



ROMANS

Introduction to Romans

Romans stands as the most comprehensive and systematic presentation of the gospel in the New Testament, written by the Apostle Paul around A.D. 57 during his third missionary journey. Composed likely while Paul was in Corinth, the letter was addressed to a diverse congregation in Rome—a city of unmatched political and cultural influence at the heart of the Roman Empire. Though Paul had not yet visited the church, he longed to encourage and instruct them in the faith and prepare for future missionary work in Spain.

At the center of Romans is the righteousness of God revealed through the gospel. Paul opens with the universal problem of human sin—both Jew and Gentile are under condemnation—and then moves to God's gracious solution: justification by faith in Jesus Christ. The letter then explores the implications of that salvation, offering deep reflection on sanctification, the role of the law, union with Christ, life in the Spirit, and God's sovereign purposes in history, particularly regarding Israel.

Romans is not merely theological—it is also deeply pastoral and practical. Paul exhorts believers to present their lives as living sacrifices, to pursue love, humility, and peace within the body of Christ, and to submit to governing authorities. He addresses divisions between Jewish and Gentile Christians, calling for unity that reflects the grace they have received.

With a blend of robust doctrine and transformative application, Romans calls believers to marvel at the depth of God's mercy and to live in obedient response to His grace. For centuries, this letter has grounded the church in gospel truth and fueled spiritual awakening—from Augustine to the Reformation and beyond. As we read, we are invited to behold the glory of the gospel and to respond with lives marked by faith, hope, and love.¹

1. D. A. Carson and Douglas J. Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005), 391–412

Week of Monday, July 7, 2025

Romans 1:1-7

1 Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God— 2 which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures— 3 concerning his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who was a descendant of David according to the flesh 4 and was appointed to be the powerful Son of God according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection of the dead. 5 Through him we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the Gentiles, 6 including you who are also called by Jesus Christ.

7 To all who are in Rome, loved by God, called as saints.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

HOPE Journaling

H – Highlight what stands out to you

O – Observe what it teaches

P – Practice this in your life

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Weekly Devotional

When I was younger, at times I was tempted to skip ahead in a new book, but I often found myself confused and lost. You meet characters you don't know and hear references to things that happened before, but without the beginning, the story doesn't fully make sense. There's a richness in the foundation that gives clarity to the conclusion. And when you miss that foundation, everything that comes later feels disconnected, even hollow.

That's how it can be with the gospel if we don't understand its roots. We might be tempted to think the gospel begins in the New Testament, as if Jesus suddenly appears on the scene out of nowhere, performing miracles, teaching crowds, and dying on a cross. But right from the very first lines of his letter to the Romans, Paul slows us down and takes us back. He wants us to see that the gospel is not new. It's not a last-minute idea. It's not a fix to a broken plan. It is the fulfillment of a promise "which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures"

In other words, the story of Jesus is not a detour or a side note, it's the continuation and the climax of everything God has been doing since the beginning of time. From Genesis to Malachi, every page of the Old Testament is pointing forward to a Redeemer. Through the law, God revealed our sin and our deep need for mercy. Through the prophets, He promised a coming King who would rule with justice and bring peace. Through the sacrifices, He gave us a picture of substitutionary atonement. Through every rescue, every covenant, every shadow and symbol, God was writing a story, and Jesus is the One who ties it all together.

The story of Jesus didn't begin in a manger in Bethlehem. It began in the heart of God before the foundation of the world. Before Adam ever sinned, before Abraham believed, before David ruled, God had already planned to send His Son to redeem and restore. And when the time was just right, He did exactly what He said He would do.

That means your faith isn't built on emotion, hype, or spiritual sentiment. It's anchored in something far more solid, God's unshakable faithfulness. He keeps His Word. He always has. He always will. He sent His Son, Jesus, born in David's line, just as promised. He lived in perfect obedience, died for our sins, "and was appointed to be the powerful Son of God according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection of the dead". The cross was not a mistake. The empty tomb was not an afterthought. The gospel was not a plan B, it was the plan all along.

And if God has been that faithful through generations, you can trust Him with your story too. He hasn't forgotten you. The gospel reminds us that God finishes what He starts.

That's why we're beginning this journey through Romans, not just to learn more, but to be formed by the truth of the gospel. Romans helps us see the bigger picture: who God is, what He's done, and how we're called to live in response.

So as we open this letter together, let's ask God to ground us more deeply in His grace, to remind us of His faithfulness, and to show us again that the story really is all about Jesus.

-Devotional written by Eric Foster

Read Also:

Romans 1

Romans 16:25–26

2 Samuel 7:12–14

Luke 24:27, 44

Acts 13:32–33

Philippians 2:6–11

1 Peter 2:9–10

Galatians 1:15–16

Group Discussion Questions

How does recognizing the gospel as the fulfillment of God’s long-standing promises deepen your trust in His redemptive plan? In what ways does this shape how you read the Old Testament and understand the unity of Scripture?

Jesus is described as both descended from David and declared the Son of God in power by His resurrection. Why is it essential for our salvation that Jesus is both fully human and fully divine? How does holding both truths together deepen your worship and strengthen your confidence in Him as Savior and Lord?

Paul saw himself as a servant, called and set apart for the gospel. How would you articulate your own gospel calling in this season of life? What does being “set apart” look like in your current relationships, or responsibilities?

How has the grace you’ve received shaped not only your identity, but also your sense of mission? Where is God currently calling you to help cultivate “obedience of faith” in others?

Paul describes believers as “loved by God and called to be saints.” How does regularly returning to this identity guard you against performance-driven spirituality or spiritual complacency?

Paul’s mission was for “the sake of His name among all the Gentiles.” How does a global view of the gospel confront tendencies toward comfort, or cultural preference?

Week of Monday, July 14, 2025

Romans 1:8-17

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you because the news of your faith is being reported in all the world. **9** God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in telling the good news about his Son—that I constantly mention you, **10** always asking in my prayers that if it is somehow in God’s will, I may now at last succeed in coming to you. **11** For I want very much to see you, so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you, **12** that is, to be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith, both yours and mine.

13 Now I don’t want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that I often planned to come to you (but was prevented until now) in order that I might have a fruitful ministry among you, just as I have had among the rest of the Gentiles. **14** I am obligated both to Greeks and barbarians, both to the wise and the foolish. **15** So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, first to the Jew, and also to the Greek. **17** For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, just as it is written: The righteous will live by faith.

HOPE Journaling

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Weekly Devotional

One of my favorite times of the week is Tuesday evening, my small group night. It's not just a scheduled meeting on the calendar; it's something I genuinely look forward to. Part of that is because I'm grateful for the chance to share what God is doing in my life, through His Word, in prayer, or in the ordinary moments of the week. But honestly, what makes it truly special is hearing from the other men in the group. Listening to how God is at work in their lives, the insights they bring to the passage we're studying, or even just hearing how they're holding onto faith in a hard season, it strengthens me. Sometimes it's a word I didn't know I needed. Other times it's just knowing I'm not walking alone.

That's the kind of dynamic Paul longed for when he wrote to the church in Rome. He says that he wanted very much to be with them, not just to give, but to receive. He says, "that is, to be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine." And I find that beautiful. This is the Apostle Paul, bold, seasoned in ministry, used powerfully by God, and yet he's looking forward to encouragement from ordinary Christians he hasn't even met yet.

There's something profoundly humbling in that. Paul doesn't see himself as above the need for encouragement. And he doesn't see the believers in Rome as too inexperienced to offer it. He fully expects that when believers gather, whether new in the faith or walking with Jesus for decades, something special and strengthening can happen.

This is how God has designed the church to work. We aren't just individual Christians trying to survive the week. We're a body. And when we show up in each other's lives, whether around a table, in a text message, over coffee, or in a hospital room; we create space for mutual strengthening.

Sometimes encouragement looks like a deep spiritual insight. Sometimes it's just someone showing up when you need them. And sometimes it's a newer believer reminding you what fresh joy in Jesus looks like, because maybe you've forgotten.

Wherever you find yourself right now, whether you're weary or thriving, seasoned or just starting out, know this: your faith matters. It matters to the people around you. And their faith matters to you. God uses it all. You never know how your simple act of showing up and being real about your faith might encourage someone else. And you never know what God might use in someone else to refresh your soul.

Look for ways to build real, Christ-centered friendships, relationships where you can talk honestly about your faith, your struggles, and how God is at work in your life. Don't pull away from community, even when life feels busy, complicated, or even a little awkward. Sometimes the most powerful thing you can do is simply show up, be present, listen well, and be willing to share even a small piece of what God is teaching you. It doesn't have to be polished or profound. Just real.

Let's be the kind of people who show up for each other. Who speak life and truth and grace. Who don't pretend to have it all together, but who trust that God works through honest, imperfect people encouraging one another in faith. We don't just need to strengthen others, we need to be strengthened too. And that's exactly how God designed it.

-Devotional written by Eric Foster

Read Also:

Romans 1

Philippians 1:3–5

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Hebrews 10:24–25

Philemon 1:6–7

1 Corinthians 9:16

Acts 20:24

Habakkuk 2:4

Philippians 3:9

Group Discussion Questions

Paul says he prays for the believers in Rome “always.” What does that say about the importance of regularly praying for other Christians? Are there any habits or practices that have helped you stay consistent in praying for others?

Paul was eager to encourage the believers in Rome, but he also wanted to receive encouragement from them. Why is it important for believers to remain open to encouragement from others?

Share a time when you were unexpectedly encouraged by someone younger in the faith. How did God use that moment to strengthen you?

Paul describes himself as “obligated” to all people. In what ways do you feel a sense of responsibility to share the gospel? How do you wrestle with that? Are there any groups of people or individuals you feel less eager to share the gospel with? What do Paul’s words challenge in your heart?

Paul says he is “not ashamed of the gospel.” In what situations today might Christians feel pressure to hide their faith? How can we grow in gospel courage? What does it mean to say the gospel is “the power of God for salvation”? How does that truth affect your confidence in sharing it with others?

What is one step you want to take this week to grow in prayer, encouragement, or gospel boldness?

Week of Monday, July 21, 2025

Romans 1:18-32

18 For God's wrath is revealed from heaven against all godlessness and unrighteousness of people who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth, **19** since what can be known about God is evident among them, because God has shown it to them. **20** For his invisible attributes, that is, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen since the creation of the world, being understood through what he has made. As a result, people are without excuse. **21** For though they knew God, they did not glorify him as God or show gratitude. Instead, their thinking became worthless, and their senseless hearts were darkened. **22** Claiming to be wise, they became fools **23** and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man, birds, four-footed animals, and reptiles.

24 Therefore God delivered them over in the desires of their hearts to sexual impurity, so that their bodies were degraded among themselves. **25** They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served what has been created instead of the Creator, who is praised forever. Amen.

26 For this reason God delivered them over to disgraceful passions. Their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. **27** The men in the same way also left natural relations with women and were inflamed in their lust for one another. Men committed shameless acts with men and received in their own persons the appropriate penalty of their error.

28 And because they did not think it worthwhile to acknowledge God, God delivered them over to a corrupt mind so that they do what is not right. **29** They are filled with all unrighteousness, evil, greed, and wickedness. They are full of envy, murder, quarrels, deceit, and malice. They are gossips, **30** slanderers, God-haters, arrogant, proud, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, **31** senseless, untrustworthy, unloving, and unmerciful. **32** Although they know God's just sentence—that those who practice such things deserve to die—they not only do them, but even applaud others who practice them.

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Weekly Devotional

Have you ever read a passage of Scripture and thought, This sounds like it was written yesterday? Our passage this week feels that way. It's like reading a news article or scrolling through a social media feed. The issues Paul addresses, denial of truth, idolatry, distorted desires, broken relationships, pride, cruelty, and moral confusion, are just as present today as they were in the first century.

That's not discouraging; it's actually a reminder of something deeply comforting: God's Word is timeless. It doesn't expire. The Bible remains relevant because it was breathed out by a God who sees all of history at once. What Paul describes here isn't just a cultural snapshot, it's the human condition apart from God.

Paul shows us the root of humanity's downward spiral: the suppression of truth. Even though God has made Himself clearly known through creation, His power and divine nature on display all around us, people choose to ignore Him. Instead of worshiping the Creator, they worship created things. And when we trade truth for a lie, God allows us to chase what we think we want. That's the tragic pattern in this passage: "God delivered them over to disgraceful passions.", and the results are heartbreaking.

But Romans 1 isn't here just to point out what's wrong with the world out there, it also confronts what's in our own hearts. It forces us to ask: Where am I ignoring what God has made clear? Where am I tempted to trade the truth for a lie? It's a sobering reminder of what happens when we reject the light we've been given.

Yet built into this warning is a call to grace. If the world's problems stem from ignoring God, then the way back begins with turning to Him. The gospel, which Paul has just begun to explain in this chapter, is God's power to save us from the judgment we deserve. And it's the only hope for a world unraveling at the seams.

So don't lose heart as you read this passage. Let it stir compassion for those who don't yet know the truth. Let it renew your gratitude for the mercy you've received. And let it strengthen your confidence in the gospel that never grows old.

-Devotional written by Eric Foster

Read Also:

Romans 1

Psalm 19:1–4 – General Revelation in Creation

John 3:36 – God’s Wrath and the Necessity of Faith

Jeremiah 2:11–13 – Exchange of Glory and Idolatry

Psalm 81:11–12 – God Giving Them Over

2 Timothy 3:1–5 – Fruits of Rebellion

Isaiah 5:20 – Calling Evil Good

Ephesians 5:6 – Wrath Because of Sinful Living

Romans 3:9–12 – Universal Sinfulness

Group Discussion Questions

How does Romans 1:18–32 confront the idea that someone can be “spiritual” or “moral” without acknowledging God? What does this reveal about the true nature of rejecting God’s truth?

What are some modern-day expressions of idolatry that may not involve physical statues but still compete for the worship that belongs to God alone? How do we discern them in our own lives?

According to this passage, why is no one excused from accountability to God, even those who have never read the Bible? How should this shape our view of evangelism and missions?

Have there been moments when you’ve tried to ignore or push down something God was clearly revealing to you, whether through Scripture, conscience, or creation? What did that look like, and what would a faithful response look like instead?

Paul’s words about God’s wrath can feel uncomfortable or even offensive in today’s culture. How do we talk about God’s judgment in a way that is faithful to Scripture but also marked by humility, love, and compassion?

In what ways does this passage serve as both a warning and a mirror? What are some signs that a culture—or even an individual—is walking the road of exchanging truth for lies?

What role does thankfulness (or the lack of it) play in this passage? How might gratitude toward God protect us from drifting into idolatry or spiritual apathy?

Week of Monday, July 28, 2025

Romans 2:1-16

1 Therefore, every one of you who judges is without excuse. For when you judge another, you condemn yourself, since you, the judge, do the same things. **2** Now we know that God's judgment on those who do such things is based on the truth. **3** Do you think—anyone of you who judges those who do such things yet do the same—that you will escape God's judgment? **4** Or do you despise the riches of his kindness, restraint, and patience, not recognizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance? **5** Because of your hardened and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath, when God's righteous judgment is revealed. **6** He will repay each one according to his works: **7** eternal life to those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor, and immortality; **8** but wrath and anger to those who are self-seeking and disobey the truth while obeying unrighteousness. **9** There will be affliction and distress for every human being who does evil, first to the Jew, and also to the Greek; **10** but glory, honor, and peace for everyone who does what is good, first to the Jew, and also to the Greek. **11** For there is no favoritism with God.

12 For all who sin without the law will also perish without the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law. **13** For the hearers of the law are not righteous before God, but the doers of the law will be justified. **14** So, when Gentiles, who do not by nature have the law, do what the law demands, they are a law to themselves even though they do not have the law. **15** They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts. Their consciences confirm this. Their competing thoughts either accuse or even excuse them **16** on the day when God judges what people have kept secret, according to my gospel through Christ Jesus.

HOPE Journaling

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Weekly Devotional

We've all seen it happen. A famous person gets exposed, some hidden sin finally comes to light, and suddenly everyone has something to say. Social media explodes. Talk shows dissect every detail. Comment sections fill up with finger-pointing and outrage. And in that moment, people rush to distance themselves: "I would never do that."

But Paul's words in Romans 2 can feel a bit jolting. He says, in essence, "Be careful. The same stuff you're condemning in others? You're not so far off yourself." That's a hard truth. And if we're honest, we know it's true.

We might not have done exactly what someone else did. But most of us have had moments where we've gossiped while judging gossip, or gotten angry while criticizing someone's temper, or felt superior while condemning someone else's pride. The truth is, it's way easier to see sin in someone else's life than to admit it in our own.

Paul isn't saying we should look the other way when someone falls morally. If a friend or fellow believer is caught in sin, Scripture calls us to lovingly help them turn back. But here's the trap: when we're quick to criticize others and slow to search our own hearts, we've moved from helpful to harmful.

Paul goes on to say in Romans 2:4, "Do you despise the riches of his kindness, restraint, and patience, not recognizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?" God is patient, not so we can stay the same, but so we can be changed. He gives us time to turn around, to repent, to grow.

The danger is that our obsession with the "big sins" of others can numb us to the quiet sins in our own hearts. Pride. Bitterness. Jealousy. Unforgiveness. These things can sit deep in our souls while we shake our heads at someone else's failure.

That's why Paul's reminder in Romans 2:16 is so sobering: "God judges what people have kept secret, according to my gospel through Christ Jesus." God doesn't just see what's out in the open, He sees what's hidden. What's buried deep. What we justify or try to ignore.

So what should we do?

When we see someone fall, it should make us pause. Not to gossip, but to reflect. It should stir humility, not superiority. It should remind us that apart from God's grace, we're all in the same boat.

Instead of saying, "I would never," maybe the better response is, "Lord, keep me close to You. Keep me honest. Show me where I need to repent too."

-Devotional written by Eric Foster

Read Also:

Romans 2

Matthew 7:1–5

Luke 6:37–42

2 Peter 3:9

Ecclesiastes 12:14

Group Discussion Questions

Why do you think we tend to notice and call out sin in others more quickly than we recognize it in ourselves? What might be going on in our hearts when that happens?

Can you think of a time when you were critical of someone, only to realize later you were guilty of something similar? What did that experience reveal about your own need for grace?

What do you think distinguishes healthy spiritual discernment from a judgmental spirit? How can we tell when we've moved from one to the other in our relationships or conversations?

Romans 2:4 says that God's kindness is meant to lead us to repentance. How does that reshape the way we think about God's character and His view of our sin? Can you share a time when His patience had a personal impact on you?

How does the message of the gospel in this passage both challenge us and comfort us? What do you think it means to live in light of both God's justice and His mercy?

What role does humility play in how we respond to the sins of others, and to our own? How might a humble posture change the way we interact with people who are struggling?