



Romans

Right With God

Introduction

Lesson One

Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex Curriculum

Romans

Right With God

Lesson One

Page 2 of 4

Introduction

The four Gospels tell the story of the Good News about Jesus Christ, and Acts tells how the Good News spread over the span of more than three decades. However, if all that we had were the Gospels and Acts, our grasp of the earliest Christian faith and practice would be seriously limited. There are nearly two dozen letters in the New Testament that round out the picture. All of them were written less than 70 years after Jesus ascended into Heaven, and all of them were written, according to reliable scholars, by persons who were, or were closely associated with, people Jesus personally appointed to receive and teach the word of Salvation.

Paul's letter to the Romans has the reputation of being hard to understand and to some even boring. Yet, this letter, probably more than any other book in the Bible, has influenced history in dramatic ways. Augustine, the great North African intellectual and church leader who lived from AD 354 to AD 430, found new life in the reading and study of Romans. Paul's letter to the Romans electrified Martin Luther's life also. Luther lived from AD1483 to AD1546. He said that he pondered night and day how he, a sinner, could ever stand forgiven before a God who is perfectly righteous and will one day judge all persons. Deeply troubled in his conscience and made aware by Scripture of the depth of his sin, he wrestled with the words of Romans 1:17, "The righteous shall live by faith." (A quote from Habakkuk 2:4) That statement convinced Luther that through grace and sheer mercy God justifies us through faith. We could list many other names...great Christians who have been influenced by this magnificent letter, but we must move on.

The city of Rome, at the time Paul wrote this letter was the capital of a great empire. In Paul's day as many as one hundred million people inhabited the Roman empire. It extended from modern day Great Britain to modern Germany, eastward to modern Iran and back westward to Egypt. Few empires in history have rivaled the size, power and glory of Rome.

The church in Rome was probably founded by converts who were present at Pentecost when Peter preached his great sermon (Acts, chapter two) and 3,000 people were saved. By AD 49, almost twenty years after Jesus ascended into Heaven, there were so many Christians among Jews in Rome that riots took place there.

There is general agreement that Paul wrote Romans during his three-month stay in Greece. This was near the end of his third missionary journey and just before his last known visit to Jerusalem. He was most likely near Corinth and sent the letter by a Christian lady named Phoebe.

Romans

Right With God

Lesson One

Page 3 of 4

As we go through the letter, we will look at it primarily as life-changing truth about God, humans and redemption. There is common agreement that the Epistle to the Romans is one of the greatest of Christian writings. It is majestic, dealing with grand themes. It has been called Paul's "Last Will and Testament." It has also been called "the most important theological epistle in Christian history."

Leon Morris urges us to remember that it is primarily "a book about God." The thought of God dominates this letter. The word "God" appears 153 times, an average of once every 46 words. Paul wrote on a number of topics, but everything is related to God. He sees sin as sin against God...and so on. As with no other book, Romans can truly be described as a book about God.

Many accept the idea that Romans is about salvation (becoming right with God). That is clearly stated in Romans 1:16, 17.

Scripture Memory: "The righteous man will live by faith." Romans 1:17b

*Underlined statements in this Teacher's Guide appear in the Student Worksheet with blanks to be filled in by the student during the lesson. Words in the Student Worksheet may not appear exactly as printed in the Teacher's Guide.

For the Teacher:

Lesson Goal: To give the student a background for studying the letter to the church at Rome.

1. Martin Luther said of Romans, "The epistle to the Romans is the true masterpiece of the New Testament and the very purest gospel, which is well worth and deserving that a Christian man should not only learn it by heart, word for word, but also that he should daily deal with it as the daily bread of men's souls. It can never be too much or too well read or studied, and the more it is handled the more precious it becomes, and the better it tastes."
2. John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, attending church in May, 1738, listened as the leader read from Luther's preface to his commentary on Romans. Later, Wesley said, "While he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt that I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for my salvation; and an assurance was given me, that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."
3. Donald Gray Barnhouse, the great Bible Teacher, Editor of Eternity magazine and pastor of Tenth Presbyterian Church in New York City said, "There is in the book of Romans that which will delight the greatest logician and hold the attention of the wisest among men, and there is that in the book of Romans that will brewing the humblest soul in tears of repentance to the feet of the Savior, will give him the knowledge of the true value of his soul in the light of eternity and a true concept of the dignity of human personality when it has been lifted by the graced of God."
4. With this lesson, we begin a study that will sometimes seem difficult. Some of the concepts, particularly those involving teachings about Judaism, will require serious study. The author of these lessons is intent on keeping the message clear and the teaching as simple as possible. We will always try to use language that will communicate to your students. The next lesson will concentrate on the very first verse of the letter.

Romans

Right With God

Lesson One

Page 4 of 4

Student Worksheet

Introduction

=This letter, probably more than any other book in the _____, has influenced history in dramatic ways.

=The church in Rome was probably founded by converts who were present at _____ when Peter preached his great sermon (Acts, chapter two) and _____ people were saved.

=There is common agreement that the Epistle to the Romans is one of the _____ of Christian _____.

=The thought of God dominates this _____. The word "God" appears _____ times, an average of once every _____ words. Paul wrote on a number of topics, but everything is related to _____.

=Many accept the idea that Romans is about _____ (becoming right with God). That is clearly stated in Romans 1:16, 17.

Scripture Memory: "The righteous man will live by faith." Romans 1:17b

A Roman Road to Salvation:

Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Everyone is a sinner and needs salvation.

Romans 6:23a "For the wages of sin is death." The law of God is unchangeable. If someone sins the penalty must be paid, and that payment is death.

Romans 5:8 "But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners Christ died for us." God loves us so much, according to John 3:16, that He sent His Son, Jesus, to die for our sins.

Romans 6:23b "But the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." The debt for sin is spiritual death, but God, through the death of Jesus on the cross, paid that debt and now everyone can have eternal life. See also, II Corinthians 5:21

Romans 1:9, 10 "That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved." To personally receive the gift of God, eternal life in Christ Jesus, you trust God to be what He says He is. Believing that "God raised Him (Jesus) from the dead" is to accept all that the Bible says about God and His Son, Jesus. Then you speak (confess) the words, "Jesus is Lord," as a statement of faith. Believing "with your heart" means that you believe with your mind and with all that you are.

Romans 10:13 "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." You have the promise of God Himself that if you do what Romans 10:9, 10 says, you will become God's child and have eternal life.

Romans 12:1, 2 "I urge you brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will." Becoming a Christian is a life-long act of faith and worship.