

## Romans Class

### Class 1

#### Introduction

**2Pe 3:15** Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him.

**2Pe 3:16** He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

**2Pe 3:17** Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position.

- Hard to understand
- Be on your guard

#### Distortions

**Rom 3:8** Why not say--as we are being slanderously reported as saying and as some claim that we say--"Let us do evil that good may result"? Their condemnation is deserved.

**Rom 6:1-2** What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?

**Rom 6:15** What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means!

**Rom 7:7** What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not!

**Jas 2:14** What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him?

**Jas 2:18** But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do.

**Jas 2:19-20** You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that--and shudder. You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless?

## The Church at Rome

### First Romans to hear the Gospel

- Act 2:7** Utterly amazed, they asked: "Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans?"
- Act 2:8** Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language?
- Act 2:9** Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,
- Act 2:10** Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome
- Act 2:11** (both Jews and converts to Judaism) Cretans and Arabs--we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!"

### Jews evicted from Rome

- Act 18:1** After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth.
- Act 18:2** There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them,
- Act 18:3** and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them. Claudius emperor of Rome 41-54 AD

**49 or 50 AD – expelled Jews from Rome (Suetonius, a Roman historian, “Life of Claudius”)**

**By the time of this letter (AD 57), Jews were back**

- Rom 16:3** Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus.
- Rom 16:4** They risked their lives for me. Not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them.
- Rom 16:5** Greet also the church that meets at their house.

**Note also, Paul's relatives... 16:7, 11**

## House churches

Priscilla and Aquila (16:5)

Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas and the brothers with them. (16:14)

Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas and all the saints with them. (16:15)

Other households

Others were greeted separately from these groups

Jewish ghetto across Tiber river from city

## Jew / Gentile

Jews gone from the city for maybe 5 years

Gentile house churches grew, leaders emerged

Jews returned, probably formed Jewish house churches

## Paul writing to stop the Judaizing influence in the church

Does this by teaching on righteousness

*righteous, unrighteous*, and other variants appear over 40 times

Occur in each of the first 10 chapters

## Romans 1

**Rom 1:1** Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God--

**Rom 1:2** the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures

**Rom 1:3** regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David,

**Rom 1:4** and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Rom 1:5** Through him and for his name's sake, we received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the **obedience that comes from faith.**

Paul's identifies himself by describing the gospel for which he was set apart

- not “Paul the Pharisee”
- not “Paul of Tarsus”
- not “Paul the tentmaker”
- How are you identified?

**Key Verse: 1:5** Obedience that comes from faith  
**Theme for book:**

**Rom 1:16** I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

**Rom 1:17** For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

## **Unrighteousness**

### **Wrath—without excuse**

**Rom 1:18** The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness,

**Rom 1:19** since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them.

**Rom 1:20** For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

### **Did not honor god --> foolish idolatry**

**Rom 1:21** For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.

**Rom 1:22** Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools

**Rom 1:23** and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

### **God gave them over**

**Rom 1:24** Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another.

**Rom 1:25** They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator--who is forever praised. Amen.

## Homosexuality

**Rom 1:26** Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones.

**Rom 1:27** In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

Shameful, unnatural, indecent, perversion. Due penalty.

No doubt where Paul stood on this issue!

Remember, Peter acknowledged this as scripture! (about 5 years later)

**Rom 1:28** Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done.

**Rom 1:29** They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips,

**Rom 1:30** slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents;

**Rom 1:31** they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless.

### **Odd mix of sins!**

Murder alongside envy, strife, deceit, malice

God-haters alongside slanderers, insolent, arrogant, boastful

**Rom 1:32** Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

All of them deserve death.

Is anyone innocent of all these things?

The solution becomes clearer through the rest of the book  
Already see this much:

1. We must acknowledge God in our lives. That means more than an intellectual admission that God exists. It also means that we need to glorify God and to give thanks to Him. And it means that we must not exchange God for the things of this world.
2. We need to flee from the sins described in this passage!
3. We must not approve of these sins, neither in our own lives nor in the lives of others.

Will find as we proceed, that even this is not enough. We need to be rescued from ourselves.