

# Note

## Romans – Part 1 of 1

### Summary

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The Romans epistle is about the “Righteousness of God”. Apostle Paul affirms that through Jesus the Messiah and Lord, God demonstrates His saving and transforming power to all His faithful followers; the Jews and the Gentiles alike.

In the first section of the letter, Paul affirms that everyone, regardless of Jew or Gentile is under God’s judgement. The second part, Paul explains the ‘Good News’ that God has revealed His righteousness through Christ so that whosoever believes in Him will be adopted into God’s family. Then, Paul goes on to explain that through Christ His faithful followers have now the hope to battle and overcome sins. Paul also speaks of how God will be faithful to keep His promise to the Jews.

The letter concludes with Paul encouraging the Roman church to be unified in His name when it comes to living and proclaiming the ‘Good News’ of Jesus, ‘The Messiah’.

# Transcript

## Romans – Part 1 of 1

Today, we come to the book of Romans. This book can be divided into 4 major sections.

- Chapters 1 to 4 reveal God's righteousness.
- Chapters 5 to 8 reveal a new race under Jesus Christ.
- Chapters 9 to 11 show that God has not rejected Israel, He will fulfill his promise to Israel.
- Chapters 12 to 16 show us how the Church must be unified.

Firstly, remember, this is an epistle. This is a letter written by God the Father, through Apostle Paul to God's children, you and me. So it's a letter. Now, if God your father were to write you a letter, I hope you will read it and hope you read it through. And I hope you will want to understand what Abba Father wants to say to you. Very different from a lecture which I may have no interest in, except to pass my exam. But if it's a letter from a loving father to his children, then I hope we will have a totally different attitude to it. So this is a letter from God.

In Romans Chapter 1 verse 1, Paul is a servant of Jesus Christ. Now the word servant here, has no rights like your domestic helper. The word servant here is a bondsman -doulos. A bondsman has absolutely no rights. He belongs to his master, never has a day off. He works extremely hard. If you had a good master he will protect you, feed you, take care of you, but if you have a bad master, you're in deep trouble. So Paul was happy to be a bondsman of Jesus Christ and we should be too.

Romans Chapter 1 verses 1 to 17 is Paul's introduction, telling who he is because he's never been to this church in Rome. Verses 18 to the end basically says that all are sinners.

Now, Romans Chapter 1 verse 16 reads:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

Paul said very clearly what this whole book is about. It's about the gospel, the good news. That's why this was the first episode place because we

were talking about Acts. Acts is about bringing good news to the world. But exactly what is the good news? What is the gospel? It is the power of God for salvation to all Jews and Gentiles.

Then in Chapter 1 verse 18 to the end, it tells us all men are sinners, but all men also have no excuse.

Verse 19 – 20:

For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

Now, this is something we have to be very clear about because I'm asked this over and over again by people saying, What about those who don't know there's a god? Oh really, is there such a human being on earth? There is none. If a person doesn't know there is a god, that's very strange because God says what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly, please underline clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world. So just by looking at nature you know that is a creator. He's not some idol looking like an animal or bird or something. How could that create the world? Call that god? That little thing on your cupboard shelf created the world? No, it is clear, there is some creator. Anytime you see something created, you know there is a creator. If I told you this watch happened by itself, you say, come on, of course, it's created by somebody. So how do you know? You never saw that the guy who made it? You said by looking at it, I know there is a creator. Someone made it. How come? Logic. If there's a creation, there is a creator. If there is a complicated creation, there's a complicated creator. I've never seen the guy who made my watch but I know he's quite smart, quite dexterous. So when people say they don't know, there is no excuse.

Chapter 2 to 4 God is telling us, all of us are sinners, and God is going to reveal His righteousness to us.

Chapter 3 verse 10, before you want the righteousness of God, you must first know you are a sinner, otherwise, you say I'm not that bad, I don't need God's righteousness now.

Chapter 3 verse 10 says:

as it is written: None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands;

So basically, all of us are going to need this gospel that Paul is bringing, whether you are Jew or whether you are Gentile, everybody is a sinner. So if everybody's a sinner, what is the solution?

Chapter 3 verse 21:

But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and Prophets bear witness to it - the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe.

So first he tells us all are sinners, none righteous. Then he says, but there is a solution - the righteousness of God, now clearly shown at the cross, when the sinless Savior went on the cross, paid the price for my sins, which I could never pay, took my place and paid the penalty. Then he rose from the dead and whoever believes in Him will have that righteousness of God.

Now, look at Chapter 3 verse 21 -but now, the righteousness of God has been manifested. In the past, everybody thought you had to work for your righteousness. But the trouble is, we are so sinful, even if we tried our best, we couldn't do it.

Chapter 3 verse 28:

For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

Every other religion says you have to earn your righteousness. You try to be right with God, but nobody can do that, all have sinned. So God is revealing His righteousness, not your righteousness, not my righteousness. His righteousness is going to be given to us through the cross.

Romans Chapter 4 verse 3:

For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness."

Everybody thought that in the Old Testament, you get righteousness by obeying the law. How did Abraham get that favour with God? What does the scripture say? Abraham believed God and was counted to him as righteousness. God told Abraham, I'm going to make you a father. He was a hundred years old, his wife was so old, but he believed God that he will have a son and through him, all nations will be blessed. And what did Abraham think? He did something, he didn't do anything. Why was he

counted righteous? Because the most righteous thing you can do, the most right thing you can do is - trust God. Not trust yourself to obey the law. And so that's exactly what Abraham did. He trusted God. That's why God said, you're righteous because you did the most right thing ever possible, you believed me. The self-righteous are people who believe they themselves can obey the law.

When did Abraham trust God?

Chapter 4:9-10

Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? For we say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness. How then was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised.

So when God gave that promise to Abraham and Abraham believed God, he was counted righteous. He received righteousness from God. His most great deed was he trusted God. And God said, Great, well done! I like that to trust me, God will never lie, God who made heaven and earth.

At that time when Abraham believed God, and it was counted him as righteousness, was he circumcised? No, he was not, it was later. So what is the point of this? They tell us that Abraham was the father of all, who would receive the righteousness of God by faith, by simply trusting God by God's gifts. So, is Abraham the father of Jews? No, no, at that time when he was blessed, he was not circumcised. So he's a father of Jews and Gentiles. In him, all nations will be blessed. All nations, Jews, and Gentiles that's why we see in Romans, the church was Jews and Gentiles. The letter was written to a church full of Jews and Gentiles.

So I hope you see in Chapter 1 verse 4, God reveals His righteousness. Actually it was hinted in the Old Testament all along. But man is so proud and self-righteous, that he never wanted to see those verses. He saw himself as a good guy, I think I can do it. And for centuries, king after king, prophet after prophet, priest after priest, all failed, thinking they were good men, but all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

Then Chapter 5 to Chapter 8 speaks of how God is going to create a whole new human race. The first race was the Adam race, he was head of a race of fallen men.

Romans Chapter 5 verse 12:

Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned---

So because of Adam, there was a race of sinners, generation after generation. Adam was the head of a race of fallen men. Let's look at Chapter 5, talking about the new race.

Chapter 5 verses 18 and 19:

Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men.

There's a new race coming up.

Verse 19:

For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

So we see now that there are two groups of people, one following Adam, the condemned race, and another one, trusting Christ. So in Chapter 5, we see the way to be part of the new race of human beings, the new humanity whose head is Christ, not Adam, is by trusting. The just shall live by faith.

Everybody looks at Chapter 5 and says, Do you mean you just believe and then you can sin after that. There's a lot of "Christianity" that promotes this, that once you're saved, you can do anything you like, you already are forgiven. Rubbish!

In Chapter 6, he shows the sacrament of baptism. Baptism is a beautiful picture of a person going into the water, which is like being buried. He's gone, he's dead. And then he comes out of the water, what does that look like? A new person, the old guy died, a new guy comes up. That's basically what the symbolism of baptism is, that's why I don't sprinkle because it doesn't show this picture.

So let's look at the picture in Romans Chapter 6:5-6

For if we have been united with Him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

So what does this tell us? The symbolism of baptism is that the old man who was a slave of sin, who had no ability to overcome the grip of sin on his life is now risen up a new person who has the ability to overcome the grip of sin or the power of sin over his life. In other words, he is a new creature with a new ability. In John Chapter 3, we say he's born again. When I received Jesus as my Saviour, the old PC, who had no power to overcome sin, and was destined for hell, was gone. In April 1980, (that's the time I trusted the Lord Jesus Christ), that PC died. He doesn't exist anymore. And a new PC came up, whose destination is not hell, but is now part of a race who has a new home called eternity with God, and who has a new ability to overcome sin. So salvation is not just a label, it is a new creation.

Chapter 6 is just giving us the basics, the understanding of the foundational truths.

#### Chapter 6:19

I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.

Underline that word sanctification. Now, I'm going to digress a little bit and teach some little foundational truths which most of you probably already know. When we trusted Jesus as our Saviour, we repented of our sins. At that moment, you are justified because you believe that Jesus died for all your sins. Just as Abraham believed God's promised that he would have a child, you believe that Jesus died for all your sins, past, present, and future. And Jesus said, "It is finished." And Jesus rose from the dead to prove it. You believe it. That is called justification.

At that very moment, just like Abraham, it was counted to him, it was imputed, put into his account-this man is righteous by God. That's justification. Justification - in the eyes of God, you are just because you believe Him. That's called imputed righteousness. Imputed means put into your account, it's 1 step. If I sign a cheque to put into your account 1 million dollars, you got the 1 million dollars in one step. At that point, your penalty of sin is removed because Christ paid the penalty, (gives you the cheque), settled your sins. So now you're just, you are no more the outlaw. You are not condemned, you're now acquitted - that's justification.

The word we saw is sanctification. Sanctification is a process. It's not 1 step, and it's not imputed. It is imparted, stage by stage in your life -the process of sanctification. Justification is one step - Just! Sanctification is a lifetime process. You present your bodies not to sin, but every day you struggle. Let's say, in your mind, you really hate that guy, but you say, 'I'm a child of God, I'm supposed to love my enemies, but I don't have enough love for him. Lord, help me to love him.' Then as God gives you grace, you love him a little more. So sanctification is a journey where you overcome the power of sin. Justification is the penalty of sin paid by Jesus at the cross for you.

And then the third stage which is not mentioned here is glorification. Glorification is one day, we will be transported into a new place. And then we will never have the presence of sin again. We won't be struggling with sin in us or around us. So, justification delivers you from the penalty of sin, sanctification delivers you from the power of sin, glorification delivers you from the presence of sin. Right now, if you're born again, you are at stage 2 - sanctification. Everyday by faith, in the power of God, by the Holy Spirit who lives in you, you overcome, you don't present your bodies to do wrong. You ask God to help you to do right.

Now, being born again doesn't mean you have a new passport, and you can do whatever you like. No, because you also have a new desire in you to do right. You are a new creature, you want to do right. You've been given new desires, which you never had before. So then in Chapter 7, we ask What is the purpose of the law? If through the law we never got saved, then what's the purpose of the law? There is a purpose.

Let's look at Chapter 7:7

What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, "You shall not covet."

The law was there to help us understand what was good and what was bad. Is that just the purpose of the law, let's just see. Then you say, the law didn't work, right?

Chapter 7:8-9

But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law, sin lies dead. I was once



alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died.

This is very difficult to understand. The law says, "Thou shall not covet." In other words, you shouldn't covet somebody's beautiful wife, but when the law said that, then my mind began to work. The moment you said I should not covet, my sinful lustful nature, instead of saying I should not, my mind thought, She's so beautiful. I wish I had that woman.

So the law not only showed us what is sin, but also showed us how sinful we are even when we try to think to do good. The law is supposed to help us to think to do good, but it actually stirred up in us some thoughts that we actually would not even have if we weren't thinking about the law of covetousness. A man wouldn't even have thought about his neighbour's wife until he started to study the bible -Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife. So you see here, the law was not only to show us what is good, but also show us how sinful we are. Because what was good can actually stir up all the junk in us. So we see here a struggle.

Romans 7 verses 18 to 20:

For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin dwells within me.

All Christians struggle through this. He's reading a book on the law about thou shall not covet but he finds his mind running away. He knows he should not lust but there's a struggle. Any honest Christian would tell you there is a struggle going on right now. A new mind wants to do good, but old habits, old lusts, old thoughts, former words remain. This is struggle, this is the journey of sanctification.

Romans 7:24

Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

So we are now struggling in this journey with a mind that says, Don't covet, but the lust keeps running and coveting, don't listen to gossip but at the first gossip, your head tilts in that direction. You can't do it yourself, but thanks

be to God we can do it through the victory that is in Christ, and Christ lives in us through His Holy Spirit.

Struggle? Yes, I struggle. Paul struggled, all Christians struggle. You don't have to struggle if you are not a believer because you just do what you want to do. Nobody knows what's in your mind. You can enjoy lusting after other people's goods, other people's things, other people's wives.

## Chapter 8:2

For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.

In the past, you've never had the power to overcome hatred, lust, selfishness, but now there is a power in Christ. Totally overcome, no, but there is victory after victory.

Romans 8:28 is the verse you all know. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God. But many people forget the part that says 'that love God'. Is it for everyone? No! For those that love God and those who are called according to His purpose (doing God's will).

Chapters 5 to 8 is about the new race, a new type of person whose head is now Jesus, whose penalty is paid at the cross. The power of sin is being broken day by day in his life, in his journey of sanctification, and then, one day, he will be transported to a place where there is no more sin. It's called glorification. That's the new man. What happened? Justification, sanctification, and glorification.

Now, Chapters 9 to 11 is about Israel. Paul is writing to Jews and Gentiles in the Roman church and the Gentiles now outnumbered the Jews. And when we talk about the law causing all these things, you know what the Gentiles feel? The Jews have gone already from the church in Rome because the Roman Emperor had chased all the Jews out of Rome. and the remaining church members who were Gentiles began to think that they were the new Israel. So there is a theory called the "replacement theory". Many people think the church has replaced Israel, Israel is gone. God has forgotten about Israel.

Romans Chapters 9 to 11 tell us God never forgets his promises. Never! God never divorced Israel. They ran away from him like a wife ran away.

But God, the husband is always loyal. Romans Chapter 9 to 11 - is Israel already condemned as many Gentiles think today.

Romans Chapter 9:31-32

but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law. Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone, as it is written,

“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

So why did Israel drop out? Because they insisted in their own righteousness. They wanted to be righteous by their works, as they obeyed the law given to them, though the new righteousness, offered at the cross was staring at them. They refused to accept it. Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith. They stumbled over the stumbling stone, Christ. To them, Christ cannot be the Messiah because he looked like so pathetic, He was not their kind of hero. Everything pointed that is the Messiah, but they couldn't accept Him. There was a stumbling block. So that's the reason why Israel today still cannot accept Christ.

Romans Chapter 10:3-4

For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

They want to earn their own righteousness, but Christ is the way to get righteousness, imputed to us. The penalty paid, perfect life given to us at the cross. His perfect life substituted for our sinful life. All that given at the cross, but they couldn't accept it. When a man is self-righteous, he doesn't need anyone, doesn't want anybody's help. The hardest people to share the gospel to are not sinners; it's the self-righteous. They don't think they're that bad - "I can do it myself, I don't need help from Jesus. You weak people, you need Jesus. I don't need Jesus." That's the Jewish mindset.

Then you say, How are the Jews going to get saved?

Romans 11:1

I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin.

Paul says, Do you think God has enough of all these Jews? No way!

Romans 11:8

as it is written,

“God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, down to this very day.”

They have a kind of dullness now allowed by God, given by God. Is this going to last forever?

Romans 11:25

Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

They hear, but can't see. But how long will it last? Until the fullness of the Gentiles. So God allows them to be dull so that the Gentiles can come into the family, and until then, He will open their eyes.

Romans 11:33

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

So actually God planned all this so that the whole world will be saved. Eventually, the Jews will also come in. Did God reject them? No way, Paul says. Oh, the wisdom of God!

Chapters 12 to 16, it is a new section. Chapters 9 to 11 are God fulfilling his promise to Israel. Chapters 12 to 16 is about how the church can live together, united as one family, Jews and Gentiles. The church brings in people from everywhere. Ecclesia is made up of all kinds of people. Other religions are kind of simple because the idol is the god of that place, and everybody has the same background, so there is less friction.

So 12 to 16 is about how we must learn to live together. Now we have a new race, under Christ coming from all over the world. Remember, God shows His righteousness - section 1. Then there's a new race - section 2, then section 3 - 9 to 11, don't forget the old race Israel is not totally rejected, temporarily displaced but coming back. And that 12 to 16 says all will be united. How?

## Romans Chapter 12:1

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

So how do we live together? We need to offer ourselves to God. No more serving ourselves, we are going to serve God. How do we serve God? By serving others; but serving others is not what we were brought up to do. We were brought up to desire people to serve us. So we need to renew our minds. We can offer ourselves now since Christ offered himself for me.

Romans Chapter 12 verse 1 says it's only reasonable that I offer myself to serve him. But how do you serve Christ? By serving His people. People say I want to serve Christ. How do you do that? By serving God's people. Christ is up there, you can't serve Him. You serve Him by serving people. But how do you serve people when your mind is always I don't like to serve, I want people to serve me. The dream of everyone is that the whole world serves me. So you need to renew your mind.

Chapter 13 is about the government. We must obey authorities. That is not easy. Nobody likes to be under authority, we like to be the boss. And so we have to learn how to live under authority, in other words, to be humble, obedient.

Chapter 14 speaks of some specific problems. Remember that this church has Jews and Gentiles?

## Chapter 14:2

One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables.

Now, Paul purposely talks about food because Jews are very fussy about their food. So Paul brings out that whatever your cultural differences, please don't make it a major issue. You all are brought up with different beliefs of what is good, what is bad, but those are our personal beliefs. The Jews had a set of beliefs but it did not apply to the Gentile church. In Acts Chapter 15, the council at Jerusalem had said that the food laws were not important already, and circumcision is not important.

Then in Romans Chapter 14 verse 5, he speaks of a special day.

Verse 5:

One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike.

To the Jews, Sabbath is a big thing. Paul says, let's not cause division about things that you treasure, but others don't need to treasure. So, again in the church, let's unite; agree to disagree on many things. You don't need to agree on everything, we need to agree only on the foundational truths.

And then in verse 15 Paul says, I hope to come to you in Rome because I want to go to Spain. He was hoping to reach the end, and some people say he did. And then he also says, What about collecting money for the poor Jews who are struggling in Jerusalem. There was a famine at that time. So he was very practical.

And then lastly, the whole of Chapter 16 is about people whom he knew, though he had never been to the church in Rome. The Jews were traders, moving from one place to another. So this church looked like quite a big church with a lot of people. And that is what a typical Ecclesia should be, lively, dynamic people moving in and out. Paul sends greetings to them, so is a very personal letter. But in this letter, I want you to see the key thing mentioned here is the righteousness of God by faith. The just shall live by faith in the great offering at the cross.

All along, man thought he is righteous enough to earn his righteousness, but Paul says, "All have sinned." Over the centuries, many have tried, good men have tried and all have failed. Because the sinful nature is so strong, God has to give this perfect life, a life we could never live, a penalty we could never pay, Christ paid for us. Just like Abraham, God promised him a son and he believed. So the penalty you could never pay, the life you could never live, do you believe God has provided for you at the cross?

The gospel is the power of God unto salvation. You receive Jesus, you don't just receive a passport to heaven, you receive power over sin in your life. A partner, the Holy Spirit will help you overcome this grip of sin in your life, that day by day, in the process of sanctification, you can be more and more like Christ.

So we are not saved to do what you like. We are not saved from hell alone, we are saved from hell to Christ-likeness through the power of sanctification. We are saved, to prepare us for the day of glorification.

May God bless you to see all the wisdom, mercy, and the love of God. What a God who never forgot his people, Israel. Through Israel's temporary stupor, the doors are open for the Gentiles like us to go in, and one day, every race will come together, including the Jews, for a great and wonderful family reunion like never before.

May God bless you!