

## "Introduction to the Book of Romans"

### Part 1

Tonight we begin a journey that will impact our lives for the remainder of our days here on earth and will truly change each and every one of us. The study of Romans will be a study that we will never forget for it will be a study that will draw us closer to our Lord and it will be a study that will change the way we live. There are some points about the letter which we need to understand before we step into the beginning verses.

#### I. The Writer and the Letter

The Apostle Paul is the writer of the letter to the Romans and we will look closer at Paul when we step into chapter 1. The place of writing is very interesting based upon what we have been studying on Sunday evenings. In 2 Corinthians 8-9 we have looked at Paul's instructions on giving and the collection for the saints at Jerusalem. When Paul went to Corinth to gather the collection he lodged there for some time and it was while he was there that he penned this letter.

#### Romans 15:23-28

*<sup>23</sup> But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you;*

*<sup>24</sup> Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company.*

*<sup>25</sup> But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.*

*<sup>26</sup> For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.*

*<sup>27</sup> It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.*

*<sup>28</sup> When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain.*

#### II. The Theme of the Letter

The theme of Romans is seen in one verse.

**Romans 1:17**

*<sup>17</sup> For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, **The just shall live by faith.***

The theme of Romans is that we are justified by faith in Jesus Christ. The letter of Romans will present to us the sinful condition of mankind and it will also present to us the provision which God has given for our salvation and the letter will explain how we are JUSTIFIED by faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ.

**Romans 3:20-22**

*<sup>20</sup> Therefore by the deeds of the law there **shall no flesh be justified in his sight**: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*

*<sup>21</sup> But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets:*

*<sup>22</sup> Even the righteousness of God which is **by faith** of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:*

**Romans 5:1**

*Therefore being **justified by faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:*

Now it is very interesting that the statement "**The just shall live by faith**" is found in two other New Testament books of the Bible but the context is different for each time it is used.

**Galatians 3:11**

*<sup>11</sup> But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, **The just shall live by faith.***

In Galatians Paul uses the verse to show all believers that we are not made acceptable to God by the works of the Law. In other words we are not brought into spiritual maturity by keeping the Law but by walking by faith.

**Hebrews 10:38**

*<sup>38</sup> Now **the just shall live by faith**: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.*

The writer of Hebrews uses the verse to teach his readers and us that we do not walk by sight in this new life in Christ but instead we walk by faith in the promises of God.

Back to Romans, the theme of the letter is "THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH".

### **III. The 5 Major Doctrines of the Book of Romans**

There are within the book of Romans 5 major doctrines which we shall study in detail.

#### **1. The Doctrine of Condemnation - Romans 1:18-3:20**

Within these verses we will see the sinfulness of man which will show us man's need of righteousness.

#### **2. The Doctrine of Justification - Romans 3:21-5:11**

Within these verses we shall see God's provisions for man's need of righteousness.

#### **3. The Doctrine of Sanctification - Romans 5:12-8:13**

This will be a very exciting section for within these verses we shall man's need and God's provision for victory in the Christian life. It will be in this section we will learn how the believer gains victory over his or her struggle with the desires of the flesh.

#### **4. The Doctrine of Glorification - Romans 8:14-8:39**

Within these verses we will see the glorious future of the believer.

#### **5. The Doctrine of Consecration - Romans 12:1-16:27**

Here within these verses we shall see the believer's life of service to Jesus Christ.

This gives to us a small amount of background on the letter but we shall see much more in the journey that is before us. Let us now get to the letter itself. The Doctrine of Condemnation will begin in Romans 1:18 but before we get there we must look closely at Romans 1:1-17 and as we do we shall look at this passage in three points. We shall see the GREETING, the WRITER and the THEME.

#### **1. The Greeting - Romans 1:1-7**

##### **Part 1**

**Notice Romans 1:1**

When we write a letter today we always sign it at the end but when letters were written in Paul's day the "signature" was placed at the beginning and that is what we have here. The way in which Paul defines himself here in this verse is very interesting and worthy of our time to look closer at what he pens.

In the opening of this letter Paul gives to himself two titles.

a. He calls himself a "Servant of Jesus Christ".

The word "servant" means "bond slave" and the idea behind this title comes from the Old Testament. Let us suppose we are living under the Law in the days of Moses. You are among the poor of Israel and you had to borrow money. If you were unable to pay the money back, you became the property of the lender or it could be said that you became his slave. Now God made provisions for these exact circumstances because He knew the poor would always exist. If this happened to you then your master who was the man who had loaned you the money was not to treat you as slave but he was to treat you as a hired person.

**Leviticus 25:39-40**

*<sup>39</sup> And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant:*

*<sup>40</sup> But as an hired servant, and as a sojourner, he shall be with thee, and shall serve thee unto the year of jubile.*

Now along with this God made a wonderful provision which happened in the Year of Jubilee. When the Year of Jubilee came around which was every seven years the slaves were to be set free and all of the debt forgiven.

There was yet another provision which God made. Let's say that you were the poor and you had to borrow money and were unable to pay it back. Therefore you became the "slave" to the one who had loaned you the money. Then when the Year of Jubilee came you decided that you did not want to leave. The "master" over you treated you really well and he took good care of you and your family. You knew that if you were to go free and strike out on your own again that you would probably end up in the same situation so you decide you want to remain the servant of your master.

**Exodus 21:2-6**

*<sup>2</sup> If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve: and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing.*

<sup>3</sup> *If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him.*

<sup>4</sup> *If his master have given him a wife, and she have born him sons or daughters; the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself.*

<sup>5</sup> *And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free:*

<sup>6</sup> *Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul; and he shall serve him for ever.*

Those who chose to stay remembered what it was like on their own. They remembered they lacked the ability to maintain themselves. On their own there were times when they did not have enough food, they had very little shelter and there was the constant fear of what tomorrow held. Under their master they were well fed, protected and never needed to worry about tomorrow so they chose to stay. They were then taken to the Tabernacle and they placed the servant's ear against the doorpost and they bore a hole through the ear lobe. Wherever he walked after that day he bear the mark that he was not his own anymore but he belonged to another. He was now known as a BOND SLAVE.

This is exactly what Paul calls himself. He was once deep into sin debt and on the cross Jesus paid his sin debt. Paul was now free from the debt but he chose to serve His Lord for the rest of his life. He did not have a hole in his ear but he had the Holy Spirit in his heart and wherever he went he carried the MARK of his Master. Paul did not want to live independent of his Lord for he remembered what it was like before Christ. In Christ he had everything he needed and so it was a privilege and a pleasure for him to remain the BOND SLAVE of Jesus Christ.

**Application:**

Now many in the church would say that as believers we are all "servants" (BOND SLAVES) of Jesus Christ. But that is not a true statement. We are ALL servants but not every believer is a servant of Jesus Christ.

Everyone serves something or someone. The spiritual believer is a servant to Jesus Christ and the carnal believer is a servant to the flesh.

**Romans 6:8-13**

<sup>8</sup> Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:

<sup>9</sup> Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

<sup>10</sup> For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

<sup>11</sup> Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

<sup>12</sup> Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

<sup>13</sup> Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

We who are believers have a choice of whom or what we will serve. It is impossible to serve two masters.

#### **Matthew 6:24**

<sup>24</sup> **No man can serve two masters:** for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

#### **Conclusion:**

We as believers have a choice to make.

#### **1 Kings 18:21**

<sup>21</sup> And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, **How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him:** but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.

The reason many believers do not live their lives sold out to Jesus Christ is because they have not come to the place where they are ready to say no to the flesh. They want the "FREEDOM" to live their lives to please the flesh. But they do not realize that TRUE FREEDOM is only found in Jesus Christ. Let me show you a conversation between Jesus and the religious leaders.

#### **John 8:31-33**

<sup>31</sup> Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

<sup>32</sup> And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

<sup>33</sup> They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

These religious leaders are like all the world today and it is sad but there are many believers who think as they thought. They did not believe they were in bondage to any man. But they were! They were in bondage to SIN, SELF, and SATAN.

There are many believers today who are the servants of SIN and SELF and even SATAN. They believe they are living lives of FREEDOM and they refuse to be bound to any responsibilities in the church or even to hold a church membership. They just want to be FREE to do as they please. But they are not FREE. True FREEDOM is only found when we are surrendered over to our Lord.

#### **John 8:34-36**

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

<sup>35</sup> And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.

<sup>36</sup> If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

When we are surrendered over to Jesus Christ we are dead to the FLESH which means we are not serving SIN, SELF or SATAN.

#### **Galatians 5:1**

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

Paul chose to be a BOND SLAVE to Jesus Christ because he remembered what life was like trying to please the flesh. He knew that ONLY in Christ could a person enjoy true freedom. Let us chose to be BOND SLAVES of Jesus Christ so that we will not be servants of SIN, SELF or SATAN.