



## The Mystery of the Meaning of the Book of Romans • Part 2

Lesson 2

### Part One: Planting the Church at Rome

- The City of Rome
- The Church in Rome

#### *Planting of the Church*

#### *People of the Church*

- 1) **DIVERSE** and easily divided: Some Jews (4:1; 11:13-14; 14:1-15:13; 16:7, 11) and many Gentiles (1:5, 13; 11:13; 15:7-12)

Who are *sinners in need of a Savior* and who wasn't? (1-3)

Who *needs to be saved by faith alone* and who doesn't? (3-5)

Who is *empowered with God's life-giving Spirit* and who isn't? (6-8)

Who are *God's chosen people* and who isn't? (9-11)

Who is *spiritually strong* and who isn't? (12-15)

Who *needs the gospel sent to them* and who doesn't? (15-16)

- 2) **DEDICATED** team of living sacrifices in the service of the Lord with a worldwide reputation. (1:8; 16:19; 12:1-2; 16:1-16)
- 3) **DYNAMIC** local churches meeting in homes: *Prisca and Aquila* (16:3-5); *Asyncretus* (16:14); *Philolus* (16:15); *Aristobulus* \* (16:10); *Narcissus* \* (16:11)  
\* These men may not be the leaders of churches in their homes or even saved at all. They may merely be the owners of the converted slaves "of their household."
- 4) **DEVELOPING** quickly into a growing force for world evangelization

#### **REMEMBER** *When In Rome, Do as the Romans!*

- In a culture and city very much like our own a church was planted, established, and needed to multiply. We need to do the same!
- The gospel is the power of God unto salvation...not just in the past, but in the present and on into the future...not just for individuals but also for entire churches...not just in our culture but in every culture and people group around the world!

### Part Two: Writing to the Church at Rome

- **Date and Place of Writing:** *Sometime between A.D. 55 and 57 at Corinth near the end of Paul's 3rd missionary journey.*
  - 1) Written near the end of Paul's 3-month stay at Corinth. *Acts 20:2-3*
  - 2) Paul was anxious to minister to and receive ministry from this famous church at the center of the empire. *Romans 1:8-15*

- 3) Paul's ultimate goal was to establish a relationship with this church, which would result in them fully participating in the worldwide proclamation of the gospel by **SUPPORTING** him as a missionary to Spain! 15:22-24
- 4) Paul's travel plans were to leave **Corinth**, deliver the collection from the Gentile churches to the needy saints in **Jerusalem**, and then be refreshed in **Rome** on his way to evangelize **Spain**. 15:25-33
- 5) **Paul** writes from the **HOME** of his Corinthian host, **Gaius**, where the Corinthian church also met for worship. *Romans 16:23; see also 1 Corinthians 1:14*
- 6) **Tertius WROTE** the letter that Paul was dictating to him under divine inspiration. *Romans 16:22; see also 2 Timothy 3:16-17*
- 7) **Phoebe**, who belonged to the church at Cenchrea near Corinth, probably **DELIVERED** the letter to Rome. *Romans 16:1-2*

## ► Occasion of the Letter

- 1) Timing was right for Paul to finally fulfill his longtime desire to visit the church at Rome on his way to Spain. 1:8-15; 15:15-33

### MapQuesting Paul's Mission

- #1 His **immediate destination** was **JERUSALEM** to deliver the collection from the Gentile churches for the Jewish saints. (15:25-27, 30-32)

**Request:** *Struggle with him in prayer by requesting safety and success.*

- #2 His **intermediate destination** was **ROME** to establish a strategic base for missions. (15:28-29, 32, 1:11-12)

**Request:** *Strengthen him with the refreshment of their faith and fellowship.*

- #3 His **ultimate destination** was **SPAIN** to evangelize where no one had gone before. (15:28-29, 32, 1:11-12)

**Request:** *Support him in reaching the final frontier with the gospel.*

- 2) Specific reasons why Paul wanted to visit:
  - To **establish** the Romans by imparting some spiritual gift(s) to them. (1:11; 16:25)
  - To **encourage** one another by the working of each other's faith in ministry. (1:12)
  - To **reap fruit** that remains among the Romans by preaching the gospel. (1:13-15)
  - To **receive support** from the Romans for his missionary journey to Spain. (15:24, 28)
  - To **be refreshed** by the fellowship with the Romans. (15:24, 32)

## ► Characteristics of the Letter

- 1) It is a **MATCHLESS** as one of most profound writings in existence.

*"It has been said that Romans will delight the greatest logician and captivate the mind of the consummate genius, yet it will bring tears to the humblest soul and refreshment to the simplest mind."*

*"The most profound work in existence." ~Samuel Coleridge, English poet and literary critic*

*"just as also our dear brother Paul wrote to you, according to the wisdom given to him, speaking of these things in all his letters. Some things in these letters are hard to understand, things the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they also do to the rest of the scriptures." ~Apostle Peter, 2 Peter 3:15-16*

- 2) No writing in the N.T. is more **UNIVERSAL** in its scope and purpose.

*"It is the principle and most excellent part of the New Testament... No man can read it too oft, or study it too well; for the more it is studied, the easier it is; the more it is chewed, the more pleasant it is. . . the more it is searched, the more precious things are found...." ~William Tyndale, sixteenth-century Bible translator*

*"It is the most remarkable production of the most remarkable man. It is his heart. It contains his theology, theoretical and practical, for which he lived and died. It gives the clearest and fullest exposition of the doctrines of sin and grace and the best possible solution of the universal dominion of sin and death in the universal redemption by the second Adam." ~Philip Schaff, History of the Christian Church*

"The book of Romans is a classic. To the unsaved it offers a clear exposition of their sinful, lost condition and God's righteous plan for saving them. New believers learn of their identification with Christ and of victory through the power of the Holy Spirit. Mature believers find never-ending delight in its wide spectrum of Christian truth: doctrinal, prophetic, and practical." ~William MacDonald, Believer's Bible Commentary

3) More **QUOTATIONS** from the O.T. in this letter than in all the other epistles put together!

4) Has exerted a profound **INFLUENCE** upon the course of Christian theology and mission:

- Ignites Revival

"While all Scripture has stamped its impress indelibly on the Christian world, perhaps it is scarcely too much to say that apart from the Gospels—for all the precision and the strength which it possesses, and much of the spirituality and the fire which characterize it, the faith of Christendom in its best periods has been more indebted to this Epistle than to any other portion of the living oracles." ~David Brown, Scholar

- Brings Reform

"This epistle is really the chief part of the N.T. and the very purest Gospel, and is worthy not only that every Christian should know it word for word, by heart, but occupy himself with it every day, as the daily bread of the soul. It can never be read or pondered too much, and the more it is dealt with the more precious it becomes, and the better it tastes." ~Martin Luther

"When anyone understands this Epistle, he has a passage opened to him to the understanding of the whole Scripture." ~John Calvin

- Causes Repentance and Regeneration

**Augustine, an early church father, was converted in 386 A.D. reading Romans 13:13-14.** He "neither wished nor needed to read further. At once, with the last words . . . it was as if a light of relief from all anxiety flooded into my heart. All shadows of doubt were dispelled."

**Luther, the reformer, was converted around the year 1515 as a monk and professor of Bible while studying Romans.** After grasping the meaning of Romans 1:17 Luther testifies, "Thereupon I felt myself to be reborn and to have gone through open doors into paradise. The whole of Scripture took on new meaning, and whereas before 'the righteousness of God' had filled me with hate, now it became to me inexpressibly sweet in greater love. This passage of Paul became to me a gateway into heaven."

**John Wesley, the revivalist, was converted on May 24, 1738, while someone read Luther's Preface to his commentary on Romans.** Wesley wrote in his journal, "About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death."

**NT Scholar F. F. Bruce wisely adds** that this Epistle's impact has not been confined to such giants, since very ordinary men and women have been affected by it, too. Indeed, "there is no saying what may happen when people begin to study the letter to the Romans. So, let those who have read thus far be prepared for the consequences of reading farther: you have been warned!"

### Reading Romans...

- One time in little over 2 weeks: *I will read 1 chapter a day for the next 16 days.*
- Two times in little over 2 weeks: *I will read 2 chapters a day for the next 16 days.*
- Four times in little over 2 weeks: *I will read 4 chapters a day for the next 16 days.*

