish community in Rome, however, was not Latin but Greek, the language in which Paul writes (seventy-six percent of their burial inscriptions are in Greek, twenty-three percent in Latin and one percent in Hebrew or Aramaic). Many Roman conversions to Judaism created resentment among other aristocratic Romans and led to tension between the Jewish and Gentile elements in the city. Relevant to this letter, ancient literature suggests that many Romans looked down on Jewish people especially for circumcision (cf. Rom 2:25-29; 4:9-12), Sabbath-keeping (cf. 14:5-6) and food customs (cf. 14:2-23).

Jewish soteriology

Jewish beliefs in the empire in Paul's day were diverse on many points, but most agreed on central issues such as the value of circumcision, Torah, and the temple for Jewish identity. E. P. Sanders challenged many earlier readings of Paul that assumed pervasive Jewish legalism, but the emerging "new perspective" has yielded a conglomeration of different solutions rather than a unified understanding of Paul. Sanders persuasively made the case for grace in ancient Judaism, but other scholars note that Judaism was diverse, and even a religion insistent on grace (such as Christianity) has its share of legalists. (Merely emphasizing reward or punishment for deeds, however, is not necessarily legalistic, also appearing in Paul, e.g., 2 Cor 5:10).

Paul's depiction of opposing positions follows standard rhetorical conventions for polemic in his day, caricaturizing his opponents for the purpose of *reductio ad absurdum*. His argument is rhetorically designed to persuade a first-century audience, even though today he might need to argue differently for a different audience. (For example, Rom 2:17-24, condemning an extreme Jewish teacher, and more general Psalms verses cited in 3:10-20, would not technically make all Jewish individuals sinful. Paul does believe that all people have sinned, but his supporting arguments use the rhetoric that was effective in his setting).

Paul thus challenges not Jewish people or Jewish views as a whole but some Jewish attitudes and practices. He does this most often in letters such as Romans and Galatians where he addresses the relationship of Gentile believers to Israel's heritage. For the Jewish people, observance of the law was a matter of culture regardless of views about salvation. For Gentile converts, however, imposing observance of the law's Israel-specific markers as a condition of belonging to Christ's community raised starkly the question of what believers rely on for salvation. Paul recognized Christ as the way of salvation and dependence on him as its necessary condition. For Paul, the Spirit provides the inward circumcision and law that meets what outward circumcision and observance of ancient regulations could only symbolize or approximate (cf. Jer 31:31-34; Ezek 36:26-27).

Situation

Although Jesus's movement in Rome started among Jewish believers (cf. Acts 2:10), most of the believers in Rome by the time Paul writes were probably Gentiles (cf. Rom 1:5; 11:13; 16:4; esp. 1:13), possibly because many of the Jewish Christian leaders had been temporarily expelled for half a decade (see comment on Acts 18:2). Sometime in the 40s A.D., probably in 49, the emperor Claudius expelled some or much of the Jewish community from Rome, apparently over debates about the Christ (cf. Suetonius, *Life of Claudius* 25.4). The Roman church was thus composed largely of Gentiles until Claudius's death in A.D. 54, when his edict was automatically repealed, and a number of Jewish Christians returned to Rome (Rom 16:3). Jewish and Gentile Christians (as well as Gentiles influenced by Jews, and lax Jews less observant of the law) had different cultural ways of expressing their faith in Jesus (cf. Rom 14); Paul thus uses the gospel to address, among other matters, a church experiencing tension between two valid cultural expressions of the Christian faith.

Paul probably wrote Romans around 55–58 (I tend to favor closer to 58), shortly after Claudius's death. A decade after Claudius's death and perhaps six years (give or take two) after Paul wrote this letter, Christians of all ethnic backgrounds would suffer together in Rome (Tacitus, *Annals* 15.44). That the church remained strong after Nero killed hundreds testifies to how much the movement had grown.

Source: Keener, Craig S. (2014). *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*, Second Edition. InterVarsity Press.

WRITER ~ PAUL

*STATEMENT
ARGUMENT*

WRITER & READERS ~ PAUL & ROME

*CAPITAL OF THE EMPIRE
GATEWAY TO THE WEST*

READERS ~ ROME

EXTERNAL ~ CITY (Political & Social)

INTERNAL ~ CHURCH

(i) Jewish (ii) Gentile (iii) Gentile & Jewish

KEY WORDS: GOD (153x)
LAW (72x)
CHRIST (65x)
SIN (48x)
LORD (43x)
FAITH (40x)

KEY CONCEPT: RIGHTEOUSNESS
*v. GENTILE UNRIGHTEOUSNESS
v. JEWISH RIGHTEOUSNESS*

- 1. IMPUTED ~ JUSTIFICATION (Penalty of sin)*
- 2. IMPARTED ~ SANCTIFICATION (Power of sin)*
- 3. COMPLETED ~ GLORIFICATION (Presence of sin)*

SALVATION

OUTLINE: FAITH (1-4) HOPE (5-11) LOVE (12-16)

HIS MESSAGE (GOD, SON, SPIRIT)	1.
CORPORATE GREETINGS	1.
1. PAUL'S ACCOUNT of HIS GOSPEL (1-8)	
<i>a. RIGHTEOUSNESS REVEALED IN GOD'S WRATH.</i>	1-3
<i>b. RIGHTEOUSNESS CREDITED THROUGH CHRIST'S DEATH.</i>	3-5
<i>c. RIGHTEOUSNESS ACHIEVED BY SPIRIT'S LIFE.</i>	6-8
2. PAUL'S AGONY OVER HIS PEOPLE (9-11)	
<i>a. ISRAEL'S PAST REDUCTION TO THE REMNANT.</i>	9
<i>b. ISRAEL'S PRESENT RESISTANCE TO THE GOSPEL.</i>	10
<i>c. ISRAEL'S FUTURE RESTORATION TO THE COVENANT.</i>	11
3. PAUL'S APPEAL TO HIS READERS (12-16)	
<i>a. THEIR PERSONAL BEARING IN SERVICE & SUFFERING.</i>	12
<i>b. THEIR PUBLIC BEHAVIOUR IN STATE & SOCIETY.</i>	13
<i>c. THEIR PRACTICAL BROTHERHOOD IN SCRUPLES & SONG.</i>	14-15
HIS METHOD (WORD, DEED & SIGN).	15
INDIVIDUAL GREETINGS.	16

Chapter
1

- Ro 1:1-8** Paul commends his calling to the Romans; and his desire to come to them.
- Ro 1:9-15** What his gospel is.
- Ro 1:16-17** God is angry with sin.
- Ro 1:18-20** What were the sins of the gentiles.

Chapter
2

- Ro 2:1-5** No excuse for sin.
- Ro 2:6-13** No escape from judgment.
- Ro 2:14-16** Gentiles cannot; nor Jews.

Chapter
3

- Ro 3:1-2** The Jews' prerogative; which they have not lost;
- Ro 3:3-8** howbeit the law convinces them also of sin;
- Ro 3:9-19** therefore no flesh is justified by the law;
- Ro 3:20-27** but all, without difference, by faith, only;
- Ro 3:28-30** and yet the law is not abolished.

Chapter
4

- Ro 4:1-9** Abraham's faith was imputed to him for righteousness; before he was circumcised.
- Ro 4:10-12** By faith only he and his seed received the promise.
- Ro 4:13-15** Abraham is the father of all that believe.
- Ro 4:16-23** Our faith also shall be imputed to us for righteousness.



Chapter
5

- Ro 5:1** Being justified by faith, we have peace with God; and joy in our hope;
- Ro 5:2-7** that since we were reconciled by his blood, when we were enemies;
- Ro 5:8-9** we shall much more be saved, being reconciled.
- Ro 5:10-11** As sin and death came by Adam;
- Ro 5:12-16** so much more righteousness and life by Jesus Christ.
- Ro 5:17-19** Where sin abounded, grace did superabound.

Chapter
6

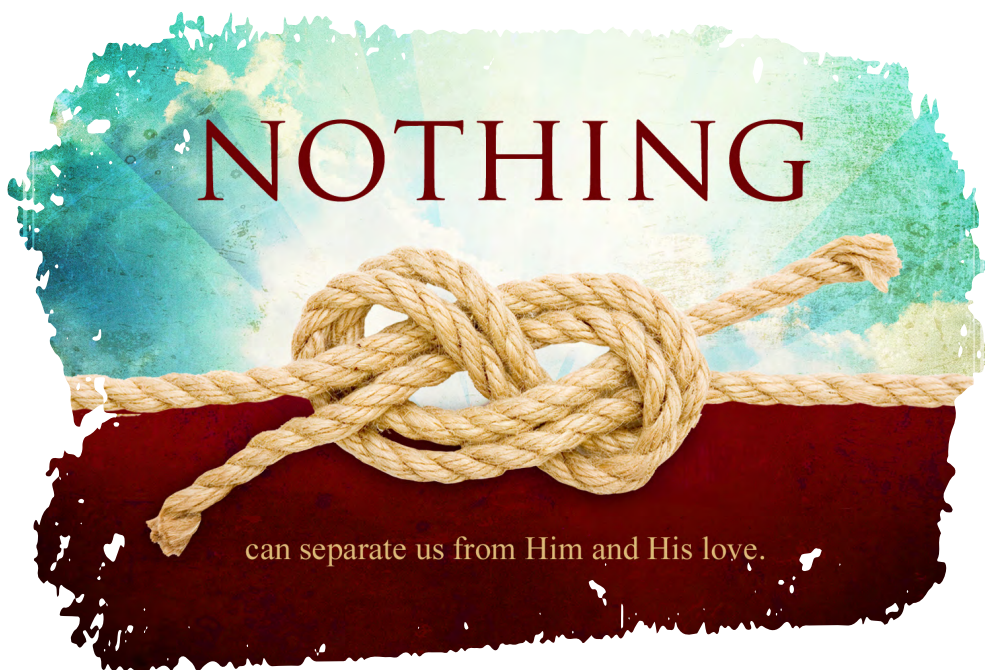
- Ro 6:1** We may not live in sin;
Ro 6:2 for we are dead unto it;
Ro 6:3-11 as appears by our baptism.
Ro 6:12-17 Let not sin reign any more;
Ro 6:18-22 because we have yielded ourselves to the service of righteousness;
Ro 6:23 and for that death is the wages of sin.

Chapter
7

- Ro 7:1-3** No law hath power over a man longer than he lives.
Ro 7:4-6 But we are dead to the law.
Ro 7:7-11 Yet is not the law sin;
Ro 7:12-15 but holy, just and good;
Ro 7:16-25 as I acknowledge, who am grieved because I cannot keep it.

Chapter
8

- Ro 8:1-4** They that are in Christ, are free from condemnation.
Ro 8:5-12 What harm comes of the flesh;
Ro 8:13-18 and what good of the Spirit.
Ro 8:19-28 The glorious deliverance all things long for,
Ro 8:29-37 was beforehand decreed from God.
Ro 8:38-39 Nothing can sever us from his love.



Chapter
9

- Ro 9:1-6** Paul is sorry for the Jews.
Ro 9:7-17 All of Abraham not of the promise.
Ro 9:18-24 God's sovereignty.
Ro 9:25-31 The calling of the Gentiles and rejecting of the Jews, foretold.
Ro 9:32-33 The cause of the Jews' stumbling.

Chapter
10

- Ro 10:1-10** The Scripture shows the difference between the righteousness of the law,
and that of faith;
Ro 10:11-17 and that all, both Jew and Gentile, that believe, shall not be confounded;
Ro 10:18 and that the Gentiles shall receive the word and believe.
Ro 10:19-21 Israel was not ignorant of these things.

Chapter
11

- Ro 11:1-6** God has not cast off all Israel.
Ro 11:7-15 Some were elected, though the rest were hardened.
Ro 11:16-17 There is hope of their conversion.
Ro 11:18-25 The Gentiles may not exult over them;
Ro 11:26-32 for there is a promise of their salvation.
Ro 11:33-36 God's judgments are unsearchable.

Chapter
12

- Ro 12:1-2** God's mercies must move us to please God.
Ro 12:3-5 No man must think too well of himself;
Ro 12:6-8 but everyone attend on that calling wherein he is placed.
Ro 12:9-18 Love, and many other duties are required of us.
Ro 12:19-21 Revenge is especially forbidden.

Chapter
13

- Ro 13:1-7** Subjection, and many other duties, we owe to the magistrates.
Ro 13:8-10 Love is the fulfilling of the law.
Ro 13:11-14 Gluttony and drunkenness, and the works of darkness, are out of season in the time of the Gospel.

Chapter
14

- Ro 14:1-12** Men may not contemn nor condemn one another for things indifferent;
Ro 14:13-14 but take heed that they give no offence in them;
Ro 14:15-23 which the apostle proves unlawful by many reasons.

Chapter
15

- Ro 15:1** The strong must bear with the weak.
Ro 15:2 We must not please ourselves;
Ro 15:3-6 for Christ did not so;
Ro 15:7 but receive one another, as Christ did us all;
Ro 15:8-14 both Jews and Gentiles;
Ro 15:15-27 Paul excuses his writing;
Ro 15:28-29 and promises to see them;
Ro 15:30-33 and requests their prayers.

Chapter
16

- Ro 16:1-16** Paul wills the brethren to greet many;
Ro 16:17-20 and advises them to take heed of those which cause dissension and offences;
Ro 16:21-27 and after sundry salutations ends with praise and thanks to God.

Quiz on Romans

1. God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet _____, Christ died for us.

2. Of what was Paul not ashamed, according to Chapter 2?

3. Paul said that death, life, tribulation, prosecution, and other events will not separate us from what?

4. According to Chapter 13, how should you love your neighbour?

5. God justifies people by what, according to Chapter 3?

6. According to Paul in Chapter 6, what are the wages of sin?

7. What tribe of Israel did the Apostle Paul belong to?

8. According to Chapter 10, how does faith come?

9. What does God's goodness or kindness lead us to, according to Chapter 2?

10. According to Chapter 5, what does tribulation produce?

GENEVA
BIBLE SCHOOL

