

Romans Context and Outline

Romans Series (Part 3)

By Ed Stevens -- Then and Now Podcast -- Nov 10, 2013

Opening Remarks:

- A. Welcome to another study of biblical history and eschatology from a full preterist perspective.
- B. Last time we looked at the overall BIG PICTURE of the epistle, trying to get an overall perspective of the book first, before jumping into the middle of the text. We need to know what the various sections of the book are, and how they relate to each other, as well as understand what Paul is trying to accomplish here. Knowing all this in advance, will give us a huge advantage for interpreting the book later.
- C. In this session we will look more at the purposes for the letter to the Romans, its historical context, and a brief outline of its contents and flow of thought.
- D. Before we get going on that, however, let's ask God for His presence and help --
"God our Father" [Rom 1:7], who created us and loved us and redeemed us for Your Own Good Pleasure and Glory: We glorify You for your righteousness, which You have graciously and freely poured out on us. Help us as we study Paul's letter to those dear precious saints in Rome, many of whom were brutally tortured and murdered by Nero just a few years after this letter was written to them. Help us understand its message deeply, and apply it to our lives in such a way that we will "reject godless ways and worldly desires and live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives" [Titus 2:12 NKJV]. Make us strong and bright beacons of Your Holy Light in this dark and sinful world. This we pray in the Name of "Jesus Christ our Lord" [Rom 1:4; 5:1, 11, 21; 6:23]. Amen.

Purposes and Historical Context of Romans

We noted in the last two sessions that Paul had several purposes in mind for writing this letter to the saints in Rome. But the Holy Spirit had even more good reasons to inspire Paul to write these particular things to this very strategic church in the capital city of the Roman Empire. Paul mentions over two dozen of those Roman saints by name in chapter 16. He wrote this letter from Corinth in AD 58, only six years before Nero unleashed his unspeakable torturous wrath upon those very dear saints there in Rome. This gives a whole new meaning to Paul's charge in Rom 12:1 to "present [their] bodies as living and holy sacrifices" to God. They literally did that in the Neronic persecution just six years later. Both in life and in death, their bodies were offered in service to Christ.

Truly, the Holy Spirit was speaking through Paul's epistle to strengthen those Christians in Rome, and brace them for the storm of persecution and martyrdom that was just about to burst upon them. Neither Paul nor the Roman saints could have imagined just how evil and horrible the Neronic outburst would be. But both of them felt the full effects

of it within six years of Paul's writing of this epistle. From all historical accounts, it seems that Paul died in Rome, either just before the Neronic persecution, or just after it broke out.

The Neronic persecution had not been revealed to Paul yet, so he could not warn them about it. However, he was aware that afflictions awaited him personally in Jerusalem, and he asked for the Roman saints to pray for him to have the strength and courage to endure it and overcome it. His example of horrendous persecutions and hardship was just what the Roman Christians needed to see, in order to fortify them against their own soon-coming horrifying tribulations under Nero. The Holy Spirit knew all of this, and inspired Paul to write exactly what was needed for such a time as this.

We can only stagger in disbelief at the indescribable suffering that Nero inflicted upon those dear saints in Rome, who remained faithful to the very end. Surely these words of Paul, and his own example of faithfulness under extreme hardship, must have been a powerful influence upon them and a stabilizing force in them when they faced that trial.

It is the awareness of these historical events, such as the Neronic persecution, lying in the background behind Paul's words, which makes the meaning and the force of his words come alive for us. That historical context is so important for us to have in place, before we try to interpret any piece of biblical text. If you have only recently joined us here on the podcasts, you may not be aware of all the historical study that we did in past podcasts. If that is your situation, I would recommend going back into the archives here and listening to some of those historical podcasts (over a year ago) where we looked at the events that shaped the writing of our New Testament books. I would especially recommend all the podcasts in 2012 that we have posted in the archives on Buzzsprout. If you prefer to read the PDF lesson outlines instead of listening to all those podcasts, those outlines are available for the asking.

For those of us who listened to all those historical podcasts last year, we are aware of the historical background behind all the New Testament books, and it will make all those verses come alive with new meaning for us. I am sure that all of us now see the reason behind all that historical study. It may have seemed boring and dry at the time, but now that we are digging into the biblical text, it is giving us a historical context with which to understand it so much better. All that historical study that we did will now payback rich dividends in understanding to us.

Too many Christians are unaware of all the historical circumstances that were involved in the production of Paul's epistle to the Romans. As a result of that historical ignorance, all they can do is speculate about what it means. And you would not believe the amount of sheer nonsense and confusion that has been written in some of the commentaries, whose authors did not have a clear understanding of the historical background. No wonder they vary so widely in their interpretations of this book. They have severed the book from its historical connections, which are the only connections that can give them an understanding its message. Now you see why I am so serious about getting a grip

on First Century History. It is the key to unlocking the meaning of our New Testament writings.

There were a few bright spots in the commentaries, however. The fellow who wrote the Preface to *Meyer's* commentary had some very good things to say about the value of historical study for our exegesis. He said: "In estimating the character and value of Dr. Meyer's work, it is essential that we should always bear in mind **the precise standpoint** of the exegete, who endeavours in the exercise of his own independent judgment to arrive, by the use of the proper means, at **the historical sense of Scripture**. His object is not to seek support for the doctrines, nor does he bind himself or regulate his operations by the definitions or decisions of any particular church. On the contrary, he reaches his results by a purely exegetical process, and then places them at the disposal of the Church." [*Meyer's* Preface, p. iii]

Notice his emphasis on "arriving at the **historical sense** of Scripture." Any attempt to interpret scripture without a careful consideration of its *historical context* is doomed to failure.

And this principle of knowing the history first before interpreting the book, applies equally well to us Preterists. One of the reasons why Universalism, Skepticism, Covenant Creationism, and the Collective Body Resurrection View have been able to confuse and captivate so many fellow preterists is because those views do not require any study of the historical background to believe them. In fact, they prefer to keep you ignorant of the history, so that you will not be aware of any other possible interpretations. Error thrives in ignorance. But a historically-aware Berean is the best Bible interpreter. We need to know the history, so we will not be at the mercy of every scripture-twister that comes along.

Knowing Paul's historical situation at the time of writing will really make his words come alive for us. It helps us perceive both **WHY** he wrote and **WHAT** he meant by it. We also need to remember that the **Holy Spirit** was the real author and source of the book of Romans, and that God had His own reasons for inspiring Paul to write this epistle. Looking at subsequent events that occurred after this book was written, can help us grasp what the Holy Spirit was trying to accomplish.

This kind of historical reconstruction is tremendously edifying. Those of you who have been listening to these podcasts for the last three years can easily see what I mean here. You know all this history now, and you see the benefit of it. It enables you to more easily discern between truth and error. And it will make the book of Romans come alive with new meaning for us.

Some of the events in the historical background that we need to keep in mind as we study the book of Romans are the following:

AD 54-58 -- Third Journey of Paul where he collected the Gentile contributions
 AD 57 -- Paul wrote 1 Corinthians from Ephesus (during 3rd journey)
 AD 57 -- Paul wrote 2 Corinthians from Philippi (during 3rd journey)
 AD 58 -- Paul wrote Romans from Corinth just before he headed to Jerusalem
AD 58 -- Paul arrived in Jerusalem and presented the Gentile contributions
 AD 58 -- Paul was arrested in Jerusalem and imprisoned in Caesarea for two years
 AD 60 -- At his trial before Festus he appealed to Caesar - Festus sent him to Rome
 AD 60 -- Paul was shipwrecked on the island of Malta on his way to Rome
 AD 61 -- Paul finally reached Rome where he was under house arrest for two years
 AD 61-63 -- While in Rome he and Luke wrote numerous epistles: Luke-Acts, Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, Philippians, and Hebrews.
 AD 63 -- Paul was released from Rome and traveled back to Macedonia, Achaia, and Turkey. This is when he wrote his last three epistles of 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus.
 AD 63-64 -- Paul was arrested a second time and sent to Rome to be executed
AD 64 -- The Fire in Rome and Nero's Persecution of Christians afterwards
 AD 66 -- The outbreak of the Zealot rebellion in Judea and the beginning of the War
AD 70 -- The temple was destroyed, and the sacrificial system was totally put out of business.

Note especially the three boldfaced events above. Paul mentioned the Gentile contribution and his upcoming trip to Jerusalem in this letter to Rome. That sharing (koinonia) of the material wealth of the Gentiles with the needy Jewish saints in Jerusalem was the glue that united both Jews and Gentiles together into one universal Church. It caused the Jews in Jerusalem to accept the Gentiles as fellow-heirs of the Kingdom. And it was a clear sign to the Jews that the Gentiles accepted and appreciated them for sharing their spiritual riches with them.

The Christians in Rome had a majority of Gentiles and a minority of Jews. Peace and unity was a challenge for them. The Jews had a hard time accepting the Gentiles, and the Gentiles had a hard time accepting the Jews as fellow heirs of the grace of life. The Holy Spirit most definitely used this epistle of Paul to help the Christians in Rome attain to "the unity of the faith in the bond of peace" (Eph 4:3 and 4:13). And it also helped brace the Roman Christians and all the saints in every church for the horrendous persecution that was looming on the horizon. They faced the fiery trial together as one united Jew-Gentile body of believers. They were overcomers.

All of this historical background is factored into the purposes for writing this epistle. If we know the purposes for the book, we will be much better able to interpret the meaning of its contents. *If the key to learning is asking **good** questions, then the key to finding the correct interpretation is asking the **right** questions.*

What kind of questions should we be asking about Paul's epistle to the Romans? Some of the questions that I have not found very many commentary writers asking are: "What *purposes* did the Holy Spirit have for inspiring Apostle Paul to write this epistle to this particular group of Christians at this particular time and place?" and "What were the *purposes* that Paul had for its composition?" and "Did it accomplish all those purposes?"

Here are some of the purposes that other commentaries have identified for the book:

Paul's purposes:

1. To strengthen his relationship with the Roman Christians (Rom 1:8-15; 15:15-16)
2. To prepare them for his coming (Rom 1:8-15; 15:23-32)
3. To enlist their support of his proposed journey to Spain (Rom 15:24, 30)
4. To get their prayers for his safe and successful trip to Jerusalem (Rom 15:30-32)
5. To encourage the Jewish and Gentile Christians to accept each other, and live in unity, and not put any stumblingblocks in each other's way.
6. To share with the Roman Christians what his REAL gospel message was, and how it may have differed with the gospel of the Judaizers or the Gentilizers.
7. To help both Jews and Gentiles see that the basis for their salvation was the same.

The Holy Spirit's Purposes:

1. To strengthen the Roman saints in the faith, and fortify them against the coming Neronian persecution, great tribulation, and great apostasy. This included practical instruction on morals, ethics, discipleship, and their relationship to the Roman government and fellow-saints. (Rom 1:11)
2. To help both the Jewish and Gentile Christians understand what was at stake in the Jew-Gentile conflict that was going on right there in Rome.
3. *To instruct the Jewish Christians:* (1) to quit pushing law-keeping on the Gentiles, (2) to avoid being judgmental, condemnatory, and too critical against the Gentile Christians, (3) to accept the Gentile believers as being fellow-heirs of the kingdom.
4. *To instruct the Gentile Christians:* (1) to quit considering the Jewish believers as cast away, rejected and cut off from their own olive tree, (2) to understand what God was doing with both Jews and the Gentiles at this particular moment in redemptive history, (3) to humble themselves and accept the Jewish Christians as fellow-heirs of the kingdom, (4) to become one united body of believers with the Jewish saints, (5) to take advantage of all the blessings that were in Christ in order to attain to the fullness of the Gentiles, which would cause the Jews to be jealous, so that the rest of the Jews that were elected to salvation might be grafted back into their own olive tree, and thus bring even greater blessings to the Gentiles as a part of the true spiritual Israel that inherited the promises at the Parousia.
5. To have this epistle copied and sent to all the churches, Jewish and Gentile, so that the whole church would see the critical necessity of becoming one united universal kingdom of saints from every nation, before the destruction of Judaism cut the umbilical cord with the mother church in Jerusalem. The transition from a Jewish church to a universal kingdom of all nations was hanging in the balance. Paul's trip to Jerusalem with the Gentile contributions was a critical factor in the Jews accepting the Gentiles, and proving to the Jews that the Gentiles accepted them as well. That mutual acceptance was crucial to the Jew-Gentile unity and the establishment of the universal church. There was everything at risk here in this Jew-Gentile relationship, and the church in Rome was a key test case. If the Roman Christians failed to accept each other and unite together, then all bets were off in the rest of the churches, especially in Jerusalem where the Judaizers were

already looking for an excuse to reject the Gentiles. There was a saying in those days that went something like this: "As it is in Rome, so it will be in the rest of the empire." That was never more applicable than it was to this Jew-Gentile situation. If the Gentiles in Rome had failed to accept the Jews and bear with their weaker brothers, and if the Jews had failed to accept the Gentiles as fellow heirs of the Kingdom without law-keeping, then Christianity would never have become the universal kingdom among all nations.

If the Holy Spirit had not helped Paul write this extremely important epistle at this extremely critical time, then these purposes would never have been accomplished, and the church would have died when the umbilical cord was cut in AD 70.

We must also note in passing here, that after Paul was arrested in Jerusalem and sent as prisoner to Rome, none of his epistles after that show any further intentions of going to Spain upon his release. Meyer notes that:

"...in all the unquestionably genuine Epistles which Paul wrote during his imprisonment, every trace of the previously (Rom 15:24) cherished plan of a journey to Spain has vanished; and in the epistle to the Philippians which was certainly not written till he was in Rome (Phil 1:25f; 2:24), he contemplates as his further goal in the event of his liberation, not the far West, but Macedonia, or in other words a return to the East." [Meyer, p. 14]

We have to wonder why Paul abandoned all plans to travel to Spain. Was it because he finally and fully grasped what the Holy Spirit was trying to accomplish through his ministry to the Gentiles, and that he now understood how critical it was for the existing churches to be knit together as one universal body before the End came? I suspect so.

The Holy Spirit was functioning as a Paraclete (helper) to enable and facilitate the work of the apostles. Obviously the Paraclete never intended for Paul to go to Spain, but rather spend a lot of time in Rome stabilizing that church and transforming it into one united Jew-Gentile body, which would be a model for all the rest of the churches to follow, and to brace them for the great apostasy and great tribulation (Neronian persecution) that was about to be unleashed on them soon after Paul was released from prison in Rome. Those Christians might never have stood the test if the Holy Spirit had not providentially arranged for Paul to spend two years there stabilizing them.

Evidently Paul realized that a trip to Spain might leave his churches in Greece, Macedonia, and Turkey at risk, so that was why the Paraclete providentially arranged for his continued presence in the East and at Rome until those Gentile churches had been fully stabilized and unified and prepared for the extreme test that was about to come. There was no time to start new churches in Spain and get them stabilized before the End arrived. Instead, the Paraclete rearranged Paul's itinerary so that the churches that he had already established would be unified and fortified. It was better to retain the gains that he had already made, than to risk losing what he had already gained. Like the old saying, "A bird in hand is worth more than two in the bush."

There was a danger of losing all those churches in the great apostasy if Paul did not stay close by to stabilize them. And that is exactly what Paul did while he was in prison in Rome. He wrote several letters to his various churches, most of which were intended for general circulation among all of them. Those letters had the desired stabilizing and fortifying effect.

The Paraclete knew that there was not enough time before the End to establish more churches in Spain. There would be plenty of time after the Parousia for the gospel to be spread to the far West. What was crucial at this point was to stabilize, fortify, and unify all those Jewish and Gentile believers into one universal kingdom made up of all nations.

That Jew-Gentile unity, and the full grafting in of the Gentiles, was absolutely critical to making the rest of the elect Jews jealous, so that they would repent and be grafted back into their own olive tree before the End arrived. Paul needed to stay right there among his churches and finish the task of helping all those churches "attain to the unity of the faith in the bond of peace."

That unity was so critical to the future of the universal kingdom AFTER the Parousia, and it had to be established BEFORE the End, or all those churches would be lost in the great apostasy and great tribulation. The Paraclete worked through all the apostles to accomplish that unification, stabilization, and fortification before the End arrived.

In this letter to the Romans, it is apparent that Paul did not understand how little time was left, nor how weak and vulnerable his Gentile churches really were. But the Paraclete knew it all, and used him to write what was needed, and to do what was needed in order to finish building Christ's universal church. At the end of his life when Paul reflected on this providential change of plans, he saw the purpose of God in it. He must have realized that the Paraclete was helping him keep the gains that he had already made, rather than lose it all by trying to gain more.

Well, what *effect* did this epistle have upon the Roman Christians? Did it accomplish all those purposes of Paul and the Holy Spirit? This question is answered in the book of Acts 28:13-31 where Luke tells us that the Italian Christians welcomed him with open arms when he arrived in Puteoli (100 miles southeast of Rome). They came from as far away as the Market of Appius and Three Inns to meet him (which was 65 miles away). Sounds like this epistle had a powerful impact on those Roman Christians. And the church survived the destruction of Jerusalem as a universal kingdom made up of all nations. All that gospel seed that had been planted in the hearts of countless thousands of Gentiles throughout the Roman empire began to sprout and grow a new crop of Christians from every nation under heaven. The work of the Paraclete through the apostles was accomplished. Christ built his Church, and it was not overpowered by the Gates of Hades. It rose up out of the ashes of Judaism to become the universal kingdom of Christ among all the nations.

Now we need to look briefly at the outline of the book of Romans to see how the Holy Spirit shaped the contents of this book to accomplish all those purposes. The best way to see this is by looking at the flow of Paul's argumentation in outline form. This is where all those outlines that I copied in the Appendix will be very helpful, because they list in outline form all the major arguments that Paul constructs here in Romans.

Outlines Reveal the Flow of Thought

While reading through Romans, I constructed an outline of the contents to keep beside my Bible as I study it. The value of an outline like this is that it helps us see where particular sections of the text fit into the *overall structure* of the book, and convey a sense of the overall context behind each of the sections of the book.

Context is very important. It is like a foundation stone. The correct *meaning* of every text is directly related to its *context*. If we lift a passage out of its context, we can virtually make it mean anything we want. That is why there are so many different interpretations of biblical texts. But when a text is carefully considered in close relation to its context, its possible meanings are drastically reduced.

So when we have a good outline in front of us, which correctly labels each section of Romans, we can much more easily keep the context in mind, and see how each section fits into the overall flow of Paul's argumentation. It helps us interpret the text, because we see how it fits into the overall context of the book.

Ideally, each of us should construct our own outline of the book as we read through it. But it helps a lot when someone else has already done a good job at that, and shares their outline with us. Then we can take their outline and tweak it and improve it as we read through the book. I have copied several outlines of Romans in the Appendix to this lesson outline. You will want to use those as a springboard for creating your own. Then keep it out to the side as you read back through Romans, glancing at it again and again as you read each new section of the text. Use it as a map to guide you through the book of Romans. You will be amazed how that will improve your understanding and appreciation for this theological masterpiece that the Holy Spirit has given us through the mind of Apostle Paul. And make no mistake about it: Of all the fourteen epistles Paul wrote, this one has to be right up there at the top of his best ones. The only other ones that come close are Ephesians and Hebrews, with the Corinthian epistles not far behind.

It was that Jew-Gentile conflict in the first century church, and the desperate need for both Jews and Gentiles to unite into one universal body of believers before End of Temple Judaism, which is the focus of Paul's argumentation here. You will see it reflected in the various outlines of the book. Let's look at the outline that I have constructed for us:

Contextual Outline for Romans

Note that this very simple outline has only five major sections. For Reformed folk that will be easy to remember and very meaningful, kind of like the five points of Calvinism. After Paul's greetings and opening comments in the first seventeen verses of chapter one, he jumps right into heart of his argumentation. He gives the bad news first:

1. BAD NEWS FIRST: (Rom 1:18–3:20)

1. Paul Begins With Something They All Agreed On – The Gentile World was grossly wicked and under condemnation. Both Jewish and Gentile Christians agreed with that. This got all of the saints there in Rome (both Jew and Gentile) on the same page with Paul (and the Holy Spirit).
2. But it was not just the Gentiles who were under condemnation. The Jews also had been cut off from the blessings by their unbelief and wickedness. The Jews put themselves on a pedestal above the Gentiles, and were critical and judgmental against the Gentiles, yet they were guilty of the same kind of sinfulness. So the Jews were under condemnation just like the Gentiles.
3. It accomplished nothing toward their salvation for the Jews to have circumcision and law-keeping without faith in Christ.
4. Therefore, all men (Jew and Gentile alike) were shut up under condemnation.

2. THEN THE GOOD NEWS: (Rom 3:21–5:21)

1. God provided a means of escape from the condemnation. He provided the atoning sacrifice, and freely applied that forgiveness, justification, and reconciliation to all who believe in Christ.
2. The true circumcision was inside the heart, by the same kind of faith that Abraham had before he was circumcised. And this kind of faith was something which the uncircumcised Gentiles could have just as easily as the circumcised Jews, because it was the same faith that Abraham had before he was circumcised.
3. Justification by circumcision or law-keeping was futile. God's justification comes only by His Grace through our faith in Christ.
4. The sacrifice of Christ reconciles both Jews and Gentiles back to God.

3. HOW SHOULD WE NOW LIVE IN VIEW OF HIS GRACE? (Rom 6:1–8:39)

1. Shall We Continue to Sin That Grace May Abound? (Dualism)
2. Shall We Sin Because We Are under Grace, Not Law? (Libertinism)
3. Is the Law sinful? Should we toss all restraints aside? (Antinomianism)
4. Did the Law cause our condemnation? Or did our sinfulness cause it?
5. The Holy Spirit gives us new life
6. The conflict between our flesh and the Spirit
7. The Holy Spirit helps us overcome the sinful desires of the flesh
8. The Holy Spirit enlivens us and guarantees a heavenly reward – in the case of those first century saints who remained alive until the Parousia, they received their bodily change and heavenly reward at the Parousia.
9. Paul assured them that their glorious reward was "about to be revealed" to them. Therefore, they could rejoice in all their afflictions and persecution, because nothing could separate them from their heavenly reward as long as they were faithful to Christ.

4. HOW CAN THE JEWS BE SAVED NOW AFTER BEING CUT OFF? (Rom 9-11)

1. The fleshly Israelites were indeed cut off for their unbelief
2. But not all of them were cut off - There is still a faithful remnant
3. Furthermore, if the ones cut off will repent and believe, they can be grafted back in
4. Some of them were cut off so that faithful Gentiles could be grafted in their place
5. When the Gentiles have been fully grafted in, then Israel will be jealous
6. That jealousy will cause them to believe and be grafted back in
7. All the Israelites who were cut off and never were grafted in again, were replaced by believing Gentiles, so that along with the remnant of believing Israelites and the regrafted Israelites, the Gentiles would make up the full number of Israelites that were promised the redemption -- thus ALL Israel would be saved.
8. By having faith in the Jewish Messiah, the Gentiles were grafted into the true spiritual Israel that was promised to receive the inheritance.

5. HOW TO LIVE IN THE CHURCH AND IN THE WORLD (Rom 12-15)

1. Offer yourselves as a living sacrifice to God in service to others
2. Jewish believers must stop their judgmentalism and accept their Gentile brethren
3. Gentile believers must not cause their Jewish brethren to stumble
4. How to relate to Nero's governmental authority and the other civil rulers
5. Try to be at peace with all men as much as possible, and try not to give them an excuse for rejecting Christ or persecuting you.
6. Live in the freedom that Christ gives us, but do not use that freedom as an excuse for unholy living.
7. Strive after unity with all the saints, whether they are Jew or Gentile

Conclusion:

This is a very basic outline of Romans. No frills. No filler. But it helps us grasp the overall flow of Paul's thought. The details will come later when we look at each of those five major sections. Everyone of us here can improve on this outline, and I hope you will. Please send me a copy of your new and improved version. I would love to see it. I might even share it with the rest of the listeners here!

Well, that has given us a taste of the overall contents of Romans. In coming weeks we will take one of these five sections each week and deal with it until we have covered all five sections. I would encourage you to keep the Jew-Gentile unity issue in mind as you study Romans. It will help you understand WHAT Paul is saying, WHY he is saying it, and HOW it related to those first century saints in Rome. Historical Context and Audience Relevance are the two key tools that bible interpreters use to unlock the meaning of scripture. Use the tools properly and you will be blessed with a good understanding of the Holy Spirit's message to the first century church. We need to know how all this applied to its original audience, before we start trying to apply it to us. We cannot make the proper application to our lives, if we do not know what its original application was to their lives.

Next time we will look at the first section of the outline (the Bad News section).

That will wrap up our study for this session. Please send me some feedback on what you are learning out of this study of Romans. Thanks so much for listening.

We urgently need your support!

If you are benefiting from these podcasts, please prayerfully consider supporting IPA with a donation of any amount. We cannot do this without you, and we need your help right now more than ever. The summer slump hit us hard, and expenses for our annual exhibit booth at the *Evangelical Theological Society* are taking a big bite. Plus, we are rebuilding our website from scratch to add a shopping cart, which is also putting a crimp in our budget. So, your help is greatly needed. To make a donation or support monthly, [click here](#). Thanks for being partners with us.

Sources Consulted

(the most helpful ones are boldfaced below)

Barnes, Albert. *Barnes' Notes on the New Testament*. Public Domain. Electronic text originated from the Christian Classics Ethereal Library. Formatted and corrected by OakTree Software, Inc. for use in the Accordance Bible Search Software, Version 1.8.

Beale, G. K. and Carson, D. A. (editors). *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Beale-Carson Commentary). Grand Rapids, Michigan USA: Baker Academic, a division of Baker Publishing Group, 2007. Electronic text was hypertexted and formatted by OakTree Software, Inc. for use in the Accordance Bible Search Software, Version 1.1.

Bruce, F. F. *Romans*. Volume 6 of the *Tyndale Commentary*, Leon Morris (gen. ed.). Inter-Varsity Press, UK. 2010. Electronic text hypertexted and prepared by OakTree Software, Inc. for use in the Accordance Bible Search Software, Version 1.4.

Carson, D. A. *New Testament Commentary Survey*. Sixth Edition. Grand Rapids, Michigan USA: Baker Academic, 2007.

Calvin, John. *Calvin's Commentaries*. Public Domain. Electronic text downloaded from the Christian Classics Ethereal Library. Formatted and hypertexted by OakTree Software, Inc. for use in the Accordance Bible Search Software, Version 2.2.

Clarke, Adam. *Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Whole Bible*. Public Domain. Derived from an electronic text from the Christian Classics Ethereal Library. Formatted, hypertexted, and corrected by OakTree Software, Inc. for use in the Accordance Bible Search Software, Version 1.9.

Conybeare, W. J. and Howson, J. S. *The Life and Epistles of the Apostle Paul*. New York USA: T. Y. Crowell, N.D.

Cranfield, C. E. B. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. In two volumes: chapters 1-8 (vol. 1) and chapters 9-16 (vol. 2). Part of the new

- International Critical Commentary*. Gen. Editor: C. E. B. Cranfield. Edinburgh, Scotland: T & T Clark Limited, 1980 (vol. 1) and 1981 (vol. 2).
- Davies, W. D. *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology*. Original Edition 1948. New York USA: Harper and Row Publishers, Revised Edition 1955.
- Erdman, Charles R. *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans: An Exposition*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania USA: The Westminster Press, 1925.
- Frick, Philip L. *The Resurrection and Paul's Argument: A Study of First Corinthians Fifteenth Chapter*. New York USA: Eaton and Mains, 1912.
- Gloag, Paton J. *Introduction to the Pauline Epistles*. Edinburgh, Scotland: T & T Clark, 1874.
- Goodwin, Frank J. *A Harmony and Commentary on the Life of St. Paul According to the Acts of the Apostles and the Pauline Epistles*. Grand Rapids, Michigan USA: Baker Book House, 1951.
- Haldane, Robert. *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans*. Orig. published in 1839. Reprinted by MacDonald Publishing Co., McLean, Virginia USA in 1958.
- Harriman, Joseph B. *A Harmony of Paul's Life and Letters*. Amherst, New Hampshire USA: The Kingdom Press, 1969.
- Hendriksen, William**. *Exposition of Paul's Epistle to the Romans*. Part of the *New Testament Commentary* series. Grand Rapids, Michigan USA: Baker Book House, 1981.
- Henry, Matthew. *Commentary on the Whole Bible* (unabridged). Public domain. Electronic text hypertexted and prepared by OakTree Software, Inc. for use in the Accordance Bible Search Software, Version 1.4.
- Hodge, Charles**. *A Commentary on Romans*. Carlisle, Pennsylvania USA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1989.
- Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown. *Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown's Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible* (JFB). 1871 Edition. By Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown. Public Domain. Electronic text graciously provided by Mr. Ernie Stefanik and the Woodside Bible Fellowship. Hypertexted and formatted by OakTree Software, Inc. for use in the Accordance Bible Search Software, Version 2.4.
- Johnson, B. W. *The People's New Testament Commentary*. Public Domain. Electronic text downloaded from the Christian Classics Ethereal Library. Formatted and hypertexted by OakTree Software, Inc. for use in the Accordance Bible Search Software, Version 1.4.
- Knox, John (intro and exegesis) and Cragg, Gerald R. (exposition of the text). *The Epistle to the Romans*. Vol. 9 of *The Interpreter's Bible*. In twelve volumes. Nashville, Tennessee USA: Abingdon, 1954. Caution: somewhat liberal.
- Knox, Wilfred L. *St. Paul and the Church of the Gentiles*. Cambridge, Great Britain: The University Press, 1939.
- Kruse, Colin G.** *Paul's Letter to the Romans*. Part of the new *Pillar New Testament Commentary*. General Editor, D. A. Carson. Grand Rapids, Michigan USA: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2012.
- Longenecker, Richard N. *Paul: Apostle of Liberty*. Grand Rapids, Michigan USA: Baker Book House, 1964. Reprinted in 1976.

- McGuiggan, Jim. *The Book of Romans*. Part of the *Let the Bible Speak Study Series*. West Monroe, Louisiana USA: William C. Johnson, Inc., 1974.
- Metzger, Bruce M. *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (Second Edition). Copyright 1994 by Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, Stuttgart Germany. Electronic text hypertexted and prepared by OakTree Software Inc. for use in the Accordance Bible Search Software, Version 2.0.
- Meyer, Heinrich A. W.** *Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Epistle to the Romans*. Translated from the Fifth Edition of the German by John C. Moore and Edwin Johnson. Reprint of the 1884 Sixth Edition by Hendrickson Publishers in Peabody, Massachusetts USA, 1983.
- Mills, Sanford C. *A Hebrew Christian Looks at Romans*. New York USA: American Board of Missions to the Jews, 1971.
- Moo, Douglas J.** *The Epistle to the Romans*. Part of *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (NICNT). Ned B. Stonehouse, F. F. Bruce, and Gordon Fee (gen. eds.). Grand Rapids, Michigan USA: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996.
- Morris, Leon.** *The Epistle to the Romans*. Part of the original *Pillar New Testament Commentary*. Grand Rapids, Michigan USA: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1988.
- Murray, John.** *The Epistle to the Romans*. In two volumes: chapters 1-8 (vol. 1) and chapters 9-16 (vol. 2). Grand Rapids, Michigan USA: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1959 (Vol. 1) and 1965 (Vol. 2).
- Nygren, Anders (trans. by Carl C. Rasmussen). *Commentary on Romans*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania USA: Muhlenberg Press, Sixth Printing 1949.
- Oden, Thomas C. (gen. ed.). *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture* (Updated Edition, ACCS Complete). InterVarsity Press. InterVarsity and IVP are trademarks of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship/USA. Electronic text hypertexted and formatted by OakTree Software Inc. for use in the Accordance Bible Search Software, Version 2.1.
- Plevnik, Joseph. *Paul and the Parousia: An Exegetical and Theological Investigation*. Peabody, Massachusetts USA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997.
- Sanday, W. (ed. by Charles John Ellicott) *The Epistle to the Romans*. London, Paris and Melbourne: Cassell & Company Ltd, N.D.
- Sanday, William and Headlam, Arthur. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. Part of the original *International Critical Commentary*. Gen. Editors: Briggs, Driver, and Plummer. New York City, New York USA: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1896.
- Schreiner, Thomas R.** *Romans*. Part of the *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, Michigan USA: Baker Academic, a division of Baker Publishing Group, 1998. Sixth printing in 2008.
- Smith, David. *The Life and Letters of St. Paul*. New York USA: George H. Doran Company, N.D.
- Steele, David N. and Thomas, Curtis C. *Romans: An Interpretative Outline: A Study Manual of Romans, Including a Series of Interpretative Notes and Charts on the Major Doctrines of the Epistle*. Preface by Gordon H. Clark. Originally published

- by The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company. Grand Rapids, Michigan USA: Baker Book House (distributor), 1963.
- Vos, Geerhardus. *The Pauline Eschatology*. Phillipsburg, New Jersey USA: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1986.
- Walvoord, John F. and Zuck, Roy B. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* (BK Commentary). Cook Communication Ministries, 1989. Electronic text formatted and hypertexted by OakTree Software, Inc. for use in the Accordance Bible Search Software, Version 1.4.
- Wesley, John. *John Wesley's Notes on the Whole Bible*. Public Domain. Derived from an electronic text from the Christian Classics Ethereal Library. Formatted and hypertexted by OakTree Software, Inc. for use in the Accordance Bible Search Software, Version 1.2.
- Whiteside, Robertson L. *A New Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Saints at Rome*. Denton, Texas USA: Miss Inys Whiteside, First Edition 1945. Seventh Edition 1976.
- *New International Biblical Commentary* (NIBC). New Testament Series, vols. 1-18. Peabody, Massachusetts USA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1988-1999. Electronic text hypertexted and prepared by OakTree Software, Inc. for use in the Accordance Bible Search Software, Version 2.5.

Appendix – Outlines of Romans

I. Introduction, 1:1-15

- A. Salutation, 1:1-7
- B. Prayer, 1:8-15

II. Thesis, 1:16-17

III. The Way of Deliverance, 1:18-5:21

- A. Universal Sinfulness, 1:18--3:20
 - 1. The Condemnation of the Gentile World, 1:18-32
 - 2. The Condemnation of the Jew, 2:1-16
 - a. The danger of judging others, 2:1-3
 - b. The need for repentance, 2:4
 - c. Judgment, 2:5-16
 - 3. The Jew, 2:17-3:8
 - a. The Jew's confidence, 2:17-20
 - b. The Jew's failure, 2:21-24
 - c. The inward and the outward, 2:25-29
 - d. The faithfulness of God, 3:1-4
 - e. Objections, 3:5-8
 - 4. Universal Sinfulness-Proof from Scripture, 3:9-20
- B. Justification, 3:21-5:21
 - 1. How Justification Is Effected, 3:21-31
 - a. The death of Christ, 3:21-26
 - b. Faith, 3:27-31
 - 2. Justification Proved from Abraham, 4:1-25
 - a. God's way is grace, 4:1-8

- b. Faith and circumcision, 4:9-12
- c. Faith and law, 4:13-17
- d. Faith and Abraham, 4:18~25
- 3. The Effects of Justification, 5:1-11
- 4. Solidarity in Adam and in Christ, 5:12-21

IV. The Way of Godliness, 6:1-8:39

- A. Shall We Continue to Sin That Grace May Abound? 6:1-14
- B. Shall We Sin Because We Are under Grace, Not Law? 6:15-7:6
 - 1. We Are Not Slaves, 6:15-23
 - 2. An Illustration from Marriage, 7:1-6
- C. Is the Law Sin? 7:7-12
- D. Did the Good Law Cause Death? 7:13-25
- E. The Holy Spirit in the Believer, 8:1-39
 - 1. The Opposition of Flesh and Spirit, 8:1-11
 - 2. The Family of God, 8:12-17
 - 3. The Glorious Future, 8:18-25
 - 4. The Spirit's Intercession, 8:26-27
 - 5. The Purpose of God, 8:28-30
 - 6. The Christian's Triumph Song, 8:31-39

V. The Place of Israel, 9:1-11:36

- A. The Tragedy of Israel, 9:1-5
- B. God's Sovereign Freedom, 9:6-29
 - 1. God Works by Election, 9:6-13
 - 2. God's Purpose Is Mercy, 9:14-18
 - 3. God's Wrath and God's Mercy, 9:19-29
- C. Human Responsibility, 9:30-10:21
 - 1. The "Stumbling Stone", 9:30-33
 - 2. Two Ways of Righteousness, 10:1-13
 - 3. Worldwide Proclamation, 10:14-21
- D. God's Promises Will Be Fulfilled, 11:1-36
 - 1. The Remnant of Israel, 11:1-10
 - 2. The Restoration of Israel, 11:11-24
 - 3. The Conversion of Israel, 11:25-32
 - 4. The Mercy of God, 11:33-36

VI. Christian Living, 12:1-15:13

- A. The Christian Attitude to God, 12:1-2
- B. The Christian Attitude to Other Christians, 12:3-16
 - 1. Humility, 12:3
 - 2. Difference of Function, 12:4-8
 - 3. Love of the Brothers, 12:9-10
 - 4. Some Practical Advice, 12:11-16
- C. The Christian Attitude to Non-Christians, 12:17-21
- D. The Christian Attitude to Civil Rulers, 13:1-7

- E. The Christian Attitude to People in General, 13:8-10
- F. Living in the Light, 13:11-14
- G. Love and Liberty, 14:1-15:13
 - 1. Christian Liberty, 14:1-12
 - 2. The Way of Peace and Love, 14:13-23
 - 3. Christian Unity, 15:1-13

VII. Conclusion, 15:14-16:27

- A. The Minister of the Gentiles, 15:14-22
- B. Paul's Plans, 15:23-33
- C. Commendation of Phoebe, 16:1-2
- D. Greetings, 16:3-16
- E. A Doctrinal Warning, 16:17-20
- F. Greetings from People with Paul, 16:21-24
- G. Doxology, 16:25-27

New Bible Commentary Outline:

- 1:1-17 The letter opening**
 - 1:1-7 Prescript
 - 1:8-15 Thanksgiving and occasion
 - 1:16-17 The theme of the letter
- 1:18-4:25 The gospel and the righteousness of God by faith**
 - 1:18-32 God's wrath on the Gentiles
 - 2:1-3:8 God's wrath on the Jews
 - 3:9-20 The guilt of all humankind
 - 3:21-26 The righteousness of God
 - 3:27-4:25 'By faith alone'
- 5:1-8:39 The gospel and the power of God for salvation**
 - 5:1-11 The hope of glory
 - 5:12-21 The reign of grace and life
 - 6:1-23 Freedom from bondage to sin
 - 7:1-25 Freedom from bondage to the law
 - 8:1-30 Assurance of eternal life in the Spirit
 - 8:31-39 Celebration of the believer's security
- 9:1-11:36 The gospel and Israel**
 - 9:1-6a The issue: Paul's anguish over Israel
 - 9:6b-29 Israel's past: God's sovereign election
 - 9:30-10:21 Israel's present: disobedience
 - 11:1-10 Israel's present: 'a remnant by grace'
 - 11:11-32 Israel's future: salvation
 - 11:33-36 The awesome purpose and plan of God
- 12:1-15:13 The gospel and the transformation of life**
 - 12:1-2 The heart of the matter: a renewed mind
 - 12:3-8 Humility and gifts
 - 12:9-21 Love
 - 13:1-7 The Christian's responsibility to government
 - 13:8-10 Love and the law
 - 13:11-14 Recognizing the times
 - 14:1-15:13 Appeals for unity
- 15:14-16:27 The letter closing**
 - 15:14-33 Paul's ministry and plans
 - 16:1-16 Commendation and greetings
 - 16:17-20 Warning about false teachers
 - 16:21-27 Final greetings and doxology

Bible Knowledge Commentary Outline:

- I. Introductory Matters (1:1-17)
 - A. Epistolary greetings (1:1-7)
 - B. Establishing rapport (1:8-15)
 - C. Emphasizing theme (1:16-17)
- II. God's Righteousness Revealed in Condemnation (1:18-3:20)
 - A. Condemnation against pagan humanity (1:18-32)
 - 1. Reasons for condemnation (1:18-23)
 - 2. Results of condemnation (1:24-32)
 - B. Condemnation according to divine standards (2:1-16)
 - 1. Truthfulness (2:1-4)
 - 2. Impartiality (2:5-11)
 - 3. Jesus Christ (2:12-16)
 - C. Condemnation against unfaithful Jews (2:17-3:8)
 - 1. Condemnation because of their hypocrisy (2:17-24)
 - 2. Condemnation because of their trust in rites (2:25-29)
 - 3. Condemnation because of their unbelief (3:1-8)
 - D. Condemnation against all human beings (3:9-20)
 - 1. All are under sin (3:9-18)
 - 2. All are conscious of sin (3:19-20)
- III. God's Righteousness Revealed in Justification (3:21-5:21)
 - A. Provided righteousness explained (3:21-31)
 - B. Provided righteousness illustrated (chap. 4)
 - 1. By faith not works (4:1-8)
 - 2. By faith not rites (4:9-12)
 - 3. By faith not the Law (4:13-17)
 - 4. By faith in God's promise (4:18-25)
 - C. Provided righteousness enjoyed (5:1-11)
 - D. Provided righteousness contrasted (5:12-21)
- IV. God's Righteousness Revealed in Sanctification (chaps. 6-8)
 - A. Ground of sanctification (6:1-4)
 - B. Attitudes for sanctification (6:5-23)
 - 1. Reckon (6:5-11)
 - 2. Yield (6:12-14)
 - 3. Serve (6:15-23)
 - C. Conflict in sanctification (chap. 7)
 - 1. The believer and the Law (7:1-6)
 - 2. The Law and sin (7:7-13)
 - 3. The believer and sin (7:14-25)
 - D. Power for sanctification (8:1-17)
 - E. Goal of sanctification (8:18-27)
 - F. Certainty of sanctification (8:28-39)

V. God's Righteousness Revealed in Sovereign Choice (chaps. 9-11)

A. God's sovereign choice enunciated (9:1-29)

1. Israel's privileges (9:1-5)
2. The choice illustrated (9:6-18)
3. The choice explained (9:19-29)

B. God's sovereign choice applied (9:30-10:21)

1. Israel's stumbling (9:30-10:4)
2. God's gracious offer (10:5-15)
3. Israel's rejection (10:16-21)

C. God's sovereign choice fulfilled (chap. 11)

1. In election of grace (11:1-10)
2. In Gentiles (11:11-24)
3. In Israel's salvation (11:25-32)
4. To God's glory and praise (11:33-36)

VI. God's Righteousness Revealed in Transformed Living (12:1-15:13)

A. The basic consecration (12:1-2)

B. In Christian ministry (12:3-8)

C. In social relationships (12:9-21)

D. In relation to authority (13:1-7)

E. In light of the future (13:8-14)

F. In dealing with other Christians (14:1-15:13)

1. Without judging (14:1-12)
2. Without hindering (14:13-23)
3. As imitators of Christ (15:1-13)

VII. Concluding Remarks (15:14-16:27)

A. Personal plans (15:14-33)

B. Personal greetings (16:1-16)

C. Final words (16:17-27)

NIV Bible Commentary Outline:

- I. Introduction (1:1-15)
 - A. Salutation (1:1-7)
 - B. Paul and the Church at Rome (1:8-15)
- II. Theme: The Gospel As the Revelation of the Righteousness of God (1:16-17)
- III. The Need for Salvation: The Plight of Humanity (1:18-3:20)
 - A. In the Pagan World (1:18-32)
 - B. Principles of Judgment (2:1-16)
 - C. Specific Guilt of the Jew (2:17-3:8)
 - D. Summary (3:9-20)
- IV. Justification: The Imputation of Righteousness (3:21-5:21)
 - A. The Description of Justification (3:21-26)
 - B. The Availability of Justification Through Faith Alone (3:27-31)
 - C. The Illustration of Justification From the Old Testament (4:1-25)
 - 1. The case of Abraham (4:1-5)
 - 2. The case of David (4:6-8)
 - 3. The promise to Abraham—apart from circumcision (4:9-12)
 - 4. The promise to Abraham—apart from the law (4:13-17)
 - 5. Abraham's faith as the standard for every believer (4:18-25)
 - D. The Benefits of Justification (5:1-11)
 - E. The Universal Applicability of Justification (5:12-21)
- V. Sanctification: The Impartation of Righteousness (6:1-8:39)
 - A. The Believer's Union With Christ in Death and in Resurrection Life (6:1-14)
 - 1. The statement of the fact (6:1-10)
 - 2. The appeal based on the fact (6:11-14)
 - B. Union With Christ Viewed As Enslavement to Righteousness (6:15-23)
 - C. Union With Christ Viewed As Deliverance From Law (7:1-6)
 - D. The Relationship Between Law and Sin (7:7-25)
 - E. The Blessings of Life in the Spirit (8:1-39)
 - 1. Liberation by the Spirit from the law of sin and death (8:1-11)
 - 2. Additional ministries of the Spirit (8:12-27)
 - 3. The security and permanence of the life of the redeemed (8:28-39)
- VI. The Problem of Israel: God's Righteousness Vindicated (9:1-11:36)
 - A. Paul's Sorrow Over Israel's Condition (9:1-5)
 - B. God's Choice of Israel Based on Election, Not on Natural Generation or Works of Merit (9:6-13)
 - C. God's Freedom to Act in His Own Sovereign Right (9:14-29)
 - D. Israel's Failure to Attain Righteousness Due to Reliance on Works Rather Than Faith (9:30-10:21)
 - E. Israel Not Entirely Rejected; There Is a Remnant of Believers (11:1-10)
 - F. Israel's Temporary Rejection and the Salvation of Gentiles (11:11-24)
 - G. Israel's Future Salvation (11:25-32)
 - H. Praise to God for His Wisdom and His Ways (11:33-36)
- VII. Our Spiritual Service: The Practice of Righteousness (12:1-15:13)
 - A. The Appeal for Dedication of the Believer (12:1-2)

- B. Varied Ministries in the Church, the Body of Christ (12:3-8)
- C. Principles Governing Christian Conduct (12:9-21)
- D. The Duty of Submission to Civil Authority (13:1-7)
- E. The Comprehensive Obligation of Love (13:8-10)
- F. The Purifying Power of Hope (13:11-14)
- G. Questions of Conscience Wherein Christians Differ (14:1-15:13)
 - 1. Brethren must refrain from judging one another (14:1-12)
 - 2. Brethren must avoid offending one another (14:13-23)
 - 3. The unity of the strong and the weak in Christ (15:1-13)
- VIII. Conclusion (15:13-16:27)
 - A. Paul's Past Labors, Present Program, and Future Plans (15:14-33)
 - B. The Commendation of Phoebe (16:1-2)
 - C. Warning Concerning Schismatics, Personal Greetings, and Doxology (16:3-27)