

Romans Outline

I. The Need for Righteousness

Romans 1:1 - 3:20

Paul establishes that every human being - both Gentile and Jew - stands guilty before God. The gospel is therefore necessary because no one can attain righteousness through morality, religion, or the law.

1. Introduction to the Gospel

Romans 1:1 - 17 - The Gospel Revealed

Paul introduces himself as an apostle set apart for the gospel of God and expresses his longing to visit Rome. The gospel reveals the righteousness of God and is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, Jew and Gentile alike. This passage provides the thesis statement for the entire letter.

2. The Guilt of the Gentile World

Romans 1:18 - 32 - Humanity Under Wrath

God's wrath is revealed against all ungodliness because humanity suppresses the truth revealed in creation. Rejecting God leads to idolatry, distorted worship, and moral corruption. As a result, God gives people over to the consequences of their rebellion.

3. The Guilt of the Moral Person

Romans 2:1 - 16 - Hypocrisy Condemned

Those who judge others cannot escape judgment themselves because they commit the same sins. God's judgment is impartial and based on truth rather than external morality. Possessing moral knowledge does not justify anyone before God.

4. The Guilt of the Religious Jew

Romans 2:17 - 3:8 - Religion Cannot Save

The Jews possessed the law and the covenant sign of circumcision but still failed to keep God's commands. Religious privilege does not guarantee righteousness before God. True circumcision is inward and spiritual, not merely outward.

5. The Universal Verdict of Sin

Romans 3:9 - 20 - All the World Guilty

Paul gathers multiple Old Testament quotations to demonstrate that no one is righteous. Every human being stands condemned under sin. The law exposes sin but cannot justify sinners.

II. The Provision of Righteousness

Romans 3:21 - 5:21

God provides righteousness as a gift through the redemptive work of Christ. This righteousness is received through faith apart from works of the law.

1. Justification Through Christ

Romans 3:21 - 31 - Righteousness Through Faith

God's righteousness has now been revealed apart from the law through Jesus Christ. Christ's death serves as a propitiatory sacrifice that satisfies divine justice. Justification is received by faith and excludes human boasting.

2. Abraham: The Example of Faith

Romans 4:1 - 25 - Justified Before Works

Abraham was counted righteous because of faith rather than works or circumcision. His experience demonstrates that justification has always been by faith. Believers today share the same faith in the God who raised Jesus from the dead.

3. The Blessings of Justification

Romans 5:1 - 11 - Peace With God

Justified believers now enjoy peace with God and access into grace. Suffering produces perseverance and hope because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Spirit. Christ died for us while we were still sinners.

4. Two Humanities: Adam and Christ

Romans 5:12 - 21 - From Death to Life

Sin and death entered the world through Adam and spread to all humanity. Through Christ's obedience, grace and righteousness abound for many. Christ's work reverses the curse introduced by Adam.

III. The Practice of Righteousness

Romans 6:1 - 8:39

Those who are justified by faith experience a transformed relationship with sin, the law, and the Spirit. Union with Christ leads to a new life of obedience empowered by the Holy Spirit.

1. Freedom from Sin's Dominion

Romans 6:1 - 14 - Dead to Sin

Union with Christ in His death and resurrection means believers have died to sin. Sin no longer has dominion over them. Christians are called to present themselves to God as instruments of righteousness.

2. Slaves of Righteousness

Romans 6:15 - 23 - New Masters

Believers are no longer slaves to sin but servants of righteousness. Obedience leads to sanctification and life. The passage concludes with the contrast between the wages of sin and the gift of God.

3. Released from the Law

Romans 7:1 - 6 - A New Relationship

Believers have died to the law through union with Christ. Just as death releases someone from marriage obligations, believers are freed from the

law's binding authority. This freedom enables them to serve in the new way of the Spirit.

4. The Struggle with Sin

Romans 7:7 - 25 - The Law and Inner Conflict

The law is good but reveals the power of sin within the human heart. Paul describes the painful struggle between the desire to obey God and the reality of indwelling sin. Deliverance comes only through Jesus Christ.

5. Life in the Spirit

Romans 8:1 - 17 - No Condemnation

Those who are in Christ Jesus are free from condemnation. The Spirit gives life and empowers believers to fulfill the righteous requirement of the law. Christians live as adopted children of God.

6. Future Glory and Present Suffering

Romans 8:18 - 30 - Hope of Redemption

Creation and believers alike groan as they await final redemption. The Spirit helps believers in their weakness and intercedes for them. God works all things together for the good of those He has called.

7. The Security of God's Love

Romans 8:31 - 39 - More Than Conquerors

God's saving purpose cannot fail because He did not spare His own Son. No accusation can stand against God's elect. Nothing in all creation can separate believers from the love of Christ.

IV. The Plan of Righteousness

Romans 9:1 - 11:36

Paul explains how Israel's unbelief fits within God's sovereign redemptive plan and how God remains faithful to His promises.

1. God's Sovereign Choice

Romans 9:1 - 29 - Mercy and Election

Paul expresses deep sorrow for Israel's unbelief while affirming God's faithfulness. God's saving purpose has always operated through sovereign election rather than human effort. Salvation depends on God's mercy.

2. Israel's Stumbling

Romans 9:30 - 10:21 - Seeking Righteousness the Wrong Way

Gentiles attained righteousness through faith while Israel pursued righteousness through works of the law. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. Israel heard the gospel but refused to submit to it.

3. Israel's Future Restoration

Romans 11:1 - 36 - The Mystery of Salvation

God has preserved a faithful remnant of Israel. Gentile believers are grafted into God's covenant people but must remain humble. Ultimately God's redemptive plan will display His mercy and wisdom.

V. The Outworking of Righteousness

Romans 12:1 - 16:27

Paul turns from theological exposition to practical application, showing how the gospel shapes the life of believers and the community of the church.

1. A Living Sacrifice

Romans 12:1 - 2 - Transformed Lives

Believers respond to God's mercy by offering their lives as living sacrifices. Transformation comes through the renewal of the mind rather than conformity to the world.

2. Life in the Body of Christ

Romans 12:3 - 21 - Genuine Christian Love

Christians serve one another with humility and diverse spiritual gifts. Love must be sincere, patient, and active even toward enemies.

3. Submission to Authorities

Romans 13:1 - 7 - God's Order in Society

Civil authorities exist under God's sovereignty and serve to maintain order. Christians are called to submit to them and fulfill their civic obligations.

4. The Law of Love

Romans 13:8 - 14 - Living in the Light

Love fulfills the moral law because it seeks the good of others. Believers live in light of the approaching day of Christ.

5. Unity Among Believers

Romans 14:1 - 15:13 - Welcoming the Weak

Disagreements over disputable matters should not divide the church. Believers are called to pursue peace, mutual edification, and unity in Christ.

6. Paul's Mission and Plans

Romans 15:14 - 33 - The Gospel to the Nations

Paul reflects on his apostolic ministry to the Gentiles and explains his missionary plans. He requests prayer for his future work.

7. Final Greetings and Warnings

Romans 16:1 - 27 - The Fellowship of the Gospel

Paul greets many believers who have served faithfully in the church. He warns against divisive teachers and concludes with a doxology praising God who strengthens His people through the gospel.