

ROMANS

Part 1: Introduction

Mike Taylor

www.TaylorNotes.Info



WHY STUDY THE BOOK OF ROMANS?

Romans has been described as being arguably the most influential book in Christian history, perhaps in the history of Western civilization

The book of Romans gives the reader a solid understanding of what Christians believe and it also provides answers to life's most challenging questions such as:

- How come I keep sinning, even when I don't want to?
- How does the Holy Spirit help me live a life that pleases God?
- You mean my behavior is not what is most important to God?
- What does it mean to live by faith?
- What makes grace so amazing?

WHO WROTE ROMANS?

It was written by the Apostle Paul 1:1 (ANE name came first, our culture it's last). He was probably the most influential man who ever lived except for Jesus. Over a billion Christians today because Paul came up with the idea of doing missionary work. He single-handedly took the gospel all over the Roman Empire starting churches all throughout the Mediterranean Sea area.

Actually, not actually written by Paul. It was authored by Paul but the actual handwriting was done by someone else (16:22). Tertius was a scribe or secretary (amanuensis) to whom Paul dictated, as he was inspired by the Holy Spirit, his letter to the Romans.

WHEN WAS ROMANS WRITTEN

The letter was probably written in AD 57-58 (Acts 20:2-3; 1 Cor. 1:14). He was being hosted by a wealthy businessman, named Gaius (16:23). Gaius was probably was the same Gaius mentioned in 1 Cor. 1:14 who was a member of the church in Corinth. So, the letter to the Romans was most likely written from Corinth on his third missionary journey.

TO WHOM WAS ROMANS WRITTEN?

Paul's letter was written to all the Christians in Rome (1:7) who knew Paul only by reputation yet he knew enough of the people and their circumstances (Rom. 14:1-15:7; 16:3-15). There was no singular church in Rome, instead there were about ten synagogues and several house churches. The church in Rome included both Jewish and Gentile Christians. Some commentators believe it was primarily Gentile. The origin of this church in Rome is unknown.

WHY WAS ROMANS WRITTEN?

As with all Paul's epistles to the churches, his purpose in writing was to proclaim the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ by teaching doctrine and to edify and encourage the believers who would receive his letter. Of particular concern to Paul were those to whom this letter was written—those in Rome who were “loved by God and called to be saints” (Romans 1:7). Because he himself was a Roman citizen, he had a unique passion for those in the assembly of believers in Rome. Since he had not, to this point, visited the church in Rome, this letter also served as his introduction to them.

WHAT IS THE MAIN IDEA?

The primary idea running through Paul's letter to the Romans is the revelation of God's righteousness in his plan for salvation, what the Bible calls the gospel (Rom. 1:16-17).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The letter to these Roman Christians teaches many important doctrines (Christian beliefs) of the Christ faith. Why is a solid understanding of Christian doctrines so important today also?
2. How would you explain the word “gospel” to an unbeliever without making it so simple that its full meaning is not realized?
3. Paul begins his letter to the Roman Christians by writing about sin. Why do people, even Christians, dislike talking about sin?
4. Why is it best to talk about sin before talking about God's grace?
5. Apparently, there were several house churches in Rome, and even synagogues where Christians met. Would it have been best for them to form one big church instead? Why or why not?