

Cornerstone Bible Church

Intentions

Why am I writing?

(Romans 1:1-16)

Survey of Romans - Part 3

Edwin Gonzalez

April 16, 2017

A Topical Survey of Romans

(I know where we're going, but not how or when will we arrive)

1. The Gospel (Chapter 1:1-6)
2. Universal Condemnation: Reason for the Gospel (Chapter 1:16-3:23)
3. God's Righteousness: The Basis for the Gospel: (Chapter 3:23-31)
4. Righteousness by Faith: Before and Better than the Law (Chapter 4)
5. Reconciliation to God in Jesus: (Chapter 5:1-11)
6. Original Sin & Forensic Imputation of Righteousness (Chapter 5:12-21)
7. Freed From the Power of Sin (Chapter 6)
8. Struggling with the Presence of Sin: Remaining Sin (Chapter 7)
9. Freed from Condemnation & Glorification (Chapter 8)
10. God's Universal Redemptive Plan (Chapters 9-11)
11. Serving in the Freedom of Grace (Chapter 12)
12. Worshipping in Freedom of Conscience (Chapters 13-14)
13. The Gospel to the Gentiles Foretold and Fulfilled (Chapter 15)
14. Greetings and Salutations (Chapter 16)

I CREDENTIALS: Paul an Apostle, Servant, of Jesus

II PURPOSE: To proclaim the Gospel

verses 1-2 – promised beforehand through God's prophets of the Holy Scriptures

- a) The Gospel is not something new, it was the plan from the beginning Genesis 3:15 / John 8:56 / etc.
- b) The Gospel was not a change in course. It was the path from the beginning -> **Peter's sermon Acts 2:22-ff**
- c) **Stephen's** sermon mentioned the first Biblical author – Moses - Acts 7:37 – as one who directed his readers to Jesus

III THE THEME OF THE GOSPEL

Verses 3-7 “concerning his Son...”

a) The Gospel is “concerning Christ”

b) A Descendant of David

c) Christ “declared” the Son of God by the Resurrection.

d) Centered on the Resurrection

- As proof of His divinity
- Proof of Jesus’ sinlessness
- Proof of God’s acceptance of His redemptive work

e) The Mediator of Grace

IV THE INTENTIONS BEHIND THE WRITING OF ROMANS

⁸First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world.

⁹For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the *preaching of the* gospel of His Son, is my witness *as to* how unceasingly I make mention of you,

¹⁰always in my prayers making request, if perhaps now at last by the will of God I may succeed in coming to you.

¹¹For I long to see you in order that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that you may be established;

¹²that is, that I may be encouraged together with you while among you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine.

¹³And I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that often I have planned to come to you (and have been prevented thus far) in order that I might obtain some fruit among you also, even as among the rest of the Gentiles.

¹⁴I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish.

¹⁵Thus, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

Introduction:

The difficulties of writing an introductory letter i.e., a resume cover letter or a proposal cover letter.

For me the difficulty lies in the sincerity of my intentions.

Paul wrote, because he wanted to give something, even when he did not hide his desire to receive as well.

WHAT'S BEHIND THIS LETTER?

1. Paul's Gratitude over the church in Rome
2. Paul's Prayer for the church in Rome
3. Paul's Longing to meet the church in Rome

I – PAUL’S GRATITUDE OVER THE CHURCH IN ROME (v. 8)

⁸First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world.

Leon Morris writes: “Paul proceeds to thank God for what he had done among the Romans. The apostle begins with First, but he never does get around to a corresponding “second”. This phenomenon may be due to a combination of the tumultuous way Paul’s thoughts tumbled out and the method of writing, by dictation to a secretary, a procedure which does not make for the smoothing out of all grammatical irregularities.”

Morris, L. (1988). The Epistle to the Romans (pp. 5556). Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press.

I – PAUL’S GRATITUDE OVER THE CHURCH IN ROME (v. 8)

a) Paul’s Gratitude was offered through Christ

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all

- Jesus is the only mediator between God and man
- Jesus is the suitable High Priest to approach God
- Jesus is the acceptable offering to perfume our sacrifice

• **Practical:** I cannot judge the heart or intentions of people who pray “in Your Name”, but remember that that our praying does not stand on our merit, it can only be offered acceptably, through Jesus.

Hebrews 13:15 “Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.”

I – PAUL’S GRATITUDE OVER THE CHURCH IN ROME (v. 8)

- WE DO NOT HAVE TO PERFORM and SHAPE UP to be accepted. Christ, makes us worthy and acceptable!

b) Paul’s Gratitude stemmed from his passion for the Kingdom

I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world.

- Paul is not rejoicing over their good reputation
- ... but because there was a church in the Capital City
- This rejoicing reflected of the passion of his heart, “**your Kingdom come**” a petition which should be part of our daily prayers.

I – PAUL’S GRATITUDE OVER THE CHURCH IN ROME (v. 8)

b) Paul’s Gratitude stemmed from his passion for the Kingdom

- The Kingdom of God on earth, - here and now - does not come through policies but through the church. Matthew 16:18
- Revelation 6:9-11 **“When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. 10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” 11 Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that **they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.”****

II – PAUL’S PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH IN ROME (vs. 9-10)

⁹For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of His Son, is my witness as to how unceasingly I make mention of you,
¹⁰always in my prayers making request, if perhaps now at last by the will of God I may succeed in coming to you.

Paul’s praying for the Romans.

- **Sincere:** he dared calling God as a witness. God whom he served - *latreu,w* – (latreuo / idolatry) - *in the preaching* - is added. Serving is more than preaching.

w-| latreu,w evn tw/| pneu,mati, In my spirit, as opposed to the flesh. It involves our whole being, not just the mechanics.

Paul did not pray for the Romans to put a checkmark on his list of duties.

II – PAUL’S PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH IN ROME (vs. 9-10)

- **Incessant:** “unceasingly” and “always”, redundancy for emphasis. Paul is dictating the letter to Tertius, his praying for the Romans was not sporadic, but passionately intense.
- **Intentional:** Paul had a specific request: “that I may succeed in coming to you.”

Let us learn (cf. Philippians 4:6-7) to make our petitions and requests made known to God.

Spurgeon’s anecdote during a prayer meeting with the man who rambled and rambled.

II – PAUL’S PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH IN ROME (vs. 9-10)



**... ask Him
something!**

II – PAUL’S PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH IN ROME (vs. 9-10)

- **Submissive:** *if perhaps now at last by the will of God.*

Paul did not demand or decreed things.

He prayed aware, that God’s will must prevail “**your will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven.**”

Practical: even if God’s will is not according to yours, chin-up. His will is always good, agreeable and perfect. **Rest on Him!**

Psalm 131:1-3 “O LORD, my heart is not proud, nor my eyes haughty; Nor do I involve myself in great matters, Or in things too difficult for me. ²Surely I have composed and quieted my soul; **Like a weaned child rests against his mother,** My soul is like a weaned child within me. ³O Israel, hope in the LORD From this time forth and forever.”

WHAT'S BEHIND THE LETTER TO THE ROMANS?

I. Paul's Gratitude over the church in Rome (vs. 8)

II. Paul's Prayer for the church in Rome (vs. 9-10)

III. Paul's Longing to meet the church in Rome (vs. 11-15)

¹¹For I long to see you in order that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that you may be established;

a) To impart some spiritual gift

ti metadw/ ca,risma u`mi/n pneumatiko.n

(Beware of translating without interpreting)

- This does not mean that Paul had the power to bestow gifts on people. 1 Corinthians 12:7 & Romans 12:3 states that this is a Sovereign work of the Holy Spirit.
- Paul's desire was to be with them and bless them with his own ministry.

III. Paul's Longing to meet the church in Rome (vs. 11-15)

b) For the church to be established

- Established not as “founded” but set firm or on a fixed course.
- This church was relatively new, Paul desired to instruct them and help further develop its growth and influence.
- This church was in the Capital City of the Roman Empire. God sets believers in differing spheres of influence according to His own will. **This church was pivotal** for the spreading of the Gospel.
- ... and it was, though it became corrupted!

III. Paul's Longing to meet the church in Rome (vs. 11-15)

c) For their mutual encouragement

¹²that is, that I may be encouraged together with you while among you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine.

- Paul drew and fed from other believers' faith, as much as he meant to be a source of encouragement to others.
- The famous and pervasive NT phrase: "one another"
- Our gathering is the expression of this need for mutual encouragement and exhortation.

III. Paul's Longing to meet the church in Rome (vs. 11-15)

c) For their mutual encouragement

- How terribly we have used Hebrews 10:24-25

“and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, ²⁵not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.”

=> For years I made of it an issue of membership requirement and pastoral supervision.

=> **For Paul it was an expression of need!** He recognized that just as the church in Rome needed him, he also needed them.

III. Paul's Longing to meet the church in Rome (vs. 11-15)

c) For their mutual encouragement

⇒ Notice the source of that encouragement: ¹²that is, that I may be encouraged together with you while among you, **each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine.**

⇒ **Non pastoral application:** let us not be consumerists!

⇒ We expect and demand to be encouraged by the professional pastor's sermon and faith.

⇒ If we knew, that our pastor needs our encouragement just as much if not more than what we need his.

⇒ Make that extensive to his family... they are just as needy of love and mutual encouragement as we are.

III. Paul's Longing to meet the church in Rome (vs. 11-15)

c) For their mutual encouragement

⇒ Remember there are three types of people (B.

Wheeler's phrase):

Keepers: they come sit and ask what's in it for me?

Takers: they come, frown and leave. There was nothing for me? I have nothing for them! (I have been a taker many, many times...)

Givers: it is self-explanatory. Let us give ourselves to the Lord first, then give out of what we have, and when we run out of *spiritual currency*, then let's give ourselves to one another.

III. Paul's Longing to meet the church in Rome (vs. 11-15)

- a) To impart some spiritual gift
- b) For the church to be established
- c) For their mutual encouragement

d) Paul's eagerness to preach the Gospel (vs. 14-15)

... ¹⁵Thus, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

- Verse 13 (“to obtain some fruit among you”) could mean a reference to financial help
- The commentators I consulted disagree with me. They take this as Paul’s encouragement to see their progress.
- I speculate it because at the end, he does mention his desire to be helped financially by the Romans on his way to Spain Romans 16:24 comp. Galatians 6:6, 1 Corinthians 9:11

III. Paul's Longing to meet the church in Rome (vs. 11-15)

d) Paul's eagerness to preach the Gospel (vs. 14-15)

- The overarching reason of his longing was His eagerness to preach the Gospel to them
- **The letter to the Romans, is Paul's Gospel.** Yes it contains doctrine, ethics, practical instructions but above all and foremost, it is the PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL OF JESUSCHRIST THE SON OF GOD.
- Preaching about the Gospel is not preaching the Gospel
- Describing Jesus' work is not offering Jesus to the audience.

III. Paul's Longing to meet the church in Rome (vs. 11-15)

d) Paul's eagerness to preach the Gospel (vs. 14-15)

CONCLUSION:

- We are not called to **prescribe good advice**, but to **proclaim the GOOD NEWS**.
- The Good News that Jesus came into the world, sinners to save.
- That, and only that, is the *Power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes*. To the Jew First and also to the Greek.
- **Once again... Do not settle for less**

END