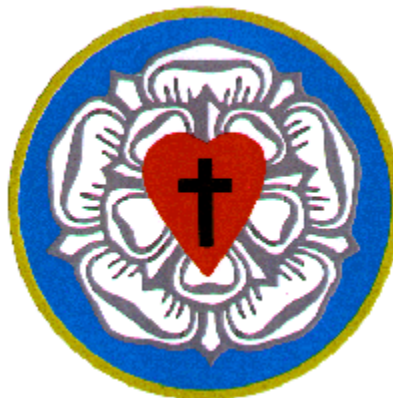


Luther on Romans

“This epistle is really the chief part of the New Testament, and is truly the purest Gospel. It is worthy not only that every Christian should know it word for word, by heart, but also that he should occupy himself with it every day, as the daily bread of the soul. We can never read it or ponder over it too much; for the more we deal with it, the more precious it becomes and the better it tastes.” (*AE* 35.365)

“In this epistle we thus find most abundantly the things that a Christian ought to know, namely, what is law, gospel, sin, punishment, grace, faith, righteousness, Christ, God, good works, love, hope, and the cross; and also how we are to conduct ourselves toward everyone, be he righteous or sinner, strong or weak, friend or foe – and even toward our own selves. Moreover this is all ably supported with Scripture and proved by St. Paul’s own example and that of the prophets, so that one could not wish for anything more. Therefore it appears that he wanted in this one epistle to sum up briefly the whole Christian and evangelical doctrine, and to prepare an introduction to the entire Old Testament. For, without doubt, whoever has this epistle well in his heart, has with him the light and power of the Old Testament. Therefore let every Christian be familiar with it and exercise himself in it continually. To this end may God give his grace. Amen.” (*AE* 35.380)

It should be recounted here that John Wesley, founder of the Methodist religion, was by his own testimony converted to the Christian faith when hearing Luther’s preface to Romans read aloud on May 24, 1738. (*WA*, *DB* 7, 3-27; found in *AE* 35.365 note 15)



Introductory Notes on Romans

Author: St. Paul, Saul of Tarsus before being named by God. See 1:1. See also our earlier study on the Life of St. Paul, attached.

Date of Writing: Approximately 56 A.✠ D. (many sources say Spring 57) See maps on the missionary journeys of St. Paul, attached. See Acts 15:39- 20:3. 20:2b-3 relates his time in Corinth. Paul had not yet visited Corinth on his third missionary journey when he wrote 1 Corinthians (see 16:1-4) and 2 Corinthians, so Romans is to be dated after 1 Corinthians (which was written in 55 A.✠ D.).

Place of Writing: The house of Gaius in Corinth. See Romans 16:23. Several men have the name Gaius in Scripture, but this is the Gaius of Corinth baptized by Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:14. He is not to be confused with Gaius of Macedonia (Acts 19:29), or Gaius of Derbe (Acts 20:4), nor the Gaius of 3 John 1, 4, 5. The Concordia Study Bible and many commentaries are wrong here. Paul was in Corinth for three months.

Circumstance of Writing: Paul had not yet returned to Jerusalem from his third missionary journey (Acts 20:22). He carried the famine offering from the churches of Asia Minor with him. While he desired to travel to Rome, he was compelled to return to Jerusalem first. He then planned to travel to Spain, and stop in Rome on the way. See Romans 1:11, 15:23-28.

Major Theme: Verses 1:16-17, and 3:25. The Gospel is the power of God for the salvation of all who believe. In the Gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness by faith. Christ is the center of the Gospel and the fulfillment of the Law. Man is justified by faith in His Blood. God is just, and justifies those with faith in Jesus.

Note these themes in Romans:

The righteousness of God: 1:17; 3:21; 10:3

The person of Christ: 1:3-4; 3:21-26; 5:6-9; 6:4; 8:9-11

Baptism: 6:3-4; 8; 13:14

The wrath of God: 1:18; 2:5-11; 3:5-6; 4:13-15; 5:9; 9:22-24; 12:19; 13:4-5

Salvation by grace through faith: 1:16-17; 3:21-25; 10:8-11

The Law, and the word Law used in different senses: 3:19-21 (Old Testament writings); 3:27 (a principle); 7:12-13, 21, 23, 25

The Christian Church as the true Israel: Romans 9:6-8; 11:25-29

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Chronology of the life of St. Paul

Year (Approx.)	Event	Reference
1	Birth and Name	Acts 9:11; 22:3
12	Son of the Law by Bar Mitzvah	Tradition of the Jews
12-17	Student of Gamaliel in Jerusalem Tentmaker	Acts 22:3; 5:34-40; 18:1-3
31	Persecuted the Christians	Galatians 1:13-14; Acts 7:58, 8:1-3, 9:1- 4, 13-14; 22:1-5, 19-20; 26:9-12; 1 Cor. 15:9
32	Conversion, baptism, days in Damascus	Galatians 1:15-16; Acts 9:1- 21; 22:6-21; 26:12-18
32-35	In the desert in Arabia (Syrian desert) ("after many days" = 3 years)	Galatians. 1:17 (Acts silent)
	Return to Damascus, escape from Damascus, 15 day visit to Jerusalem return to Tarsus through Cesarea	Acts 9:22-30 Galatians 1:17-19
35-43	"8 silent years", preaching in Syria and Cilicia	Galatians 1:21-24
43-47	Barnabas brought Paul from Tarsus to Antioch to help in the first gentile congregation. Antioch becomes the "sending congregation" of St. Paul on all the missionary journeys.	Acts 11:19-26 13:1-3
44	The Prophet Agabus prophesies famine	Acts 11:27-30
46	Famine in Jerusalem (Josephus)	(Galatians 2:1-10, Acts 11:30, 12:25
	Paul, Barnabas and Titus take an offering to Jerusalem (14 years after the conversion of St. Paul), and return to Antioch with John Mark	
	Paul opposes Peter in Antioch	Galatians 2:11-21

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Year (Approx.)	Event	Reference
47-48	First Missionary Journey (with Barnabas) One and a half years.	Acts 13:2-14:27
49	Paul writes Galatians (in Cilicia)	Acts 14:28
49	The Apostolic Council in Jerusalem	Acts 15:1-30 (Galatians 2:1-10)
49-51	The Second Missionary Journey, with Silas (return to Jerusalem)	Acts 15:40-18:22
50	Paul writes 1 Thessalonians (in Corinth) Appearance before Gallio Paul writes 2 Thessalonians	Acts 18:1-18 Acts 18:12-17
51-52	Paul remains in Antioch	Acts 18:23 ^a
52-56	Third Missionary Journey (4 years) (three years in Ephesus, 19:1-20:1) Paul returns to Jerusalem for Pentecost, 56	Acts 18:23-21:15 Acts 20:16
54	Ephesian Captivity?, Paul writes the Captivity Epistles: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon (1 Cor. 15:32; 2 Cor 1:8-10, 11:23; Romans 16:4)	
55	Paul writes 1 Corinthians in Ephesus. He leaves after the riot of the silversmiths for Macedonia for six months. 1 Corinthians 16:8, Acts 20:1-2 (probably in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. It is possible That he made it as far north as Illyricum, see Romans 15:19) Paul writes 2 Corinthians (from Macedonia). Paul goes to Corinth for three months, until February, 56. Acts 20:2b-3.	
56	Paul writes Romans, in Corinth, in the house of Gaius.	Rom 16:23
56-58	Captivity of St. Paul (Jerusalem, then Caesarea, Acts 23:23-26:32)	Acts 21:16-26:32
58-59	Trip to Rome, three months on Malta	Acts 27:1-28:16
59-61	Paul imprisoned in Rome for two years	Acts 28:16-31

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Year (Approx.)	Event	Reference
61-62	Paul in Spain for one year (presumed)	Rom 15:24-28, Acts 19:21
62	Return from Spain to Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3), journey to Macedonia leaving Timothy as Bishop of Asia Minor.	
62-63	Paul in Macedonia Paul wrote 1 Timothy in Macedonia. Paul went to Crete (not mentioned in Acts, see Titus 1:5), a promised visit to Timothy (1 Tim 3:14, 4:13) with Titus. He preached the Gospel on the isle of Crete and established churches there (Titus 1:5). Paul leaves Titus on Crete, and returns to Macedonia. He writes the Epistle to Titus, probably from Macedonia. Paul had told Titus he desired to winter (63) in Nicapolis (on the west coast of Greece, Titus 3:12). We believe that Paul had to flee (new charges?) back to Asia Minor, to Troas (2 Timothy 4:9-12). Immediately thereafter Paul was taken to Rome and imprisoned.	
63-64	Paul's imprisonment in Rome a second time (assumed), much more severe in nature than the first. (2 Tim. 1:17; 2: 8,9) Paul wrote to Timothy that he would not be set free, but would be killed (2 Tim 4:6). Paul writes 2 Timothy from prison in Rome. (His reference to the coming winter would make it the winter of 64-65, 2 Tim 4:6)	
July 64	The burning of Rome under Nero. It began July 19, 64 A.✠ D. We believe that in the persecution of the Christians that followed, St. Paul was martyred.	

Rev. Mark P. Braden, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, 2005 A.✠ D. Chronology adapted with permission from Maier, WAM II. *Supplemental Class Notes for New Testament Bible*. CTS Press. Originally written by Dr. William Arndt, St. Louis. Translated from Braden, MP. *Cronología de la Vida de San Pablo*. 2002. Unpublished.

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OUTLINE OF ROMANS

Credit: The Rev. Dr. Charles Gieschen
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Concordia Theological Seminary
November, 2000

- I. Introduction to the Epistle (1.1-15)
- II. The Theme of the Epistle: The One who is Righteous by Faith will Live (1.16-17)
- III. Who is Righteous? The Wrath of God Revealed Against All (1.8-3.20)
 - A. Wrath against Unrighteousness without the Law (1.18-32)
 - B. Wrath against the so-called Righteousness by the Law (2.1-3.20)
- IV. God is Righteous! The Righteousness of God Revealed for All (3.21-4.25)
 - A. Revealed in Christ and by Faith (3.21-31)
 - B. Example: Abraham is declared righteous by faith before Circumcision and the Law (4.1-25)
- V. The One Who is Righteous by Faith Truly Lives (5.1-8.9)
 - A. Lives at Peace with God: Reconciliation Through Christ (5.1-21)
 - B. Lives Dead to Sin and Alive to God: Baptism and Sanctification (6.1-23)
 - C. Lives at War with the Sinful "Flesh" (7.1-25)
 - D. Lives Victoriously in the Spirit for Eternity (8.1-39)
- VI. The Righteousness by Faith That Lead .•• to Life is for "All Israel" (9.1-11.36)
 - A. The Promise is only to Believers (9.1-29)
 - B. Jewish Rejection is Not God's Fault (9.30-10.21)
 - C. Jewish Rejection is Not Final (11.1-36)
- VII. The Life Lived by the One Who is Righteous by Faith (12.1-15.13)
 - A. Live as Living Sacrifices (12.1-2)
 - B. Live as the Body of Christ (12.3-8)
 - C. Love One Another (12.9-21)
 - D. Live Subject to Authorities (13.1-7)
 - E. Love Your Neighbor (13.8-10)
 - F. Cast off Evil and Put on the Lord Jesus Christ (13.11-14)
 - G. Live Sensitive to the Weak in Faith (14.1-15.13)
- VIII. Conclusion (15.14-16.27)
 - A. Paul's Travel Plans (15.14-33)
 - B. Greetings and Salutation (16.1-27)

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