

Studying the Book of Romans

Why did Paul write this letter to the Christians in Rome? What motivated him? What did he hope to achieve?

Suppose you were to write the most important document of your life: perhaps a booklet for your grandchildren explaining your philosophy of life. More than anything, you would want them to understand “why” you wrote, what motivated you, and what you hoped to achieve by writing it. Otherwise, they might learn the facts without really understanding you. In that case, they would miss the best part.

The Book of Romans may be the most profound letter in the New Testament. It is possible to be deeply fed and impacted by this letter and still not comprehend what Paul was trying to accomplish. You don't want to miss the best part.

Paul says in Romans 1:11 (NAS) that he longs to see these Roman Christians so that he may impart some spiritual gift to them which will establish them. Remember, they were already Christians, like yourself; but God wanted to impart a spiritual gift to them, and He wants to impart this same gift to you. He wants to “establish” you along with them. Now Romans becomes your personal letter! (Other versions say, “make you strong”; but “established” is more preferable. I highly encourage the use of the NAS Bible.)

Paul had never been to Rome, and he didn't plan to retire there. He intended to launch a major new thrust into Spain, but he needed a Home Church, a spiritual base and resource center in order to open up a new frontier for Christ! (Romans 15:24, 28) For the Roman Church to fulfill this great, world-changing purpose, they needed something.

The question is: What did this Church need to become so established that they could operate at a level necessary for this mission? Once you understand what it was that would accomplish this transformation in them, you can receive Paul's spiritual gift for yourself and be “established” for God's higher purposes.

Paul explains the Gospel more fully in the book of Romans than any other place. Words like, “righteousness,” “faith,” “glory,” “justification,” and “wrath” are threaded through the letter; but Paul's major concern is to justify God. The Gospel justifies God first, then man.

Why is it right that God exhibit wrath toward men? Why is it right for God to do whatever He chooses to do? Why is it right for God to hold all men accountable, even those who have not heard? Why is it right that God bypass the Jews at this time in history? In answering these questions, Paul exonerates God, thereby highlighting His mercy toward us in this glorious Gospel!

Lesson 1

What is the main purpose of your life? Until this question is satisfactorily answered, you will feel adrift. As Ravi Zacharias says in Jesus Among Other Gods: “Purpose is to life what the skeleton is to the body.”

Jesus taught that your satisfaction in life comes from your hunger for God Himself and His character , or righteousness. (Mathew 5:6)

And for you to have such a hunger for God, you must first have experienced Him in such a way that His love for you overwhelmed your fears. His adequacy covered up your failures and gave you the assurance that He has decreed: “You measure up in My sight.”

Scripture Study: Drink in Romans 1:1. (*10 minutes*)

Perhaps you are not an apostle; but everything else in this opening statement applies to you just as much as to Paul. All that remains is for you to own it.

What is Paul’s identity?

What is your identity?

What is Paul’s calling?

What is your calling? (Don’t worry about a title. Give a function that relates to what God’s Call is upon your life.)

What is the main purpose of Paul’s life?

What is the main purpose of your life?

Just because you may not be called into “full-time ministry,” is there any reason that Paul’s main purpose may not also be offered to define your life purpose?

Journal: Write your thoughts to the Lord and communicate with Him what is going on inside you as you consider this opening verse. (*5 minutes*)

Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

Read Romans 1:1 before the Lord and pray through the issues.
Surrender your will, your plans, and your identity to the Lord. Take God's claim upon your life as your identity.
Now bow before Him in quiet worship.
Express your love back to Him for loving you and for caring for you.

Lesson 2

It is a good day when you become deeply curious and ask the question, “What is the Gospel?” It certainly is a lot more than “The Four Spiritual Laws.” Paul’s entire letter is written to answer this question, so hold tightly to this question as you go exploring in the adventure to discover what motivated the Apostle Paul.

Paul designates the Gospel in Romans 1:1 as “the Gospel of God”; but there may be as many as forty different expressions that serve as synonyms. This may surprise you. There are many rich expressions which refer to “the Gospel” such as “the message,” “the word of God,” “the word,” “the good news about the Kingdom,” “the truth,” “the word of His grace,” “preached Jesus,” “the word of the Lord,” “the whole purpose of God,” “the ministry of the Spirit,” “the ministry of righteousness,” “the word of life,” etc.

Scripture Study: Examine Paul’s opening statement about the Gospel in Romans 1:1-4. (5 minutes)

In Romans 1:2, what did God promise through the prophets?

In Romans 1:3, how does Paul define the Gospel?

In Romans 1:4, how does Paul further define the Gospel?

So Paul’s definition of the Gospel is _____.

Scripture Study: Now see how Paul applied this Gospel to his own life in practical ways. Read Romans 1:5. (10 minutes)

Paul has defined the Gospel as “the Son of God,” and now he says that he has received two things through “Him” (NIV) or “Whom” (NAS). What are the two things Paul was receiving?
_____ and _____

While your individual Call may not be that of an Apostle, insert your Call in place of Paul’s and finish this sentence: “I am receiving _____ and _____ through _____ the very same way Paul did.”

In Paul’s mind, to live for the Gospel was the same as to live for and by _____.

Can you spot another synonym for the Gospel in Romans 1:5? _____ What is it?

Prayer Time: (15 – 30 minutes)

Read Romans 1:5 before the Lord and ask the Holy Spirit to apply God’s grace to your life and ministry this morning!

Read Romans 1:4 and say in prayer, “The Son of God with Power lives in me and is my personal Savior!”

Worship Him. Raise your hands or your voice or bow, but worship!

Ask the Holy Spirit to fully establish you as an individual and your Church so that the great things of God might be accomplished.

Lesson 3

You may be unmarried, a single mother with children, or a father of several, but the essential Call that is upon your life grips all of Jesus' Disciples. It is what Paul labels in Philippians as, "the upward call of God in Christ Jesus"; for your "Call" is a summons from God to you personally to live for His glory. A surprising thing results: it really does pull you upward and out of the various fears and insecurities of life, and into something which gives meaning and purpose to all the repetitious demands of daily routines.

Scripture Study: Romans 1:9 reveals one of Paul's secrets, but unfortunately the English translations miss his point by adding a phrase that is not in the Greek. Strike the phrase, "preaching of." Modern translators think of the Gospel as something to be preached rather than something in which we live, so they added their misunderstanding to the text. Just take your pen and cross out this phrase, and you will read it as it appears in the Greek. *(5 minutes)*

Another textual issue: The NIV has translated the Greek "by my spirit" as "with my whole heart," and this also makes it more difficult to get Paul's point. *(15 minutes)*
Reading the verse as from the Greek, what do you think is Paul's point?

How does this apply to your life?

Write out Romans 1:9 using your own words.

Prayer Time: *(15 – 30 minutes)*

Thank God that He has called you to serve Him by living in the Gospel of His Son!
Thank Him for giving you His grace and His help to live out His purpose in your life.
Ask the Holy Spirit for an increasing revelation of Jesus Christ in the Gospel.
Intercede for those you know who need more of this revelation.

Lesson 4

You are living in the best of all times. You have the written Words of the Living God. You have the Holy Spirit continually teaching you, comforting you, counseling you, and leading you into the very will of God! Plus you have the accumulated wisdom and sacrifice of those who have gone before.

And the world needs your help! All around you people are without the true understanding of the Gospel and how they might gain access to the Life that is found in Christ alone.

Add to this the marvelous fact that you are not alone. Christ has pledged that He will never leave you; and He has placed you in His Church, the group of people He calls, "His Body."

Your life really counts. You are part of the way God is changing the world.

Scripture Study: Read Romans 1:11-12. (*5 minutes*)

What does Paul intend to accomplish?

What do you see here that tells you Paul was not a spiritual "Lone Ranger"?

Scripture Study: As you read Romans 1:15, think about it; don't just read it. Here the Gospel is not a noun but a verb, and we cannot easily translate this. It means to "Gospelize" these Christians. (*10 minutes*)

Paul is writing to Christians. So why might he be eager to "Gospelize" them?

Quickly read through Romans 1:1-15, observing the central place of "the Gospel."

Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

Ask the Holy Spirit to open your spiritual eyes to see how much God loves you by sending His Son to set you free!

Raise your hands to God, your Father. Love on Him!

Ask the Holy Spirit to apply the Gospel of the Son to your everyday living so that you may live in the same power as Paul.

Pray in more anointing of the Holy Spirit revelation of Christ into your Church so that together you may be the light of the world.

Lesson 5

Perhaps no Christian fully understands how much power God has already activated in order to transform their life; but you can begin to think about this, for Paul will definitely talk about it later.

Furthermore, Christians (probably all of us to some extent) do not understand just how much power is available to us day by day which makes it doable to live the way God describes. God's power is preeminently practical. Moment by moment, from challenge to challenge, His power is designed to provide His adequacy.

Scripture Study: Paul is eager to "Gospelize" these Roman Christians because, even though they have eternal life, they do not understand how this power works in their daily lives. Read Romans 1:16.

(5 minutes)

The word "salvation" is a good word; but we may limit the meaning and thus miss the broader offer intended here. It can also be translated "deliverance" or "freedom."

In Romans 1:16, how does Paul define the Gospel?

What does this Gospel do?

What activates the power?

Scripture Study: Romans 1:17 begins to unlock some of the significance of the Gospel, which is critical if you are to experience the power. *(10 minutes)*

What is it that the Gospel gives you?

If "the righteousness of God" is revealed, what does this mean for your life?

How important is it for you day to day to operate by consciously using your faith?

What in this verse backs up your answer?

The word "righteousness" refers to the character of God Himself; and it includes His wisdom, patience, purity, humility, boldness, courage, faithfulness, loyalty, endurance, long-suffering, meekness, self-control, love, mercy, etc. In short, this is the stuff you really need; and the Gospel supplies it! Now this is power! Practical power, just where you need it.

Prayer Time: *(15 – 30 minutes)*

Do you feel inadequate? If so, good, for Jesus offers His righteousness to those who totally lack it but trust Him for it!

By faith, appropriate the "Righteousness" (God's character) that you need today; ask the Holy Spirit to reveal this to you.

Partake of Christ as your wisdom, your courage, your purity, and your strength this morning.

Now thank Him; worship Him!

Lesson 6

If you had just written someone that the Gospel was God's power to provide His very character, what would you discuss next? Would it be the wrath of God? Probably not, but this is exactly what Paul highlights as being of supreme importance. In fact, he will speak directly of the wrath of God thirteen times while making many other indirect references to this great subject.

For Paul, the Gospel includes both the judgment and the impending wrath of God. (Romans 1:18 and Romans 2:16)

Until you deeply agree with the necessity for the Wrath of God, your understanding of the Gospel of grace will be limited.

Scripture Study: Read Romans 1:18-32 intently. Try to grasp not only what Paul is saying but why.

(15 minutes)

Romans 1:18 begins with the word, "For." This conjunction means, "for this is the reason." This is the third reason Paul has given for being eager to preach the Gospel to these Christians living in Rome.

Wrath refers to God's just response to all that is opposed to His nature. Wrath is an extreme emotion; but in God's case, a most justified one. It goes beyond anger. It is the very reaction of the pure holiness of God's Person to all that challenges His glory, His honor, and His created order.

As you study this passage, what do you learn about God?

What do you learn about man?

Part of "the righteousness of God" includes "the wrath of God"; and Paul outlines why God is just to express the first stages of His wrath by giving men over to their sins and all the consequences.

Prayer Time: *(15 – 30 minutes)*

Thank God your Heavenly Father for being Holy and for hating sin!

Thank God for revealing His way of declaring you righteous.

Ask God to give you His hatred for sin.

Give Him the honor and glory that belongs to Him alone!

Lesson 7

What is wrong with this world? Paul's answer: "They exchanged the truth about God for a lie..." The very root of your problems is that you still believe lies about God. The world of chaos and pain that is all around you is the result of people believing lies about God and acting out of this Misbelief.

What, then, can correct this evil? The Truth about God is what corrects the mess of this world system. When a man sees God for Who He really is, he becomes a changed person.

Begin by dishonoring God, and then develop a society with this generating principle, and you have the various cultures around us. The Accuser of the Brethren has cleverly woven his lies about God into the fabric of everyday life. This is the world system.

Scripture Study: Read through the larger passage of Romans 1:15-32, looking for the big picture. See how it all fits together. *(15 minutes)*

List the three reasons Paul is so eager to preach the Gospel to you. (1)

_____ (2)

_____ (3)

What happens to a man who refuses to honor God as God?

Prayer Time: *(15 – 30 minutes)*

Come to Christ this morning and repent from seeking your own glory.

Come to the Cross and exchange your sin for His gift of righteousness.

Ask God to: "Hallow Thy Name upon the earth": i.e. to bring His glory into view of all men!

Ask the Holy Spirit to come and convict the world around you of sin so that they may come to Christ to experience the Gospel.

Lesson 8

Why does Paul spend so much time speaking to the Jews when there were few Jewish Christians in the Roman Church? (Acts 18:2 - Claudius drove the Jews out.)

There are only two possible ways a man may become righteous. One is that he might keep the law perfectly and therefore deserve it; or two, he might be given this righteousness when the debt owed God had been paid. Paul must show that the Jews had violated the laws just as had the Gentiles. All men deserve the Wrath of God, and Paul must demonstrate this in his argument so that no one can claim an exemption.

If Jews are just as guilty, just as deserving of the Wrath as Gentiles, then the logical question is, “What, pray tell, is the value of being a Jew?” After all, the Jews had a lot of revelation about the true God, and many of them worked hard in their attempts to obey the Law. Had God tricked them? Had God not kept His promises to them? Remember, Paul’s overall purpose was to Justify God. Only when men see God as He truly is will they be established. For this reason, he addresses these issues in a very straightforward way.

Scripture Study: Read Romans 2 quickly in order to look for the overall picture of what Paul is trying to accomplish. Then read it again, a little more slowly (*10 minutes*)
What do you notice in this chapter?

If you had been a Jew and thought that you would be justified by your obedience to the Law, what would you say Paul’s message was to you?

Scripture Study: Read Romans 3:1-9. (*5 minutes*)
Reread Romans 3:5. What is in the Gospel that shows that God is righteous when you have sinned?

List the ways you see Paul justify God in these verses.

Scripture Study: Read Romans 3:9-18. Note: Paul’s “under sin” in Romans 3:9 means “under the power and domination or power of sin.” (*5 minutes*)
What is Paul’s conclusion in Romans 3:9?

Paul uses Old Testament verses to back up his conclusion. What do these verses say about all humans?

Prayer Time: *(15 – 30 minutes)*

Agree with God that you had no righteousness of your own; but then go on to agree with Him that Christ is your Righteousness today!

Thank Him for giving you the Bible so that you might know the Truth about Him.

Use the authority that He has given you to rebuke the Destroyer who is attempting to steal from you.

Receive by faith the Goodness of God in your life!

Lesson 9

To have the Law of God is a great privilege! Paul will argue later that there is nothing wrong with the Law. The problem is with us, not God's righteous descriptions of how men should behave (the Law).

The Law was never intended to justify men. The Pharisees in particular and the Jewish people in general misunderstood God's purpose for the Law, while Paul explained its proper use.

People who have no knowledge of the Law still sin, and they suffer accordingly. (One of the definitions of sin is lawlessness.) However, their condition is even worse: they don't know why they are reaping such consequences in their lives.

Scripture Study: Read Romans 3:19-20. (*5 minutes*)

In Romans 3:19, what is the purpose of the Law?

In Romans 3:20, what is the purpose of the Law?

Scripture Study: Read Romans 3:21-22. (*5 minutes*)

In Romans 3:21, how did God manifest or reveal His righteousness apart from the Law?

In Romans 3:22, what is Paul's conclusion regarding both Jews and Gentiles?

Scripture Study: Read Romans 3:23. (*5 minutes*)

Reread Romans 3:23, and then explain what Paul means by: "fall short of the glory of God."

Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

If you are aware of a particular sin this morning, the Holy Spirit has probably used the law to prick your conscience.

Come to Christ Jesus, your Substitute, this morning and receive His cleansing.

Now soak up the love that the Father wants to give you as His child.

Tell the Father that you are relying upon the Righteousness of His Son.

Lesson 10

Paul never used the word “cross” in this letter; but he frequently referred to the event of Christ’s dying. Thus the word “propitiation” clearly invokes the image of Christ as the sacrificial lamb, satisfying the righteous wrath of God.

The word “propitiation” is a better choice for the translators than “atonement,” though both are acceptable. To propitiate means to satisfy the wrath while to atone emphasizes the conciliatory effects of the sacrifice; and here Paul clearly has the wrath of God as his primary focus.

Scripture Study: The short passage of Romans 3:23-26 requires a lot of work in order to fully unpack Paul’s thoughts. *(15 minutes)*

In Romans 3:24, “justified” translates to a Greek word, “to make or declare righteous.” What does the grace of God do for the sinner?

The redemption mentioned in Romans 3:24 is described in the first part of Romans 3:25. Paul defines the redemption as

Here is the difficult but critical part found in the last sentence of Romans 3:25. How does Christ being our propitiation demonstrate His righteousness, because He had previously passed over sins? Try to answer, and then I will comment on this.

When the Father poured out His righteous wrath upon His Son, it proved that God was just and would punish sin, and thereby restore the damage to His glory and honor occasioned by sin.

Paul is eager to show you that because God is just, He cannot forgive sin without requiring that His righteous wrath be satisfied. The Gospel which justifies sinners also justifies God, for it demonstrates that God is just.

Before Christ satisfied God’s wrath, God was subject to the accusation that He was unjust in that He did not immediately send all men to hell! No doubt Satan had raised this issue on many occasions while God waited for the right time.

Prayer Time: *(15 – 30 minutes)*

Worship Jesus Christ as your sin offering who satisfied God’s wrath for you!

Oh, see how He loves you! By faith, receive His love into your soul. Give Him your heart afresh!

Adore Him. Ascribe all honor to Him who was so motivated to restore the Father’s glory that He would pay the price!

Ask God to open the eyes of those around you to see His great salvation.

Lesson 11

We come from our mothers' wombs with the strong inclination to pursue our own glory and to live life by trusting ourselves. (Romans 1:22) Now, we are different. We have a new nature; but our old nature, the flesh, still pulls us toward the original instincts. For this reason, we must deliberately choose to operate by faith in Christ, for this is our new life.

The grace of God operates by faith. When we trust Him to be our sufficiency, all the credit (glory) goes to God. Grace delivers us and glorifies God! What an amazing combination found in the Gospel!

Scripture Study: Read Romans 3:23-31. *(10 minutes)*
Use your own words to rewrite Romans 3:27.

In Romans 3:31, explain why Paul says that when we move in faith toward Christ, we are establishing the law.

If you are having trouble understanding how this works, don't just ignore it; find out. Ask God. Ask others to help you. This is important if you are to understand how the grace of God works in your life.

Scripture Memory: Romans 3:23 is a familiar verse and should be memorized. There is a lot of theology in this one short statement; and it can help you to share your faith with others who need your help.
(5 minutes)

Prayer Time: *(15 – 30 minutes)*

Thank God for giving you the gift of saving faith.

Ask the Lord Jesus to cleanse you from recent instances of your unbelief, which is sin.

Use the faith He has given you to receive Christ as your faithfulness to God.

Ask the Holy Spirit to work His miracles in you and in the places He has put you.

Lesson 13

Christians are usually clear on the fact that they are saved by grace through faith alone. Most are quick to recognize that our works do not save us, but rather are the result of faith.

If this is how you start the Christian life, how does one live day to day? And right here is the problem, for most of us have spent a considerable number of days trying to live the Christian life in our own strength. Of course, discouragement and weariness follow.

As you learn more about how God justifies you, realize that He uses the same principles of grace through faith to sanctify you. In justification, God goes beyond forgiving you; He counts you righteous. But He changes your actual behavior by imparting Christ's righteousness to you as you trust Him for your wisdom, patience, purity, self-control, etc.

Scripture Study: Read through this classic passage of Romans 5:1-11. *(15 minutes)*

Read Romans 5:1. When you lose your peace, what does it indicate?

Read Romans 5:2. God has introduced us or given us access into _____, and we experience this _____ by using our _____, which brings _____ to God.

Read Romans 5:3-5. Why does Paul say Christians can rejoice in tribulations?

In Romans 5:6, if you realize that Paul is writing this treatise to justify God, how does his little phrase, "at the right time," fit into this theme?

In Romans 5:6-8, what does Paul want you to understand about yourself?

People often say, "I am saved"; but according to Romans 5:9, what are they saved from?

In Romans 5:10, what does Paul say delivers, saves, and frees us?

In Romans 5:11, what is the result of Christ being your propitiation, which saves you from the wrath of God?

Prayer Time: *(15 – 30 minutes)*

In Romans 5:2-3, and 5:11, Paul has spoken of "exulting" or "rejoicing," so raise your hands to God and praise Him for declaring you righteous in His sight!

By faith this morning, take your place in the grace of God, which is now your rightful place.

Receive the Father's love for His Son now being poured out upon you!

Bring others before your Father's throne and pray for them as He leads.

Lesson 14

If your great-grandfather had suffered debilitating damages from the nerve gas of WWI, resulting in generations of deformed descendants, you could easily understand how linked you were to this unknown relative, for you would be suffering from things which had been inflicted upon him.

Now, suppose your great-grandfather's name was Adam, and someone was explaining to you that your pain existed because you were "in Adam" when the damage was done to him so many years before. This explanation might not relieve your suffering, but the expression, "in Adam," would certainly have a clear and powerful meaning!

Scripture Study: Romans 5:12-21 is rarely preached or taught for two reasons: (1) it is very difficult to explain, and (2) when explained, it offends. However, when you remember that Paul's purpose in this letter was to justify God, he must, in the process, offend the man-centered thinking so embedded in fallen man. *(15 minutes)*

Read Romans 5:12. From the illustration of the great-grandfather given above, please explain what Paul meant by, "because all sinned."

Read Romans 5:13-14. People who have never received the law of God still die. What is Paul's explanation?

Read Romans 5:15-19. Paul begins with a negative comparative: a contrast between your being "in Adam," and your being "in Christ." There is a problem here, for if Paul meant that "the many" who died through Adam are the exact same group, "the many" who receive the free gift, then you have all men being saved! All died without the benefit of choice just as the descendants of the great-grandfather were deformed without doing anything themselves. This is contrary to all Scripture so there is a necessary conclusion: Paul must not intend for you to understand that "the many" are the exact same group in both cases. He probably intends for you to understand that all died "in Adam," but all those who are "in Christ" are made alive.

Read Romans 5:20-21. Jesus taught that those who had been forgiven much loved God more than those who had not received as much forgiveness. Explain how Jesus' teaching fits in nicely with Paul's statements here:

Prayer Time: *(15 – 30 minutes)*

Thank your Heavenly Father for including you in His Son so that what He did took effect in you!

Confess that the gift of righteousness is yours!

Draw upon Him for your many needs, for He is your Savior!

Intercede for those you know who need this revelation!

Lesson 15

The message of Grace can cause some to fear that it will lead to lawlessness. What this indicates is that they do not understand how the grace of God works, for grace is the only cure for sin. Unfortunately there are those who misunderstand the message of Grace and excuse their sin, thus confirming the fears of those who take obedience seriously.

Paul had years of experience in dealing with people who did not fully understand how the message of Grace in the Gospel actually freed men from the power of sin. Therefore, in Romans 6, he addresses two very similar accusations: (1) Since God is glorified by granting us forgiveness through the sacrifice of His Son, it must follow that by continuing to sin we can bring Him even more glory. (2) Since the keeping of the law is not the path to righteousness, then perhaps we should just continue to sin due to the Grace of God.

To both charges, Paul screams, “NO!” Romans 6 explains how the Gospel of Grace works to deliver men from the bondage to sin.

Scripture Study: Use your marking pen to indicate the progression of Paul’s thought in Romans 6:1-14. *(15 minutes)*

Let’s work backwards for a moment. What is Paul’s conclusion in Romans 6:14?

Use your own words to express the accusation which Paul has encountered as He has brought the message of Grace to people.

Paul answers this charge with a question. Restate his question in Romans 6:2, using your own words.

Paul answers his own question and thus satisfies the charge in Romans 6:3-7. Try to summarize his argument using your own words.

Paul describes how a Christian is to practically avail himself of this power over sin in Romans 6:11-13. Use your own words to describe how a Christian can experience the power of God (His righteousness) right at the point of being tempted to be afraid, to be lustful, to be angry, to be impatient, to be resentful, etc.

Prayer Time: *(15 – 30 minutes)*

Take Romans 6:11 and use it to reckon/consider/count yourself to have died with Christ and

to be raised up with Him!

God has given you the ability to trust Him, so use that ability to trust right now for His character, which you need today.

Pray His promises into the situations that are challenging your life.

Let the Holy Spirit use you to pray Father's will into the lives of others.

Lesson 16

Paul declared in Romans 3:11 that no non-Christian seeks God; but later he makes it clear that a Christian does have a will that can seek God and make right choices. His will is free in the full sense of being free to trust God and thus free to obey from the heart.

The Christian has died with Christ, and his old nature has been changed! He is gloriously changed in that he is united with the risen Christ and enjoys a new nature. For this reason, he can respond to the exhortations by choosing to believe this Gospel. The moment he does this, the power flows! What is this power? It is the righteousness of God that is given to him right at the point of his need! Oh happy day!

Scripture Study: Paul does a brilliant job of showing why the Gospel of Grace does not lead a man to sin even though the method of law-righteousness is discounted. Read the rest of his argument in Romans 6:15-23. *(15 minutes)*

Reference Romans 6:16. Paul has argued that you died with Christ to sin which means that you do not have to sin any longer. Now you can make real choices, because your will is free to choose faith in Christ. In your own words, what is Paul's point in Romans 6:16?

In Romans 6:16, cross reference Romans 1:5 and explain what type of obedience Paul is describing which leads to the practical demonstration of righteousness.

Read Romans 6:17. Once a man has been freed from being a slave, any further service he renders to his old master is voluntary. Re-examine Romans 1:5 and comment on Paul's phrase, "obedient from the heart."

What is Paul's definition of the phrase, "that form of teaching to which you were committed"?

Read Romans 6:19. Re-examine Romans 1:16 and Romans 6:11 in order to answer the following question: How can you "present your members as slaves to righteousness resulting in sanctification"?

If you understand the answer to this question, then you know how to effectively use the power of the Gospel for deliverance in the everyday challenges to your faith and obedience.

Prayer Time: *(15 – 30 minutes)*

Quote the proper translation of Romans 1:9 before the Lord, "For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the Gospel of His Son." Now confess to Him that you also are serving God in your inner spirit in the Gospel of His Son!

Thank Jesus for taking your place and dying for your sins.
Thank Jesus for freeing you from having to be a slave to your old master, sin.
By faith, count yourself dead to sin along with Christ's death. Now, count yourself alive with Him in His righteousness: i.e. His adequacy.

Lesson 17

There is one sense in which all humans know something of God's law derived from their consciences. (Romans 2:14) Most people consider themselves to be "good" according to their own definition, and thus they attempt to live up to some type of moral standard in which they also fail. The serious Jew certainly attempts to keep the law in order to be righteous based upon his own performance; but when such a Jew becomes a Christian and realizes how the law applies to the inner life (Jesus in Matthew 5), he becomes convicted at a whole new level! He thought he was keeping the law, but suddenly he realizes that he has fallen far short of the law in his thoughts, intents, and motives! The Gentile Christian learns about the law from the perspective of Jesus' teaching from the beginning ("the law of Christ" Galatians 6:2), and he experiences the full force of the law exposing his sins!

Scripture Study: Read Romans 7:1-12. Paul addresses the problem every Christian faces when he realizes he has died with Christ and is free from serving sin, yet he experiences such a sense of frustration and hopelessness as he slips into self-effort, comes under the law in the wrong way, and seems to constantly live under condemnation. *(15 minutes total)*

Read Romans 7:1. Using my introduction, answer the following question: Who are those who "know the law"?

If you do not know the answer to the question above, you will miss the force of Paul's argument. He is being very practical about why Christians who know the truth can find themselves in such bondage.

In Romans 7:2-4, what is Paul's point?

In Romans 7:4, how did you "die to the law"?

Explaining the way the law affects us, Paul says, "While we were in the flesh," to describe the time we were not trusting Christ alone for our righteousness. When we operate this way, the law arouses our sinful passions in two ways: (1) we may rebel against God's law in a blatant way, or (2) we may endorse the law while trying to keep it in our own ability. In these ways, the law actually "provokes" us to sin!

When the law simply says, "no adultery" it is one thing; but when it says, "no looking upon a woman with lust," it is quite another. It isn't until the law is applied to the heart that it takes full effect; and it reveals the otherwise unrecognized addiction to sin.

Paul felt fully alive when the law only governed his outward actions; but when the Spirit applied God's laws to his inner life, then he felt the constant inability to live up to the law.

This is what he meant when he said, "I died."

So, now you can answer this question: In Romans 7:11, how does your sin nature hear God's standards and then deceive you and kill you?

Prayer Time: *(15 – 30 minutes)*

Praise your Savior for fulfilling the law for you, and then dying to the requirements of the

law on your behalf.

Worship Him as the One Who gives you forgiveness, adequacy, and life!

Trust Jesus to be your personal Shepherd as the Holy Spirit leads you and teaches you.

Pray for the Headship of Christ to be fully released into His Body, the Church!

Lesson 18

It is usually the serious Christian who dabbles in legalism. We don't mean to, of course. It's just that we want to please God, and our own flesh deceives us into attempting to serve God in our own strength. This is not the Gospel of Grace, and soon we feel the effects of the resulting condemnation: that feeling that we can't quite measure up. Our joy dissipates. Our critical nature turns first upon ourselves, then upon other Christians.

Some Christians blame this condition upon the standards set by the Church; but legalism has less to do with standards than the absence of faith in Christ alone for the power (ability) to live up to them. Remember, it is "the obedience of faith" which is "the obedience from the heart."

The cure for legalism is faith in Christ alone for our ability to be righteous: i.e. the Gospel.

Scripture Study: Read Romans 7:13-25. (*15 minutes*)
Paul defends the law. How does he do this?

Describe Paul's painful experience with trying to live up to the law in his own power. I think you can easily identify with him.

Romans 7:18. How well do you think you know this about yourself?

How might your pride cause you a great deal of trouble in this matter?

Reread Romans 7:23-24. Do you know this feeling?

What is the cure?

Why do you think God allows you to experience the very same things Paul went through?

Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

Bring your own failures to your Savior this morning and see Him as the One who saves you from all your sins!

Raise your hands to God and praise Him for sending His Son to you to set you free from the law of sin and death!

Bring all your needs to Jesus and use your faith to commit every troublesome problem to Him alone.

Surrender yourself to the Holy Spirit so that He can use you to intercede for your Church and its missionary call.

Lesson 19

Christians live under more condemnation than they realize. Years ago I gave a test to a large group of Pastors asking them how often they experienced condemnation. They answered, “rarely”; however, when I asked how often they felt they did not measure up, they answered, “Frequently.” Bingo!

The uneasy feeling that you do not measure up is a symptom which indicates that you are not trusting Christ alone for your righteousness (your adequacy). You are intuitively feeling that you should be able to produce the righteousness yourself. You keep looking inward with the expectation that you will see goodness in yourself. This is natural enough. We all have this tendency, and it is called, “the flesh.”

When you look away from your own ability to satisfy God and, by faith, depend upon Christ alone for your goodness, you are “in the Spirit.” It is the Spirit who glorifies Christ and applies His achievements to His children; thus you are “in the Spirit” when you work this way.

Scripture Study: Read Romans 8:1-16. (*15 minutes*)

Read Romans 8:1. Why do you think Paul begins with this declaration?

How does God intend for you to not live under condemnation?

In Romans 8:2, explain what “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” is in terms of the Gospel.

In Romans 8:3, what could the law not do?

Why could the law not make you righteous?

In Romans 8:4, how is the requirement of the law fulfilled in your life?

Explanation: The “mind set on the flesh” refers to unbelief or the attempts to please God (or even worse, yourself) without exercising faith in Christ. The “mind set on the Spirit” refers to those times when you are trusting in Christ alone for your measuring up and, as a result, you experience “life and peace.”

In Romans 8:7, you will notice that when you are operating in unbelief, your mind is actually resisting God.

Reading Romans 8:8, finish this sentence: “When I am operating in unbelief, I cannot

_____.”

Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

Repent of living in unbelief, for it resists glorifying God.
Humble yourself before the Lord this morning and use your faith to draw upon Christ's
faith. He is even the Source of this all-important faith!
Bow before Him and adore Him.
Enjoy Him this morning. Take your pleasure in Him, for He delights to be your God!

Lesson 20

It is the Holy Spirit who reveals to you that you are united with Christ in His rising from the dead. God the Father and God the Son together sent God the Spirit to live in you, and He is “another Counselor” who came to lead you. It will not come as a surprise that He leads you to “consider yourselves to be dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.” This simply means that the Holy Spirit is leading you to the Cross of Christ.

Paul doesn’t use the expression, “the Cross,” in Romans that he does in other letters; but the concept is clearly visible. The “Cross” is a term which refers to the act of faith with which a Christian identifies with the death of Christ at the very point of his temptation to sin.

Scripture Study: Read Romans 8:12-16. *(15 minutes)*

In Romans 8:12, why does Paul not believe he has any obligation to his flesh?

What about you? Do you have any obligation or loyalty to your flesh?

Read Romans 8:13. If you live your life in unbelief, you will experience...

When Paul says, “...if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body,” what does he mean?

In Romans 8:14, the Spirit is always going to lead God’s children to do what with the pull of their flesh?

Read Romans 8:15. There is a right and wrong way to fear God. The wrong way is something many Christians live with, and it robs them of faith. They live constantly expecting God to be unhappy with them, but this is not the truth about God!

Read Romans 8:15-17. Instead of living in the wrong fear, the Holy Spirit does what in your life?

Prayer Time: *(15 – 30 minutes)*

Tell your Heavenly Father that you intend to serve Him in your spirit in the Gospel of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Now bring your old desires for sin (your stubbornness, your impatience, your unbelief, your despair, your anger, your lusts, and your lack of self-control) to Jesus, as He died in your place on the Cross.

By faith join Him in His rising from the place of dying to live with Him in His resurrection life, which is the life of the Spirit.

Believe in the goodness and power of God to meet your problems today, for this glorifies the Lord!

Lesson 21

Paul wrote this treatise to show how right God has been in all that He has done and will do.

One of the most perplexing dilemmas humans face is trying to understand why God would allow or cause suffering. Paul first addressed this issue as it affects the whole human race in Romans 1:18-32. Humans deserve the fallen world in which they live! Then what about those who are in Christ? What about their suffering?

God only has good in store for His children, but His good includes fulfilling their ultimate destiny, which is to be conformed to the image of Christ! A tall order; and suffering with Christ is part of the package.

Scripture Study: Paul opens the topic of Christian suffering in Romans 8:17 and continues this theme through the rest of the chapter. Note that (1) God is fully in charge of everything, and (2) He interjects hope into every aspect of this discussion. Read Romans 8:17-39, looking for Paul's explanation of why Christians suffer. *(15 minutes)*

In Romans 8:17, Paul says, "We suffer with Him so that

_____."
Note this statement, because this is his proposition that he will spend the rest of the verses supporting.

Paul's attitude toward suffering is stated in Romans 8:18. Take his statement and use your own words to make this your statement.

Reference Romans 1:23. When men refused to glorify God and give Him thanks, what did they lose? _____ Once you understand this, then and then only can you understand what God is restoring in the Christian.

Romans 8:19-22 speaks of the whole creation groaning. What is the hope of the creation?

Read Romans 8:23-25. Why does a Christian groan?

What is his hope? _____

Romans 8:26 - "In the same way," refers to (1) creation groaning, and (2) the Christian groaning. Now Paul refers to the _____ groaning in you.

This discussion of Christian suffering brings Paul to explain that God actually "causes" or works through your suffering in order to conform you into the image of His Son and thus bring you into your ultimate state of glory! Read Romans 8:28-30 in this light, and it will make more sense than ever before.

Now quickly read the rest of the chapter for more of Paul's assurance that your suffering is no sign that God does not love you, but the reverse!

Prayer Time: *(15 – 30 minutes)*

Confess your own struggles through the lenses of Romans 8:28-29.

Thank Him for loving you and foreordaining you to become like His Son, Jesus Christ.

Confess Romans 8:18 before the Lord.

Join Jesus in praying for His Kingdom to come in the places He has stationed you!

Lesson 22

Paul brings us to a crescendo with, “In all these things we super conquer through the One who is loving us,” - Romans 8:37 (Greek). Now arises a question which Paul knows must be addressed: What about Israel? Obviously most of Israel was not being saved, which then left the possibility that somehow God had not been faithful to them. And, if He had not faithful to Israel, how could the Christians be certain that He would be faithful to them?

Remember that Paul was writing this to justify God so that the Roman Christians would be established and therefore able to become his base of operations in opening up the next mission field, Spain. So Paul devoted Romans 9, 10, and 11 to make it clear that God had been faithful to Israel.

Scripture Study: Read Romans 9:1-5. (*15 minutes*) Why do you think Paul expressed his love for his brother Jews in such terms?

Read Romans 9:6-13. What is Paul’s main point?

Refer to Romans 4:16 and answer this question: Why is it the children of the promise who are regarded as true descendants?

Read Romans 9:14-29. What are the two questions/accusations that Paul answered? (1) _____ and (2) _____

How did Paul answer these two charges? (1) _____

_____ and (2) _____

Read Romans 9:30-33. What was Paul’s conclusion?

Prayer Time: (*15-30 minutes*)

Worship God as the Faithful One who keeps all His promises to you!

Confess your faith in Him, and offer Him your life, which you are living in order to glorify Him!

Pray His will into your circumstances so that He will receive the glory and honor from all that you face.

If you detect any Unbelief trying to work its way into your life, repent of it and trust Christ even for His faith to be given to you.

Lesson 23

Not many Christians understand what God is giving us in the Gospel. He offers us His righteousness, but so often the Christian does not see how His righteousness meets their immediate, practical need.

Because of this lack of understanding even among the saved, the Christian should be able to sympathize with the Jew who has no understanding whatsoever concerning how God imparts righteousness by faith alone. Because of Unbelief, the flesh tries to earn it.

Only when you see His righteousness as the gift of His character does it begin to make sense. His wisdom, His purity, His courage, His steadfastness, His compassion, His patience, and His fill-in-the-blank, comes to you as you trust Him alone for the character of His Son. This is what makes you a “super-conquerer”: faith in His Son!

Scripture Study: Read Romans 10:1-21. (*15 minutes*)

Read Romans 10:1. How does Paul feel about his people, and how might this apply to you?

Read Romans 10:2-3. What can you learn from their wrong example?

Read Romans 10:4-10. If you were to live the way Paul describes in Romans 10:9-10, what would change in your daily life?

Read Romans 10:11. So, when you find yourself being disappointed, what is wrong according to this verse?

Read Romans 10:12-17. Why do you think Paul began to speak to the Roman Christians this way?

Read Romans 10:17. This is a misused verse, for in context, “the word of Christ” is not just any word of God. It is a synonym for “Gospel.” When a person hears the good news concerning how God first counts a person righteous (justification) by faith and then imparts His righteousness (sanctification) by faith, the Holy Spirit quickens faith in those who are going to be saved!

Read Romans 10:18-21. What charge did Paul bring against Israel?

Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

“Render unto God what is God’s,” says He who died in our place!

Tell God this morning that you are worshipping Him with your life!

Yield every care, every worry to Him this morning in complete trust.
Pray for His Kingdom to come to those around you who appear to not yet understand their
need for His righteousness.

Lesson 24

God is infinitely pure. He is holy. Blameless. Faultless. Perfection. Perfect. Whole. Complete in the infinite sense.

He alone understands true love, true justice, and true mercy. It should be clear that we humans understand these things to some degree but imperfectly. The humble man bows before all of God's choices, because he recognizes the goodness and perfection of God who deserves to be trusted far more than any man.

What is the definition of "what is right?" The definition always begins with Him who alone is true: God. All that God does, says, or does not do defines "what is right."

Scripture Study: Read Romans 11. (*15 minutes*)

Read Romans 11:1-5. When Paul mentioned himself and Elijah's experience, what was his point?

Read Romans 11:6-10. What is Paul's connection between "Grace" and "God's Election/Choice"?

Read Romans 11:11-24. When Paul said, "They did not stumble so as to fall," what did he mean?

Why do you think Paul continually pounds away on the damning effects of Unbelief? (Hint: it is associated with God's glory.)

Read Romans 11:25-32. Which of Paul's points speak most to your own life?

Read Romans 11:33-36. What would you call this section?

Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

Pray-read Romans 11:33-36 before the Lord.

Now enter into your own time of giving God the honor and recognition, which is His due!

Thank Him for His grace that is transforming your life.

Pray for His Church to express His glory by their unity and faith-obedience.

Lesson 25

The more you understand of your own prior lostness, the more you feel the force of His love in choosing you to become His child. Do you remember that in John 4, Jesus said that His Father seeks people for the very purpose that they might enjoy the highest joy of worshipping Him? The study of “the God-ness of God” instills the heart of the true worshipper in you, and it stabilizes your faith during the hardest of times.

Thus it is His mercies that draw you into the surrender that your inner spirit man craves. Paul said, “The kindness of God leads you to repentance” - Romans 2:4. And so it is with your life: it is Sovereign Grace that transforms His children! In this, He receives all the glory, all the credit, all the praise, all the gratitude; and the angels love it!

Scripture Study: Read Romans 12:1-8. (*10 minutes*)

Read Romans 12:1-2. Use your own words to apply what Paul is saying to your life.

Read Romans 12:3-8. List the seven types of grace which issue forth in seven different gifts:

(1) _____, (2) _____, (3) _____, (4)

(5) _____, (6) _____, and (7) _____.

Paul does not want us to operate in _____. Why not?

Notice that in Paul’s reference to “each a measure of faith,” he is not saying that all people have faith, for he contradicts this in other letters. He is saying that every Christian has a specific grace and a specific faith that causes him or her to approach life through one of these areas of gifting.

Scripture Study: Read Romans 12:9-21. (*5 minutes*)

Why do you think Paul now turns to exhort Christians in specific acts of righteous behavior?

List any exhortations that especially speak to you.

Comment on how Romans 12:21 relates to Paul’s confident statement that you are a super-conquerer in Romans 8:37.

Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

If you discovered something that needs your repentance and His forgiveness, bring it to Him for His cleansing and gift of righteousness.

Tap into His confidence that He is making you one who conquers evil through His Gospel.
Stop now and enjoy God as your Father who loves you dearly.
Wait in His presence. Just give Him the gift of time spent with Him.

Lesson 26

The Kingdom of God operates on recognizing God's rights, God's glory, and God's authority! The one who lives by faith in Him will always be submitted to Him, because such a person is recognizing Who He is!

Even though we live in a fallen, imperfect world, God has placed authority figures here in order to preserve and protect us from the unchecked evil or anarchy.

Jesus Himself was the perfect example of living under authority. First He submitted to His own parents, and later He paid taxes and obeyed the laws of Rome. What He revolted against was the system of the "Kosmos," or world, which is best evidenced in our various cultures or societies.

Scripture Study: Read Romans 13:1-7. (*10 minutes*)

According to this passage, what would you say to those who rebel against the government and refuse to pay taxes?

When is civil disobedience justified? When a government or authority figure requires you to disobey a direct commandment of God. At this point, such an authority figure has assumed an authority that is infringing upon God's rights.

Why do you think Paul would be raising the issue of authority when he was writing the Christians in the capital city of Rome?

Scripture Study: Read Romans 13:8-14. (*5 minutes*)

How can Paul say that love fulfills the law?

If someone says that they are acting in love, but they are disobeying God's commandments, why would you say they are deceived?

With Paul's treatise on the Grace of God, why do you think Paul would come back now with these practical exhortations about how Christians behave?

Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

Bring any sinful attitudes toward authority figures into the light by confessing and repenting. Receive Christ's forgiveness and His righteous attitude toward authority figures.

By faith submit yourself to the proper people as a way of submitting in faith to the God who

rules over all.

Now call upon His authority to manifest through your life so that you are overcoming all that opposes His glory!

Lesson 27

From Romans 12:3-4 on, Paul spoke about the issues that could divide a Church and thus destroy the unity so critical to overcoming Satan. Pride is man's most vulnerable spot, for it causes people to judge others, to compare themselves with others and feel inferior, or even to fall into condemnation.

There are differences among us that Paul knows must be allowed. Mature Christians can flow with those who lack some revelation in some area without disrespecting them or causing them to come under the condemnation of their own consciences.

There are true Christians who Paul called "weak in faith"; yet they do have the basic revelation about Christ and should be treated as genuine brothers.

Scripture Study: Read Romans 14:1-12. (*10 minutes*)

When Paul speaks of those who may eat all things, he is referencing the Jewish laws. He is not talking about what may or may not be healthy. One may keep the Jewish laws concerning food if it does not relate to being righteous.

What is Paul's definition of the one who is weak in faith?

What sin is Paul concerned will be committed?

Have you seen this sin in today's Church? _____ If so how?

Why does Paul emphasize the judgment of God?

Scripture Study: Read Romans 14:13-23. (*10 minutes*)

What does Paul mean when he says in Romans 14:17 that the Kingdom is not about eating and drinking? What is it about?

What would Paul say about drinking too much wine or eating too much food? _____ How would he justify commanding Christians not to eat too much, drink too much, or talk too much?

In reference to Romans 14:23b, why do you think I would say, "You cannot operate in faith and sin"?

Prayer Time: *(15 – 30 minutes)*

By faith receive the Father's acceptance for others who may be operating with slightly different standards than yours.

Ask the Holy Spirit to give you His revelation of His will and attitudes toward these issues so that you can be confident about what He wants you to do.

Stand guard against Unbelief in your own life. Use your faith to receive His righteousness this morning.

Rejoice in how much He loves you and shepherds your life!

Lesson 28

Paul does us such a great service by addressing the reality that Christians have different standards about things such as having a glass of wine, which day to gather in worship, eating pork, the use of jewelry, etc. What is the Christian response?

First, all Christians should be fully committed to obeying Scripture. Grace is the means to heart and faith obedience, not a ticket into disobedience.

Secondly, when our genuine Christian liberty might lead another Christian into defiling his conscience by imitating us when he does not enjoy our freedom, we should refrain in his presence.

Thirdly, there are those who simply insist upon forcing their lack of liberty upon others. They may be displeased by your liberty, but they will not defile their own consciences by following you nor will they cease to follow Christ. In such a case, you may practice your own freedom.

But, above all, there is to be no looking down on a Christian when we disagree upon certain standards of behavior that are not made clear in Scripture. Unity glorifies God. Mutual respect and acceptance furthers the advance of His Kingdom.

Scripture Study: Read Romans 15:1-33. *(15 minutes)*

Read Romans 15:1-13. Remember, Paul is writing to a Church that is ministering to a multitude of cultures. What is Paul's principle?

Re-read Romans 15:4. What does Paul say that leads you to have hope?

Re-read Romans 15:5. Who actually gives you this hope?

Re-read Romans 15:14-33. What effect do you think Paul wanted to have upon these Roman Christians with these verses?

Prayer Time: *(15 – 30 minutes)*

Read Romans 15:13 before the Lord.

Let your Father minister His joy and His peace to you.

Tell your Father that you also want to join Paul in being a priest who ministers the Gospel of God!

Commit your life to live in the power of the Gospel so that everything you do flows from trusting Christ as your adequacy.

Lesson 29

Phoebe was probably the person who was delivering Paul's treatise to the Church at Rome and thus needed to be commended so that her reception would be as it should be. There is much unnecessary speculation about Junias being a female Apostle. Here are the four reasons Paul singled them out for special greetings: (1) they were his kinsmen in some way in which the others were not, (2) they had been in prison with him [a fact in itself which argues against Junias being a female], (3) they were well known among the Apostles [probably meaning to the original Apostles in Jerusalem], and (4) they had been Christians longer than Paul. Paul had never been to Rome, but he strategically planned to make this (I believe) his base of operations so he could open up the region of Spain for the Kingdom. He believed that both his epistle and his personal ministry there would establish them in such a way that they would be able to crush Satan under their feet and thus become a strong base camp for expanding the Kingdom.

Scripture Study: Read Romans 16:1-27. (15 minutes)

Think about Romans 16:17. Why would this warning and instruction be so important to Paul?

Use your own words to restate this verse and apply it to your own life.

Re-read Romans 16:18. Have you ever seen Satan use someone in a Church to help destroy the work of God rather than build it up? _____ What can you do to help unify your Church for the glory of God?

Re-read Romans 16:20. Why is your ongoing experience of God's peace so important to your Church's ability to crush Satan under your collective feet?

Re-read Romans 16:25. What does Paul think the Gospel will accomplish?

Since Paul is writing to people who were already "saved," why does he think that what he has written to them will establish them in ways which they are not yet experiencing?

Prayer Time: (15 – 30 minutes)

Read Romans 16:27 before the Lord and begin to worship Him!

Remember that He seeks those who will worship Him.

Pray for His glory to be restored upon the earth.

Pray for His glory to be revealed through your Church and into your city.

Some thoughts about Paul's epistle to the Christians in the Church at Rome

Paul writes to answer all the possible accusations that men bring against God. He is justifying God by:

Showing that God is righteous to express wrath toward all humans because of their sin of unbelief in that they refuse to glorify Him as God and they refuse to give Him the thanks due Him.

Showing that God is righteous to not have fully judged sin earlier because He was waiting to vindicate His wrath upon His Son.

Showing that God is righteous to forgive sins now, because He has propitiated His wrath by the blood sacrifice of His Son.

Showing that God is righteous when He sent His law even though the law only caused sin to increase.

Showing that God is righteous to justify through grace, for it satisfies the law.

Showing that God is righteous to use grace to impart righteousness rather than the law, because grace is the only cure for sin.

Showing that God is righteous to set aside His people, the Jews, for a season because: (1) not all Jews are Jews indeed, (2) He will include them later, (3) it was their unfaithfulness not His, and finally, (4) it is right for Him to do whatever He wishes, because He is God!

Showing that God is righteous to let Christians suffer.

Showing that God is good, merciful, and just.

Paul has a theme concerning how men lost their intended glory through their sin of unbelief. By this sin, men refused to honor God (glorify Him) or give Him thanks; and this resulted in all the destruction that brought on all the misery that men suffer.

The Gospel satisfies the justice of God (His wrath) and restores the glory of men who now live for the glory of God.

Faith sees God as He truly is; therefore it is faith, alone, which pleases God, for only faith gives Him the glory that He deserves.

Christians do suffer as they live in a fallen world and follow Christ by putting to death their flesh.

The power of the Gospel is released into the Christian's life when he trusts Christ alone for his righteousness (his adequacy).

So there is a direct link between the giving of glory to God, the Gospel, and faith.

Paul uses the two Greek words for glory twenty-two times in this one epistle, so there is a huge emphasis upon this topic.

Paul uses the word "wrath" thirteen times in this epistle, and it is inferred in every case where he speaks of men being saved, because he is thinking of men being saved from the wrath of God.

There are three levels of wrath: (1) Romans 1:18-32 in which Paul shows how God's wrath is now being revealed through the consequences of sin upon the earth, (2) the propitiation (Romans 3:25-26), and (3) the final judgment (Romans 2:5, 16).

Hope is a favorite topic of Paul's letter. He uses the word nineteen times because he wants to show how God gives people hope through His Gospel.

Ten times Paul says, "May it never be," which is an expression that reveals a horror at the very thought of such a thing. The King James translation probably catches the intent with its, "God forbid!" In each case, Paul specifically targets an accusation against God, which he answers.