

Tuesday Evening Bible Study  
Series #7: Paul's Letter to the Romans  
Session #3: Chapters 3-4  
Tuesday, October 4, 2016

General Outline of Romans

**Introduction (1:1-17)**

- I. Address and Greeting (1:1-7)
- II. Thanksgiving & theme (1:8-17)

**Body of the Letter (1:18 – 15:13)**

- I. The Inclusive Saving Power of the Gospel (1:18 – 11:36)
- II. Summons to Live according to the Gospel (12:1 – 15:13)

**Conclusion (15:14 – 16:24, [25-27])**

Outline of Chapters 1-4

***Introduction***

- I. Address and greeting (1:1-7)*
- II. Thanksgiving and theme (1:8-17)*

***Body of the Letter***

- I. The Inclusive Saving Power of the Gospel*
  - A. The inclusion of the Gentiles on the basis of righteousness by faith (1:18 – 4:25)*
    - i) No other righteousness (1:18 – 3:20)*
      - a) The revelation of God's wrath against the Gentile world (1:18-32)*
      - b) Those who "judge" are not immune from the wrath (2:1-11)*
      - c) Possession of the Law makes no difference (2:12-29)*
        - 1. The Law and the Gentiles (2:12-16)*
        - 2. The Law and the Jews (2:17-24)*
        - 3. The "Real Jew" (2:25-29)*
      - d) God's faithfulness to Israel stands (3:1-8)*
      - e) Scripture's witness to universal lack of righteousness (3:9-20)*
    - ii) The "righteousness of God" is now available to all believers (3:21-26)*
    - iii) Faith: The sole basis upon which the One God justifies all (3:27-31)*
    - iv) Scripture's witness to righteousness by faith (4:1-25)*
      - a) Abraham: Justified on the basis of faith (4:1-12)*
      - b) Abraham: Paradigm receiver of the Promise on the basis of faith (4:13-25)*

- 3:1-8 – Paul responds to Jewish objections. 3:4 quotes Psalm 116:11.
- 3:10-20 – Paul uses a chain of scriptural passages from the OT to support his claim in 3:9, "Are we any better off?"
  - 3:10 – Ecclesiastes 7:20
  - 3:10-12 – Psalm 14:2-3
  - 3:13 – Psalm 5:9 & 140:3
  - 3:14 – Psalm 10:7
  - 3:15-17 – Isaiah 59:7-8
  - 3:18 – Psalm 36:1
  - 3:20 – Psalm 143:2

- 3:21-31 – Now that Paul has indicted all of humanity, he makes his central point: that in Christ, God’s righteousness itself rectifies the relationship between God and humanity.
- 3:25 – ‘atonement’ ‘propitiation’ – Perhaps an allusion to the rituals associated with the Day of Atonement (modern = Yom Kippur), as it would have been practiced at that time. In Christ, there is an eschatological release from sin.
  - *hilastērion* = a sin offering by which a deity is appeased. That word is also used to refer to the mercy seat that was at the center of the Temple.
- Justification – being made “right” by faith upholds the law (i.e., scripture)
- 4:1-5 – Abraham is acknowledged as the starting point of the Jewish people, but was justified, not by *faith*, but by “reckoning” which was a gift from God.
  - 4:7-8 – support for his claim from the Psalms (32:1-2)
- 4:12 – Abraham was “made righteous” (i.e., justified) *before* circumcision. Therefore, circumcision is not required for justification to take place.
- Faith is the key.
- It is through faith that the law stands and has authority.
- Paul upholds Abraham as a formative part of God’s plan.
  - The story of righteousness attributed to Abraham was written for us who believe in the Lord Jesus, “who was handed over to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification.” (4:25)

### Resources

N.T. Wright, *Paul for Everyone: Romans, Part 1* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004).

B. Byrne, *Romans in Sacra Pagina Series*, D. J. Harrington, editor (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2007)

R. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, (New York: Doubleday, 1997)

Notes from HarperCollins Study Bible (NRSV), 1989