

**The Epistle to the Romans
(Special English Edition)**

Prepared by William S.H. Piper, D.D.

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Author, Time, To Whom, Contrast to Galatians

Reading assignment: Romans 1

Introduction

The Bible has influenced the civilized world more than any other book. The Epistle to the Romans by the Apostle Paul is a greater part of this influence than any other book of the Bible. Romans is a study that displays such powerful intelligence that it shows a deeper and wiser view of truth than ever thought up by human minds. Even those who do not believe in inspiration recognize it as a masterpiece of persuasion and reasoning on the subject of salvation. It is the most systematic account of God's plan of redemption from sin.

No other writing has so powerfully influenced the Church from its beginning. Romans was a most important part in every revival movement in the history of the Church, because it gave a complete treatment to such doctrines as sin, salvation, man's lost and helpless condition, redemption, justification, sanctification, regeneration, glorification and the effectiveness of Christ's atoning death. The Epistle of Romans became the most important book of the Reformation and changed the life of Martin Luther. Martin Luther called Romans "The Masterpiece of the New Testament."

May God bless you as you begin your studies of this remarkable book. I trust you will find it inspiring and that it will change your life. You will find much information and teaching in this book.

Importance of this Lesson

- ❑ This first lesson teaches us who wrote the epistle, the time that person wrote it and the place from which and to which he wrote it. It will tell you about the people to whom the writer wrote it. It will also show differences between Romans and Galatians.
- ❑ To understand these things completely will make the book even more valuable to you and will add great depth to your study.

THE LESSON

I. THE WRITER OF THE BOOK OF ROMANS

- A. Since the beginning of church history all people have accepted the fact that Paul wrote the book of Romans. There is no doubt that Romans was written by the Apostle Paul. From the introduction to the benediction it is filled with words that Paul used all the time. It is full of his special phrases. We can see Paul's personality and beliefs in this book. It is the most completely "Pauline" of all the epistles. Dr. James M. Stifler says that Paul wrote the book. He says, "No other book in the New Testament is better attested."
- B. Evidence in the epistle itself.
 - 1. The Holy Spirit did not use an uneducated fisherman or common person to write the greatest book on salvation presenting a gospel for every person because everyone needs it. Paul possessed a giant mind that was flexible, wise, reasonable, and able to give strong reasons for what he said.
 - 2. He was born as a Roman citizen in the city of Tarsus. Tarsus was a proud city and a great center of education. In this city Paul learned well both the Greek and Roman way of life.
 - 3. He was also born a Jew, a Hebrew, and he received a thorough education from a famous teacher by the name of Gamaliel who lived in the city of Jerusalem.
 - 4. With such an education and with his international outlook, it is easy to see why God chose him to write this deepest epistle in which the glorious Gospel of Christ is preached to all the nations, Romans 1:5,16.

II THE TIME PAUL WROTE THE BOOK OF ROMANS

To verify this we will give you the opinions of several well-know Bible teachers.

- A. B.H. Carroll – He says that we can determine the date by the connection between Corinthians and Galatians. In 2 Corinthians and Galatians Paul answers those people who object to his authority as an apostle. The evidence of the book of Romans itself shows us that without doubt it follows Galatians. (We will discuss a contrast of these epistles in the lesson.) Paul wrote Romans from the house of Gaius in Corinth about 58 A.D.
- B. J. Vernon McGee says that certain names point clearly to Corinth as the place Paul wrote the epistle to the Romans. The time was probably the spring of the year 58 A.D. We can see the shameful sinfulness of the Gentiles of Rome in the picture Paul draws of the city of Corinth of his day.
- C. Norman Bartlett writes that it is the general opinion of qualified experts that Romans was written from Corinth in the winter of 57-58 A.D. During the close of his third missionary journey, just before his visit to Jerusalem, Paul spent several months relaxing somewhat in the home of Gaius, a wealthy merchant.
- D. W.S. Hottel writes that Bible teachers generally agree that this epistle was written from Corinth when Paul visited Greece the second time (Acts 20:2,3), during his third missionary journey.”
 - ◆ *From all the comments above, you will understand that Paul wrote Romans from the city of Corinth, which is located in Greece. Paul wrote it at about the end of his third missionary journey. He most probably wrote it during the cold period of the year 57-58 A.D., while he visited in the home of Gaius. He called Gaius his host in Romans 16:23.*
 - ◆ *According to Acts 18:11, Paul spent a year and a half in Corinth during that period of time. Paul certainly needed that much free time to write such a masterpiece as Romans.*

III. THE PEOPLE TO WHOM PAUL WROTE THE BOOK

It is clear from the book itself that Paul wrote this great epistle to the believers in the city of Rome.

- 1. Romans 1:7 – “To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called (to be) saints...”
- 2. Romans 1:15 – “So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.”
- A. Who were the “saints” at Rome? (Since the English KJV uses the word “saints” an explanation is needed here.)
 - ◆ *When Paul wrote this book he had never been in Rome, “...often times I purposed to come unto you, (but was let (prevented) hitherto) that I might have some fruit among you also...” (Romans 1:13). This verse shows us that Paul desired to go to Rome but the Lord had prevented him from visiting that city.*
 - ◆ *There is absolutely no proof in history that the apostle Peter ever visited Rome. Thus, Peter did not establish the church in Rome. Peter was never the head of the church in Rome, as many people want us to believe.*
 - ◆ This church seems to be different from other churches because no apostle founded it. In Romans 15:20, Paul states plainly “...I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man’s foundation.”
 - 1. Some of the verses in chapter 1 clearly suggest that the people in this church were mostly Gentiles. They were strong in the faith.
 - a. Romans 1:13 – “...that I might have some fruit among you also even as among other Gentiles.”
 - b. Romans 1:8 – “I thank my God...that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.”
 - ◆ *It is interesting that in other epistles Paul strongly advises Jews to accept Gentiles. In Romans, it is the opposite. Paul tells Christian Gentiles that God did not cancel His purposes for Israel and that Jewish believers are also “in Christ.”*

- B. Where did the believers in Rome come from?
- ◆ *There is no clear statement in the Bible concerning the origin of this church. The Bible does not tell us how so many believers, especially Gentiles, had moved to Rome. We can only guess at some possibilities.*
 1. Among the thousands gathered in Jerusalem at the time of Pentecost there were many Gentiles who had accepted the Jewish beliefs. These people heard Peter's great sermon and doubtless some believed in Christ. These new Christians probably carried the gospel back to Rome.
 2. The terrible persecution of the Church after Stephen's message and death as a martyr probably caused many Christian Jews and Gentiles to move to Rome.
 3. It is possible that some of the Gentile and Jewish believers in Rome received Christ in other cities as a result of Paul's preaching on his great missionary journeys. Possibly some of the believers in Rome knew Paul and some others did not know him.
 - ◆ *Keep in mind that the Roman government built very good roads throughout its empire. Traffic to and from Rome was heavy.*
 - ◆ *Some of Paul's family, including his mother, lived in Rome and believed in Christ before Paul did (Romans 16:7,12,13).*
- C. How did Paul know so much about this church before his visit to Rome?
1. Paul learned much about Rome by working with Aquila and Priscilla, who were Jewish tentmakers. Paul lived with them in Corinth for a while. Emperor Claudius had sent all believers away and did not allow them to return to Rome (Acts 18).
 2. Many Romans came under the influence of the Gospel because of Paul's fruitful ministry in Cilicia, Asia, Macedonia and Achaia. The epistle clearly shows us that Paul had many friends among Asian (Gentile) believers.

IV. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE BOOK OF ROMANS AND GALATIANS

- ◆ *We insert this here because most Bible teachers agree that Paul wrote Galatians before Romans. This helps us to know the time he wrote the epistle to the Romans. This also helps us to know the difference between the two epistles.*
- A. In Galatians Paul strongly defends the Gospel. In Romans Paul declares and explains the Gospel.
- B. Paul wrote Galatians in a hurry. He wrote Romans over a long period of time.
- C. Paul wrote Galatians in the fight against false teachers. He wrote Romans for the classroom with calm, carefully thought-out phrases.
- D. Galatians is the work of a fighting evangelist. Romans is the work of an intelligent college professor.
- E. In Galatians, Paul is on the battlefield, fighting with people who wanted to put believers back under the Jewish laws. These people wanted to corrupt the gospel of Christ. In Romans, Paul is calmly stating and explaining the doctrines of the Christian faith.
- ◆ *After Paul wrote the epistle to the Galatians, he felt that he needed to give a full explanation of the doctrines he preached. That is exactly what Paul did in Romans.*

THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS
EXAM - LESSON 1

Name _____

Address _____

1. Romans influenced even secular civilization more than any other book in the Bible because: (Value 5 points)
 - a. it influenced the Church.
 - b. leaders in every field recognize intellectual power and brilliant philosophies.
 - c. it is inspired.

2. What Romans teaches has been a vital force in every revival in the history of the church because: (Value 6 points)
 - a. of its exhaustive treatment of every major doctrine having to do with relationship with God.
 - b. it was the battle cry of the Reformation.
 - c. it is the masterpiece of the New Testament.

3. We know that the Apostle Paul wrote Romans because: (Value 5 points)
 - a. it is included in the New Testament.
 - b. God gave Paul a very special message.
 - c. Paul is stated as the author in Romans 1:1 and 15:15.

4. Paul's credentials for writing the book of Romans were: (**Mark all correct answers**) (Value 10 points)
 - a. he was God's special messenger.
 - b. he was an intellectual giant who was capable of tight reasoning.
 - c. he was both a Roman citizen and a Jew.
 - d. he sat at the feet of Gamaliel, a famous Jewish teacher.
 - e. he gained broad perspective by traveling through much of the known world of his day.

5. Paul wrote the book of Romans while he lived in: (Value 5 points)
 - a. Jerusalem.
 - b. Corinth.
 - c. Ephesus.

6. The verse that shows us to whom Paul wrote the book of Romans is: (Open Bible) (Value 5 points)
 - a. Roman 1:7.
 - b. Romans 3:10.
 - c. Romans 10:13.

7. The verse that shows us Paul had not been in Rome when he wrote the book of Romans is: (Open Bible) (Value 5 points)
 - a. Romans 1:8.
 - b. Romans 15:20.
 - c. Romans 1:10-15.

8. One way in which this epistle is different from Paul's other epistles is: (Value 6 points)
- a. in this epistle he told the Jews to accept Gentiles.
 - b. in this epistle he told the Gentiles to accept the Jews.
 - d. in this epistle he told the Romans to accept both Jews and Gentiles.
9. A possible answer concerning the origin of the believers who formed the church at Rome is: (Value 6 points)
- a. Roman soldiers who had served in Jerusalem started the church.
 - b. some Jewish proselytes may have been converted at Pentecost and carried the Gospel to Rome.
 - c. Peter preached in Rome before Paul arrived there.
10. Paul knew very much about the church in Rome: (Value 5 points)
- a. through his association with Aquilla and Priscilla.
 - b. because the Church of Rome had written a letter to Paul.
 - c. because Peter had informed him about the church in Rome.
11. Give three contrasts between Romans and Galatians by filling in a word in the blank spaces from the list below. (Value 42 points)
- a. Galatians is a _____ of the Gospel but Romans is a _____ of the Gospel.
 - b. Galatians was written in the heat of _____ but Romans was written for the _____.
 - c. Galatians is the work of an _____ but Romans is the work of a _____.

Possible words to be filled in the above blanks:

defense written hurriedly definition fury battle long period of time legalizers
classroom evangelist Christian faith professor.