

Romans 1:1-17

January 10-11, 2024

BOUNDLESS GRACE A STUDY OF ROMANS

1. Briefly share about a time you wrote or received a meaningful note or letter.
2. The book of Romans is a letter written by the apostle Paul to churches in Rome. Apostle means “sent one,” so Paul was sent by God to the early churches. However, prior to his conversion, Paul went by his Hebrew name, Saul. Read Acts 7:54-8:1; 8:3 and Philippians 3:4-6. What was Paul like before he became an apostle?
3. Read Acts 9:1-19. Summarize what happened to transform Paul’s life.
4. After encountering Jesus, Paul became a prolific apostle to the early church and is credited with penning nearly half of the entire New Testament. Read Romans 1:1-7. In verse 1, what is the first phrase Paul uses to describe himself? Why is it surprising he uses this title?
5. According to Romans 1:2-4, who does Paul say Jesus is?
6. In Romans 1:7-8, to whom is Paul writing? List the ways he describes them.
7. Read Romans 1:8-15. In these verses, Paul tells those in Rome how he longs to be with them. According to verses 11-15, why does Paul want to go to Rome?
8. How do you imagine the Roman Christians would have felt to receive a letter from Paul stating the news of their faith had reached him?
9. Read Romans 1:16-17. Gospel means “good news,” and Paul is talking about the good news of Jesus Christ’s perfect life, death on a cross for the penalty of sin, and resurrection from the dead. List all the descriptors Paul uses to describe the gospel.
10. In the opening of Paul’s letter to the Romans, he repeatedly takes a position of humility and solely exalts Christ. When are you most tempted to exalt yourself rather than Christ? What can you learn from Paul’s example?

The Gospel for All! Romans 1:1-17

A Grand Opening

1:1-7

- Romans was written on Paul's third missionary journey while he was in Corinth (~AD 57-59).
- Romans was written to churches throughout Rome rather than one specific congregation.
- In an honor-shame culture, Paul humbly describes himself as a servant of Jesus.
- Paul was given a position of honor in the church by God, not man.
- Gospel: The good news of Jesus Christ coming to the world to save us from sin by His death on a cross and resurrection three days later.
- All Scripture points to Jesus!
 - The Law: Given by God to Israel for pure living and worship.
 - Sacrifices: Made by Israel for forgiveness of sin so they could live at peace with God.
 - Prophets/prophetesses: Men and women sent by God to admonish Israel and proclaim the coming Messiah.
 - Jews/nation of Israel: People chosen by God in the Old Testament; awaiting their Savior.
- Jesus was fully God *and* fully man!
- Faith prompts obedience, and Paul wants knowledge of God to transform how we live.

Let your faith _____ you to obedience!

A Great Longing

1:8-15

- Paul wants to leverage his position to strengthen Roman churches and be encouraged by their faith.
- Paul desires for everyone to know Christ—both those with and without Jewish heritage!
- Out of humility, Paul recognizes the importance of the Church as a source of encouragement and strength.

Immerse yourself in Christian community for mutual _____.

A Glorious Gospel

1:16-17

- Paul is unashamed of how unfair the gospel is; it is undeserved grace for all of us!
- Righteousness: Being “right” with God; freedom from sin and guilt.
- Christ's perfect righteousness is given to all who believe in Him. We do not have to earn it or strive for His approval; God the Father is pleased with us in Christ.
- Justification: The action of declaring someone righteous in the sight of God.

Trust _____ in the finished work of Christ on your behalf.

Boundless Grace – Romans 1:1-17

January 10-11, 2024

EXODUS 34:6-7 The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.”

HEBREWS 9:22 Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.

HEBREWS 9:25-26 Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

MATTHEW 23:37 “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!”

Romans 1:18-2:16

January 17-18, 2024

1. As a review, read Romans 1:1-17. Record a truth that stands out to you as important to remember.
2. Carefully read Romans 1:18-23. God's wrath is His holy anger against sin and evil. Who are the objects of God's wrath in verse 18?
3. According to Romans 1:20, what can we know about God through observing the created world?

What are some ways you personally see these attributes of God in creation?

Look back at Romans 1:21-23. Paul methodically describes the progression of suppressing God's truth. Record this sequence of increasing ungodliness.

4. Romans 1:22-25 describes idolatry, which is exchanging the right worship of God for anything lesser. Read Colossians 3:5-6 and 1 John 5:20-21. Take some time and ask God to show you an idol in your life. What is an action you can take today to turn from worshipping and serving this idol to worshipping and serving the living God?

5. Read Romans 1:24-32. Identify two reasons God chooses to give the people up or remove His hand of protection from their lives.

What changes might occur in a person's heart and mind when God gives them over to their persistent sinful choices?

Summarize some categories of sin in Paul's list of "what ought not to be done."

After looking at this list as a whole, what is one conclusion you can draw about yourself?

6. Look again at Romans 1:32. In addition to personal sin, what else is offensive to God?

Honestly assess your own words and actions. In what circumstances do you tend to encourage rather than discourage others' sin? What are some reasons for this tendency?

7. Read Romans 2:1-5. According to verse 1, why do we condemn *ourselves* when we judge others?

8. Read Romans 2:4-5. What is the right response to God's kindness and patience toward us as we struggle with sin?

The opposite of a hard and impenitent heart is a soft and repentant heart. Read Psalm 51. What are some practical ways you can cultivate a soft and repentant heart toward God?

9. Read Romans 2:6-11. The Jews and Greeks living and worshipping together in Rome struggled to be unified in their new faith. How does Paul teach them they are all equal in Christ Jesus?

2:6

2:9

2:10

2:11

How do you see God's completely equal treatment of all people as evidence of His divine nature?

10. Read Romans 2:12-16. Throughout Romans, Paul articulates that no person other than Jesus Christ is perfect. According to verse 16, what is the hope of every imperfect person? Also review Romans 1:16-17.

11. Look back at the passage we are studying this week. What is one important truth you glean about humanity and one important truth you glean about God?

12. Write out a personal prayer request in one or two sentences to share with your small group.

First, the Bad News

Romans 1:18-2:16

The Sin of Man

1:18-32

- Every offense against God provokes His holy _____.
- Suppressing truth is a willful pushing away of God and what is known about Him.
- All of creation speaks of a God who is powerful, good, and worthy of worship. Even so, people make a choice to ignore what God has made known. As a result, their hearts and minds grow foolish and increasingly sinful. Then they exchange the worship of God for the worship of idols.
- God allows those who refuse to worship Him to do things their own way with terrible consequences.
- Paul's list of sins ensures everyone understands their guilt before a _____ God.

Hold tight to God's truth.

The Wrath of God

2:1-16

- Paul is speaking primarily to Jewish Christians who struggle with understanding they too can fall under God's _____.
- When we judge someone else for something we have also done, we bring reproach on ourselves.
- Good works are evidence of faith. A lack of good works is evidence of a lack of saving _____.
- God's judgment of mankind is utterly faultless.
- All those who suppress the truth of God and reject Him will bear His wrath.
- Christians will not bear God's wrath, but we will give an account for our lives, including our inner life and thoughts known only to God.

Fiercely pursue righteousness.

I delight to do your will, O my God; Your law is within my heart. Psalm 40:8

Key: anger, holy, wrath, faith

Boundless Grace – Romans 1:18-2:16

January 17-18, 2024

ROMANS 1:16-17 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”

PSALM 19:1-2 The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge.

EXODUS 20:2-5a “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God...”

MATTHEW 22:37-39 And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

MATTHEW 7:3,5 “Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?...You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.”

JOHN 3:36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

Romans 2:17-3:20

January 24-25, 2024

1. Read Romans 2:17-24. To whom is Paul speaking in these verses?

What religious or spiritual advantages do the Jews have according to verses 17-18?

Look again at verses 19-20. Because of their supposed spiritual superiority, what do Jews assume is their responsibility to the Gentiles and pagans around them?

Describe the accusations Paul levels at them in verses 21-24.

2. Write out your definition of a hypocrite.

In what way does your definition apply to Paul's Jewish audience?

What is the ultimate consequence of the Jews' hypocrisy according to Paul in verse 24?

Share some consequences of religious hypocrisy that you have witnessed in our culture.

3. For the Jews, circumcision is an outward sign of God's covenant with the nation of Israel. Read Romans 2:25-29. What gives circumcision true value in the lives of Jews?

Read Romans 2:26-29 along with 1 Corinthians 7:19 and Galatians 6:15. In your own words, explain Paul's point to his Jewish audience concerning outward, physical signs versus inward obedience.

4. What are some symbols, actions, or attitudes that you rely on to seek God's approval?

What changes can you make to ensure that your relationship with God is based on a transformed heart rather than superficial actions or outward appearances?

5. Read Romans 3:1-4. Paul gives a distinction God Himself made between the Jews and the Gentiles. What one important advantage is given to the Jews according to verse 2?

Paul's next question to his audience in verse 3 addresses the issue of faithfulness of the Jews. He asks whether the unfaithfulness of some Jews cancels God's faithfulness to His people. Read the following Scriptures and write down what it says about God's faithfulness.

Lamentations 3:22-23

1 Corinthians 1:9

Hebrews 10:23

Reread Paul's declaration in Romans 3:4. How do his words line up with the truth from these verses?

6. In Romans 3:5, Paul uses the words "unrighteousness" and "righteousness" in his next question to his audience. Righteousness means to have a right standing before God. Unrighteousness signifies sin and wrongdoing. Read Romans 3:5-8. What human behaviors actually highlight God's righteous character according to verses 5 and 7?

Share how the phrase, "The end justifies the means," describes the twisted logic Paul is addressing in verses 5-8.

7. Despite the argument God's light shines brighter because of sin, what is Paul's conclusion in verse 8 concerning God's judgment on sinners?

8. Read Romans 3:9-20. Paul finishes his arguments that all people stand guilty before God by naming the guilty parties. Identify who stands guilty before God according to verse 9.

In verses 10-18 Paul quotes the Old Testament which the Jews would be familiar with. What do the words “none,” “no one,” and “all” in verses 10-12 reveal about sin in the world?

Reread verses 13-18 taking note of the sins and categorize them in these categories:

Talking

Conduct

9. Paul concludes by giving the purpose and ministry of the law in Romans 3:19-20. What truths do you learn about the law from these verses?

In your own words, share how becoming conscious of sin can lead us to repentance and salvation through the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Read Romans 3:23 and 6:23.

10. Write out a personal prayer request in one or two sentences to share with your small group.

Things that Matter

Romans 2:17-3:20

A Matter of the Heart

2:17-29

- Paul calls out the Jews by name as he continues to address sin and God's judgement.
- Their self-righteous behavior was based on their advantage of knowing the law and their privileged relationship with God.
- They look down on Gentiles as those who needed their guidance and wisdom.
- Paul pokes holes in the Jews hypocritical behavior by spelling out their transgressions.
- They value the outward symbol of circumcision more than obedience to God's laws.
- Paul affirms that those who keep God's precepts have a changed and circumcised heart.
- It is the work of the Holy Spirit not the law that transforms hearts.

Examine your heart often and submit to the _____ of the Holy Spirit!

A Matter of Righteousness

3:1-8

- God's covenant relationship with the Jews is an unequalled privilege.
- The unfaithfulness of the Jews will never prevent God from keeping His promises.
- God will not absolve the Jews from judgement even if their sin highlights His glory.
- Salvation by grace through faith had been slanderously perverted as a license to sin.

Rejoice in God's righteousness knowing He is _____ to keep His promises.

A Matter of Unrighteousness

3:9-20

- Paul identifies himself with the Jews to whom he has been speaking.
- The Jews are not better off than others even though they have received greater privileges.
- Both Jews and Gentiles are enslaved and condemned by sin.
- Paul used the Old Testament Scriptures to affirm the universality of sin.
- Sin affects everyone and every aspect of people's lives.
- Words, actions, and attitudes are all tainted by sin.
- Sin flourishes when the fear of God is abandoned.
- The law was given so through it people would become conscious of sin.

Be convicted of your _____ and accept God's grace, mercy, and forgiveness.

Key: transforming work, faithful, sin nature

Romans 2:17-3:20
January 24-25, 2024

GENESIS 17:9-11 And God said to Abraham, “As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations. This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you.”

DEUTERONOMY 30:6 “And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.”

JEREMIAH 4:4 “Circumcise yourselves to the LORD; remove the foreskin of your hearts, O men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem; lest my wrath go forth like fire, and burn with none to quench it, because of the evil of your deeds.”

ISAIAH 55:6-7 “Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.”

DEUTERONOMY 7:9 “Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations...”

ROMANS 1:17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”

PROVERBS 1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

ECCLESIASTES 12:13 The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.

GALATIANS 2:15-16 We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.

ROMANS 3:23-24 ...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus...

EPHESIANS 2:8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Romans 3:21-4:25

January 31-February 1, 2024

1. Review Romans 3:10-11 from last week's lesson and then read 3:21-22. With the words "But now," Paul makes a sharp transition from a dark picture to something wonderful God does for us. What does Paul talk about after opening this section with "But now"?
2. Read Romans 3:21-26. Righteousness can be defined as a right standing before God. Justification is the action of declaring someone righteous and treating them as such. How many times do you see the word righteousness in these six verses? How many times do you see the word justified or a form of it?

List what you learn about righteousness from these verses.

If a just and holy God must punish sin, explain how God can be both just and the justifier of the sinner who has faith in Jesus. Along with Romans 3:21-26, read Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:10, and Isaiah 53:6.

3. Read Romans 3:27-31. Paul continues by asking questions to explain God's amazing gift of righteousness by grace alone, not works. Write Paul's answers next to the following questions.

"What becomes of our boasting?"

"By what kind of law?"

Whom does God justify by faith according to verses 29-30?

4. Read Romans 4:1-5. How does Paul describe Abraham in verse 1?

What does Scripture say about Abraham's righteousness according to verse 3? Also, read the conversation between God and Abraham in Genesis 15:1-6.

Why is Abraham unable to boast about his righteousness?

In your own words, explain the difference between receiving something as a gift and receiving payment for work.

Think about your own faith life. How often do you try to add works to your righteous standing before God which comes by grace through faith in Jesus? What are some reasons you do this?

5. Read Romans 4:6-8. David was the king of Israel centuries before Jesus came to Earth, so his words are important to the Jews. In verse 7, Paul quotes Psalm 32. Who does David credit for the forgiveness of sin?

Consider God's forgiveness of your sin because of Jesus' sacrifice on your behalf. What is your overriding emotion?

6. Read Romans 4:9-12. What argument does Paul use to prove circumcision was *not* necessary for righteousness?

Why is this good news for Gentiles according to verse 11?

7. Read Romans 4:13-17. The promise God made Abraham did not come through the law but through the righteousness that comes by _____.

Because the promise comes by grace through faith, Abraham is the spiritual father of whom?

Why do you think Paul might be pointing out this truth to the Jewish and Gentile Christians he is writing to?

What is the promise God gave to Abraham which Abraham believed according to verse 17? Also read Genesis 15:1-6.

8. Read Romans 4:18-22 along with Genesis 17:15-17,21. Describe Abraham's life situation when God gave him this promise which could have made it hard for Abraham to believe God.

Read Romans 4:18-22 again. What words describe Abraham's great faith?

What strengthened Abraham's faith according to verse 21?

Record a time when reading God's Word strengthened your faith as you waited or currently wait on the Lord in a difficult situation.

9. Read Romans 4:22-25. This sums up all the verses we studied this week. What is the good news for us in 4:23-25 and what difference does it make in your life? Also read Matthew 20:17-19,28 and John 3:16.

10. Write out a personal prayer request in one or two sentences to share with your small group.

Romans 5

February 7-8, 2024

BOUNDLESS GRACE A STUDY OF ROMANS

1. Write down some words that come to mind when you consider the benefits you experience daily as a follower of Jesus.
2. In chapter 5 of Paul's letter to the Romans, Paul is continuing his teaching from chapter 4. Read Romans 4:24b-25. What did the resurrection of Jesus accomplish for all who believe?

One simple definition of justification is the action of declaring someone to be made right with God. How are these words specifically true when it comes to your salvation?

3. Read Romans 5:1-11 with the intent of recognizing the results of being justified by faith. Make a list of the gifts that are connected to our justification in Christ from verses 1,2,5,9 and 11.

Justification is not an ongoing process but a one-time act of God in our lives. What can we learn from these verses?

Hebrews 10:22-23

1 Peter 3:18

Jude 24-25

4. Read Romans 5:3-5 again. How would you describe the life of a justified individual from these verses?

5. According to Romans 5:6-8, what part do our good works and intentions contribute to a right standing with God?

What words are used to describe the unsaved in 5:6-10?

What one word repeatedly describes our new position before God in 5:10-11?

6. Read Romans 5:12-17. Explain all you learn about sin in verses 12-14.

Now explain all you learn about the gift of God's grace in verses 5:15-17.

7. Romans 5:12-14 explains that sin existed even before the laws God gave Moses. What was the result of Adam's sin of disobedience in the Garden of Eden according to these verses? Also read Genesis 2:16-17 for more insight.

Read Romans 5:17 again along with 1 Corinthians 15:47-49. What encouragement do we find?

8. Read Romans 5:15-21 and contrast the work of Jesus Christ and the work of Adam.

The Work of Adam

The Work of Jesus

9. How would you explain the following sentence after studying these passages in Romans?
Humans are not sinners because they sin, but rather they sin because they are sinners.

10. How would you describe Jesus in your own words after reading 5:18-21 again?

Jesus' mission

Jesus' character

Jesus' submission

Jesus' love for you

11. Write out a personal prayer request in one or two sentences to share with your small group.