

# Chronological Bible Study

Week 47

**God's Power for Salvation**

Romans 1:1-16:27

Acts 20:3b-26:32

Philippians 1:1-4:23

## Opening Reflection

[Video Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HdlmnT8gY8o)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HdlmnT8gY8o>





## **General Checkin**

How are you doing? Any major news in the past 3 weeks?

# Questions?

# Comments?

## **Summary of This Week's Readings**

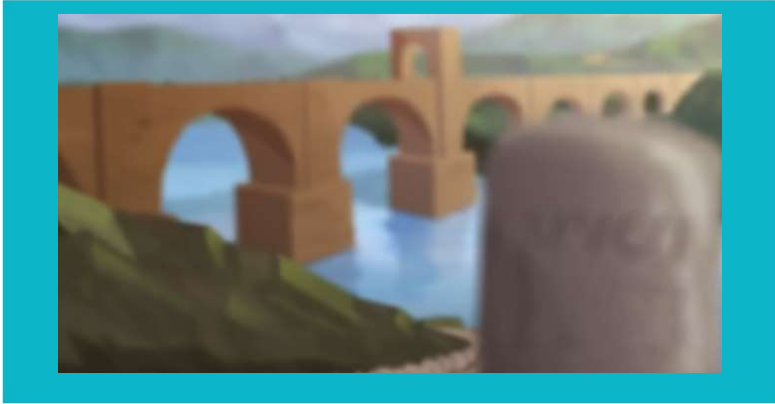
- Paul's Letter to the Romans
- Paul's Ministry to the Gentiles
- Paul's Travels to Jerusalem
- Paul's Arrest in the Temple
- Paul Escorted to Caesarea
- Letter to the Philippians
- Paul Appeals to Caesar
- Voyage to Rome

Questions from Weeks 45 and 46?

## Paul's Missionary Journey

[Video Link](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fglsbcGSr3A>





God did many amazing things through the life and ministry of the apostle Paul. The gospel was spread to many people across the known world thanks to Paul's efforts, despite the severe opposition and persecution Paul faced. Before he was known as the apostle Paul, he was first known as Saul of Tarsus. He was a brilliant, pious, zealous, and well-educated Pharisee, from a wealthy and well-connected family. Saul was obviously intimately acquainted with the Hebrew Scriptures, but was also thoroughly acquainted with Greco-Roman history, language, and culture.

Paul took four missionary journeys. Paul's first three missionary journeys are recorded in the book of Acts. The fourth is alluded to in Paul's letters. On the first missionary journey Paul went through Cyprus, Pamphylia, and Galatia. On his second missionary journey he went through Galatia, Macedonia, and Achaia. Paul's third journey took him through Galatia, Asia, Macedonia, Achaia, and ended in Jerusalem. After his third missionary journey Paul was imprisoned in Caesarea for two years and later transported to Rome where he was then placed under house arrest for another two years. His fourth missionary journey is not clear, but it may have included Spain, Crete, Asia, Achaia, and Macedonia.

## Timeline of Paul's Missionary Journeys

- **A.D. 37:** Converted on the road to Damascus
- **A.D. 37-40:** Spends three years in Arabia
- **A.D. 40:** Brief visit to Jerusalem to meet with the apostle Peter
- **A.D. 40-44:** Preaches and ministers in Tarsus and surrounding regions
- **A.D. 44 or 45:** Relocates to Antioch in Syria
- **A.D. 45 or 46:** Travels with Barnabas to visit Jerusalem, brings a famine relief offering
- **A.D. 46 or 47:** First missionary journey with Barnabas, likely lasts 1-2 years
- **A.D. 50:** Attends the Jerusalem Council
- **A.D. 51:** Leaves on second missionary journey, trip lasts 2.5 to 3 years, including 18 months in Corinth
- **A.D. 54:** Leaves on third missionary journey, trip lasts more than 4 years, including 3 years in Ephesus
- **A.D. 58:** Arrested in Jerusalem, put on trial before the Roman governor Felix
- **A.D. 58-60:** Held in Caesarea for two years
- **A.D. 60:** Put back on trial by Festus the new Roman governor; eventually transported to Rome
- **A.D. 61:** Arrives in Rome
- **A.D. 61-63:** Placed under house arrest for two years
- **A.D. 63:** Released from house arrest, likely launches his fourth missionary journey
- **A.D. 66 or 67:** Imprisoned in Rome again
- **A.D. 67 or 68:** Martyred under Nero's persecution

*\*Dates are approximate.*



## Paul's First Missionary Journey

- Barnabas and Saul begin first journey ~46-47 AD
- Travelling to Antioch
- John Mark joined them for a part of the trip
- Saul becomes Paul
- Travelled more than 800 miles over 1-2 years
- Paul preaches in local synagogues and identifies leaders to start a church.
- Established churches in Antioch of Pisidia, and Galatia at Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe



Barnabas and Saul sensed the call of the Holy Spirit to go out on their first missionary journey (Acts 13-14). Sometime around 46 A.D. (or 47 A.D.), Barnabas and Saul were set apart by the Holy Spirit and sent out on their



first missionary journey by the church at Antioch. Before Barnabas and Saul officially left on their first missionary journey, they recruited a young man named John Mark to go with them. John Mark was the son of a woman named Mary (mentioned in Acts 12:12). She owned the house where the Christians had been meeting and praying when Peter was miraculously delivered from jail by the angel. It is likely that, as a young boy, John Mark had witnessed Jesus'

ministry first-hand.

After ministering in Cyprus, the author of the book of Acts, Luke, begins to refer to Saul as Paul. Some Christians have asserted that Saul changed his name. However, it's more likely that *Saul* and *Paul* were two different names for the same person all along; he was known by both names for many years.

After launching a Gentile-focused ministry, Paul would have been interacting with many Gentiles, and they

would have likely preferred to refer to him by the Gentile name.

Barnabas, Paul, and John Mark then traveled across the Mediterranean Sea to Perga in Pamphylia. This is where John Mark deserts Paul and Barnabas and heads back to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13). From Perga, Paul and Barnabas then continued northward into the province of Galatia, coming to the city of Antioch in Pisidia (not to be confused with their home base city of

Antioch in Syria). Once they arrived in Antioch in Pisidia, Paul went to the synagogue and preached about the good news of Jesus. Paul effectively preached in the synagogue for multiple weeks. This resulted in many people coming to faith in Jesus (Acts 13:14-44).

Unfortunately, Barnabas and Paul faced significant opposition there too. Part of the problem they faced was the jealousy of certain Jews. There were many Gentiles showing up to hear the

gospel preached. Some Jews became jealous and started to contradict what Paul had to say. Since the Gentiles were more willing to hear what Paul had to say, he turned and preached to the Gentiles.

Barnabas and Paul returned back home to Antioch in Syria stay there after the trip for “a long time” (Acts 14:28).

They had traveled more than 800 miles. Their first missionary journey had probably lasted between one and two years. When Barnabas and Paul arrived

back in Antioch in Syria, they shared with everyone about the many people who had come to faith in Jesus and the churches that were established.

**Paul's model for building the church was fairly simple:**

first, he attends the local Jewish Synagogue preaching there to gain some followers. A brilliant orator and charismatic figure Paul also possesses a comprehensive knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures and can quickly win over key people to the Christian message.

His strategy is then to select influential figures in each town to start his Church. This gives him status and influence, and in some cases, a place to stay and run the mission. This is a successful idea and he enlists these wealthy ones to go before him to set up the process in other towns. Wealthy women were key people in some of these places and Paul enlists their assistance.



## Paul's Second Missionary Journey



- Paul and Silas go to Macedonia and Greece ~50-51AD
- Visited churches they had established in first journey
- Timothy and Luke join them
- Lydia becomes an influential follower
- Churches planted in Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, and Corinth
- Travelled more than 1500 miles over 2.5-3 years, ending c53AD

Paul likely started his second missionary journey (Acts 15–18) sometime late in 50 A.D. or early in 51 A.D. (but some scholars date both the council of Jerusalem and the launch of this missionary journey as early as 48 A.D.).

Paul and Silas started by traveling northwestward by land through the region of Cilicia. The Roman road that they would have used went directly through Paul's hometown of Tarsus.

Paul and Silas made stops in the churches all throughout the region, along their way, "strengthening" believers (Acts 15:41). They spent significant time in several Galatian cities including Derbe, Lystra, and Iconium, connecting with the churches

that Paul had planted with Barnabas on this first missionary journey. Paul and Silas taught the believers throughout Galatia what had been decided at the council in Jerusalem and the “churches were strengthened in the faith, and they increased in numbers daily” (Acts 16:5).

Along the way, Paul and Silas meet a young man named Timothy from that region. He had a good reputation. Paul decided to let Timothy

accompany them. However, Paul first circumcised Timothy (Acts 16:3). It seems that Paul knew that having an uncircumcised man like Timothy with him could somehow impede the advance of the gospel wherever they preached. Paul intended to continue to preach that circumcision was not necessary for salvation. But Paul knew that Timothy's presence could potentially cause their opponents to claim that the only real reason that Paul was making

these claims is because he had an uncircumcised friend (Timothy). In Troas, Luke joins their missionary crew. The book of Acts does not explicitly state this, but it's implied. Luke would become one of Paul's ministry protégés. He was a Greek physician, but he also functioned as an investigative journalist. He eventually writes both the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts. Some scholars have also suggested that Luke wrote the book of Hebrews.

While at Troas, Paul received a vision. This vision was of a Macedonian man asking for Paul to come and help them (Acts 16:9-10). After receiving this vision they sailed across the Aegean Sea to the island of Samothrace, and then onto Neapolis (modern-day northeastern Greece). The missionary crew then traveled to Philippi where they stayed for "some days" (Acts 16:12). The church he established in Philippi was the first Christian community in Europe. While



there, they preached the gospel. One specific woman they met was Lydia. She became a believer along with the rest of her household and invited Paul and his companions to stay (Acts 16:13–15). Paul and Silas were imprisoned for casting a demon out of a girl that made money as a fortune teller in Philippi.

Next, Paul and his crew passed through Amphipolis and Apponia and came to Thessalonica (Acts 17:1). As

was his habit, Paul first went to the synagogue to preach to the Jews. He preached there on three consecutive Sabbath days. Many people believed, including many Gentiles. Paul and his crew then went to Berea. There, Paul yet again started in the Jewish synagogue, but this time he got a different response. Instead of jealousy and mobs, the Jews there examined the Scriptures to see if what Paul was saying was true. Many believed in Jesus. Paul was sent away

but Silas and Timothy stayed behind (Acts 17:13-14). The apostle Paul was then escorted by some brothers more than 300 miles south, into the region of Achaia, reaching the city of Athens. When they arrived in Athens, the brothers headed back. Paul stayed in Athens, but told the brothers to tell Silas and Timothy that he wanted them to join him as soon as possible (Acts 17:15). Paul talked with the Jews at the synagogue and preached to many Gentiles in the

marketplace (Acts 17:17). Paul also talked with Epicurean and Stoic philosophers (Acts 17:18). They eventually brought Paul to the Areopagus, the court where men discussed philosophy, civics, and religion. In the court of the Areopagus, Paul preached one of his most famous sermons (Acts 17:22–31). Paul's sermons included quotes from famous Greek philosophers that they would have been familiar with. This gives us insights into Paul's knowledge of their culture

and insights into Paul's missiology. After hearing Paul's sermon, there were some there who laughed at him, but there were also some who believed the gospel and joined Paul (Acts 17:32-34).

After leaving Athens, Paul traveled 53 miles southwest to Corinth. By this point in his second missionary journey, Paul had traveled more than 1,500 miles. The apostle Paul probably arrived in Corinth apx. 8-12 months after the start of the second

missionary journey, therefore, it's likely that he got there sometime late in the year of 51 A.D. (or maybe sometime early in 52 A.D., depending on how we date his departure from Antioch in Syria). Paul stayed in Corinth for a year and a half (Acts 18:11), so Paul was likely in Corinth until the summer or fall of 53 A.D. Silas and Timothy also rejoined Paul in Corinth. While in Corinth, Paul met two Jews from Rome, Aquila and Priscilla. Like the apostle Paul, Aquila and Priscilla were also



tentmakers. Paul stayed with them and worked while also going to the synagogues on the Sabbath to preach, seeking to convert both Jews and Greeks (Acts 18:1-4). Paul may have been considering leaving the city, but he stayed in Corinth after having received a vision from God that told him that “no one will attack or harm you” (Acts 18:10). While in Corinth the apostle Paul wrote his letters to the Thessalonians, encouraging the new believers there to stand firm

under the pressure and pain of persecution. He gives them instructions on how to live a godly lifestyle and gives doctrinal teaching about the future second coming of Christ. Paul continued to preach the word of God faithfully for those 18 months. Many were saved and the church was established. But many Jews were upset. The Jews of Corinth eventually tried to bring the apostle Paul before the Roman proconsul Gallio, who happened to be the older brother of the

renowned dramatist and philosopher Seneca (the tutor of Emperor Nero). Gallio refused to even hear their case against Paul and sent them away (Acts 18:12–17). Paul stayed in Corinth for “many days longer” (Acts 18:18) after being brought before Gallio. He then started his journey back home to Antioch in Syria, but planned to first make a stop in Ephesus. Priscilla and Aquila came with him. When Paul arrived in Ephesus, he went into the synagogue to talk

with the Jews about Jesus. His visit to Ephesus was brief. They requested that he stay in the city longer. He declined but said, "I will return to you if God wills" (Acts 18:21). Paul made plans to leave, but Priscilla and Aquila stayed in the city. Paul traveled from Ephesus to Caesarea. Once he was there he visited with the believers in the region and preached the gospel in various towns and places. He briefly visited Jerusalem and then traveled back home to Antioch in Syria. Paul's second

missionary journey lasted between two and a half years and three years, and likely ended back in Antioch sometime in the fall of 53 A.D. (or maybe early 54 A.D.).

## Paul's Third Missionary Journey

- Paul launched 3<sup>rd</sup> missionary trip from Antioch ~54 AD
- Lasted for about 4 years, ending in Jerusalem in 58 AD
- Visited churches he had established in Galatia
- Stayed in Ephesus for 3 years (54-57 AD) teaching in the Hall of Tyrannus
- Paul performed many miracles
- Visits Corinth to help the troubled church
- Travels to Greece (~57-58 AD) and Macedonia
- Sailed to Syria and travels to Jerusalem
- Paul arrested in Jerusalem and jailed in Caesarea for 2 years



After getting back from his second missionary journey, the apostle Paul stayed Antioch for “some time” (Acts 18:23). Maybe just a few weeks or few months. He then launched his third missionary journey (Acts 18–21). Paul likely left for his third missionary journey in the spring of 54 A.D. This third missionary journey was probably more than four years long and ended with Paul in Jerusalem in 58 A.D. Paul began his third missionary trip by visiting many of the same locations that he had visited on his first and second missionary journeys. We don’t know his exact route, but it’s likely he began by traveling through the region of Cilicia and through the city of Tarsus, on the way toward Galatia. He spent several months traveling to the churches throughout the regions of Galatia and Phrygia, “strengthening all the disciples” (18:23).

Paul passed through the “inland” route through Asia and traveled west to Ephesus (Acts 19:1). Paul spent three labor-intensive years in Ephesus (Acts 20:31). Paul was likely in Ephesus from the fall of 54 A.D. to the fall of 57 A.D. Paul’s time in Ephesus was hard. He later says that he experienced many “afflictions” and he wasn’t confident that he would live through this season (2 Cor. 1:6–10). But God did many great things through Paul while he was in Ephesus. Paul decided to spend the last two and half years of



his time in Ephesus preaching in the hall of Tyrannus, instead of the synagogue. He preached in the hall of Tyrannus daily and “all residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord” (Acts 19:10).

During Paul’s ministry, he performed many miracles in the name of Jesus, leading many to believe. Paul had made plans to travel through Macedonia and then southward into Achaia (1 Cor. 16), which would likely include a visit to the church in Corinth. At some point, Paul received some correspondence telling him that there were massive problems in the church of Corinth. Paul leaves Ephesus and heads toward Macedonia. In the book of Acts, Luke gives us no details. He only says that Paul “departed for Macedonia” (Acts 20:1). However, by examining Paul’s letters, we get more insight into these travels. It appears that, at some point during this journey, Paul had sent Titus to Corinth with a letter (this is sometimes referred to as the “sorrowful letter”). Paul later describes this “sorrowful” letter as having been written with “much affliction and anguish of heart and with many tears” (2 Cor. 2:4). Some scholars contend that this “sorrowful letter” is the epistle that appears in the New Testament, that we know today as 1 Corinthians. Other scholars argue that the “sorrowful letter” is a separate correspondence that has been lost to history. On the way to Macedonia, Paul stopped in Troas to preach there and to await Titus’ return from Corinth. While waiting in Troas, Paul had great ministry opportunity. He called it an “open door” (2 Cor. 2:12).

However, when Titus’ return from Corinth appeared to be delayed, Paul was concerned for Titus’ safety. Paul decided to leave Troas and traveled to Macedonia to find Titus (2 Cor. 2:13). Paul traveled throughout Macedonia, visiting the churches and friends in the region, and encouraging the believers in those churches (Acts 20:2). Finally, while in Macedonia, Paul was reunited with Titus. Titus reported that many people in the church of Corinth had repented after hearing Paul’s letter (2 Cor. 2:5–11; 7:5–16). Paul was filled with joy. However, Titus also reported that Paul’s opponents still wielded some influence over a small rebellious faction within the church questioning Paul’s authority and credibility. Paul responded to this faction by writing another letter (most likely from Philippi). This letter is in our New Testament, known today as 2 Corinthians.

After these travels through Macedonia, the apostle Paul eventually traveled southward and finally arrived in Greece (i.e., Achaia). He stayed in the region for three months (Acts 20:2–3), including a lengthy stay in Corinth. This stay likely took place in late 57 A.D. or early 58 A.D. While in Corinth, Paul wrote his theological masterpiece, the letter to the Romans. As previously discussed in this article, some scholars believe that this was Paul’s second visit while others argue that this was his third visit. It’s also possible that during these three months in Achaia, Paul spent time in the

nearby city of Cenchreae. In the book of Romans, Paul mentions Phoebe, a deaconess in the church of Cenchreae (Rom. 16:1). Phoebe was the person that delivered Paul's letter to the Romans, and Paul asked them to welcome her, praising her for being a "patron of many" (Rom. 16:2). It's highly unlikely that Paul would have asked her to make this important delivery for him unless he knew her well and trusted her, pointing to the likelihood that Paul had spent time in Cenchreae before writing that letter. After his time in Achaia, Paul had originally intended to sail directly to Jerusalem. Those plans were changed, however, when it was discovered that some of Paul's opponents had been plotted against him. Paul decided to take another lap through Macedonia instead (Acts 20:3). Paul had many companions with him, from various churches, which gave him protection while he traveled through Macedonia (Acts 20:4-5). Throughout the spring of 58 A.D., Paul traveled through the Macedonian region, visiting towns such as Berea and Thessalonica, and eventually ending up in Philippi (again) during the "days of unleavened bread" (Acts 20:6).

It would make sense that Paul would have wanted to stop in Ephesus before heading to Jerusalem. Considering the dear friends he had there, but he intentionally passed Ephesus because he wanted to be in Jerusalem by Pentecost, and he knew that traveling through Ephesus, and staying in Asia, would take much more time than he desired. In addition, he knew visiting Ephesus again could cause an uproar (Acts 20:13-16). However, Paul did want to see his Ephesian friends and ministry partners, so when he arrived in Miletus, Paul called the elders from Ephesus to meet him there (Acts 20:17). In Miletus he encouraged the elders and commended them, letting them know that he would not be seeing them again since he knew that imprisonment and maybe death waited for him in Jerusalem. This was, no doubt, an emotional moment for Paul and his friends. Paul had spent several years laboring with these men in ministry, and now he was saying goodbye for, what appeared to be, the last time. They wept and prayed together (Acts 20:17-38).

From there, the apostle Paul and his companions then sailed towards Syria. They made brief stops in Cos, Rhodes, and Patara, before finally coming to Syria, landing at Tyre (Acts 21:1-3). Paul and his companions spent seven days with the disciples in Tyre. Through "the Spirit" they told Paul not to go onto Jerusalem, but Paul sensed that Jerusalem was the right place to go (Acts 21:4). Then Paul and his companions went to Ptolemais (Acts 21:7), spending one day with the believers there, before heading onto Caesarea. There they were greeted by the believers there and they stayed with Philip the evangelist (Acts 21:8). While they were there, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea and told Paul of the coming affliction he would face in Jerusalem (Acts 21:10-12). Despite many people again urging Paul

not to go to Jerusalem, Paul told them he knew what was instore and that he was ready to die. Paul and his companions then traveled to Jerusalem and was greeted by his brothers in Christ who lived there. He told the church there all God had been doing among the Gentiles (Acts 21:14-16). Once there, Paul visited with James and all the elders (Acts 21:17-18). He told them about all that God had done throughout the Gentiles.

While in Jerusalem, Paul went to the temple to worship and pray. While he was there, some Jews from Asia Minor stirred up trouble for Paul. They accused him of abandoning the one true God of Israel, of maligning the law of Moses, and of encouraging people to disobey the Jewish laws. Paul (obviously) denied this charge. This confrontation caused a riot in the temple. Paul was dragged out of the temple by a mob. The Romans then intervened and took Paul into custody (Acts 21:27-36). Paul then addressed the crowd. He made it clear that he loved the law of God and that he had previously been a persecutor of Christians. But that he had become a preacher of the gospel after meeting Jesus on the road to Damascus. This caused another riot to erupt. The Romans then took Paul in their barracks. The Romans were going to flog him but Paul appeals to his own Roman citizenship (Acts 21:37-22:29). Paul is taken to the Roman barracks in Caesarea. During this time the Roman governor over the region, Felix, brought Paul to trial. Ananias, the high priest, came from Jerusalem to bring charges against Paul. Felix gave Paul the opportunity to speak before the crowd. Paul shares his story and preaches truth. Felix was afraid of Paul's message, so he doesn't seemingly know what to do with Paul (Acts 23:23-35; 24:1-27). Paul was imprisoned in Caesarea by the Romans for two years, but was given "some freedom" and his friends are allowed to visit him "to take care of his needs" (Acts 24:23). Paul is taken to the Roman barracks in Caesarea. During this time the Roman governor over the region, Felix, brought Paul to trial. Ananias, the high priest, came from Jerusalem to bring charges against Paul. Felix gave Paul the opportunity to speak before the crowd. Paul shares his story and preaches truth. Felix was afraid of Paul's message, so he doesn't seemingly know what to do with Paul (Acts 23:23-35; 24:1-27). Paul was imprisoned in Caesarea by the Romans for two years, but was given "some freedom" and his friends are allowed to visit him "to take care of his needs" (Acts 24:23).

## Paul's Fourth Journey



- Paul appeals to Rome and transported there for trial
- Shipwrecked and deserted on island of Malta for 3 months.
- Arrives in Rome ~61 AD
- Placed under house arrest
- Arrested again ~64 AD and placed in Roman jail
- Beheaded shortly after writing 2 Timothy ~67-68 AD

After his appeal to Rome, the apostle Paul is transported from Caesarea to Rome by ship under Roman guard (Acts 27:1–28:10). Paul's trip to Rome was tumultuous, filled with difficulties, including a shipwreck that caused him to

be deserted on the island of Malta for three months. He also consistently faced belligerent resistance from people that opposed the gospel. Paul and his companions eventually made it to Rome, sometime around 61 A.D. (or maybe somewhat earlier). When Paul arrived in Rome, he was placed under house arrest for two years. Paul lived in a rented house where he served his house arrest. There he is able to visit with friends and preach the gospel to those who visit.

During this time he also writes several letters that are now in the New Testament, including Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon. The book of Acts ends there, with Paul under house arrest in Rome (Acts 28:11-31).

Paul was released from his first Roman arrest, but there wouldn't be a second release. Paul eventually ended up back in Rome. The second time, it wasn't house arrest. It was a real Roman jail. This was most likely part of Nero's

persecution of Christians in the mid 60s. This was one of the most brutal times of persecution in Christian history. When much of the city of Rome burned down in 64 A.D., Emperor Nero blamed the Christians. The emperor later requested that the apostle Paul be arrested and chained. It appears that Paul was arrested somewhat abruptly and unexpectedly, evidenced by the fact that he was not able to secure his cloak and his Old Testament parchments; Paul later

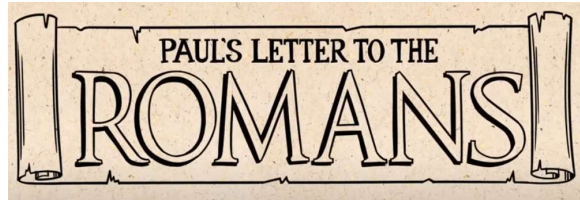
requested that these be brought to him (2 Tim. 4). Paul likely penned 2 Timothy during this second Roman imprisonment. Paul was beheaded shortly after he wrote 2 Timothy. Some scholars have concluded that Paul was killed as early as 64 A.D., but it is more likely that he was executed sometime between 67 A.D. and 68 A.D.



## Romans Part 1

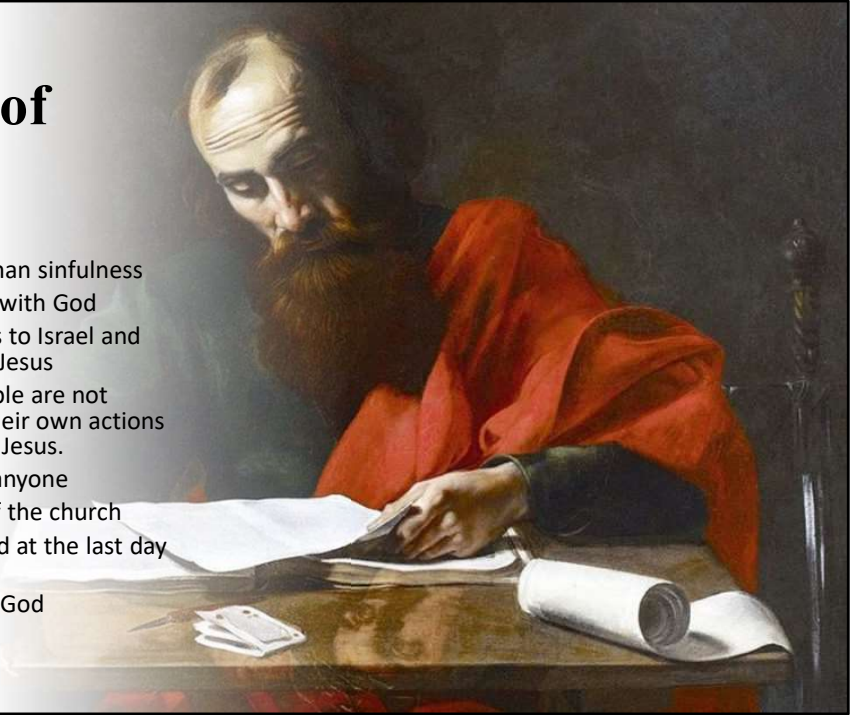
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## Key Themes of Romans

- God's righteousness vs human sinfulness
- People need a relationship with God
- God maintains his promises to Israel and rescued humanity through Jesus
- Justification by Faith – people are not brought closer to God by their own actions but by placing their faith in Jesus.
- Forgiveness is available to anyone
- Love unifies the diversity of the church
- God's wrath will be revealed at the last day as punitive judgment
- The Gospel is the power of God



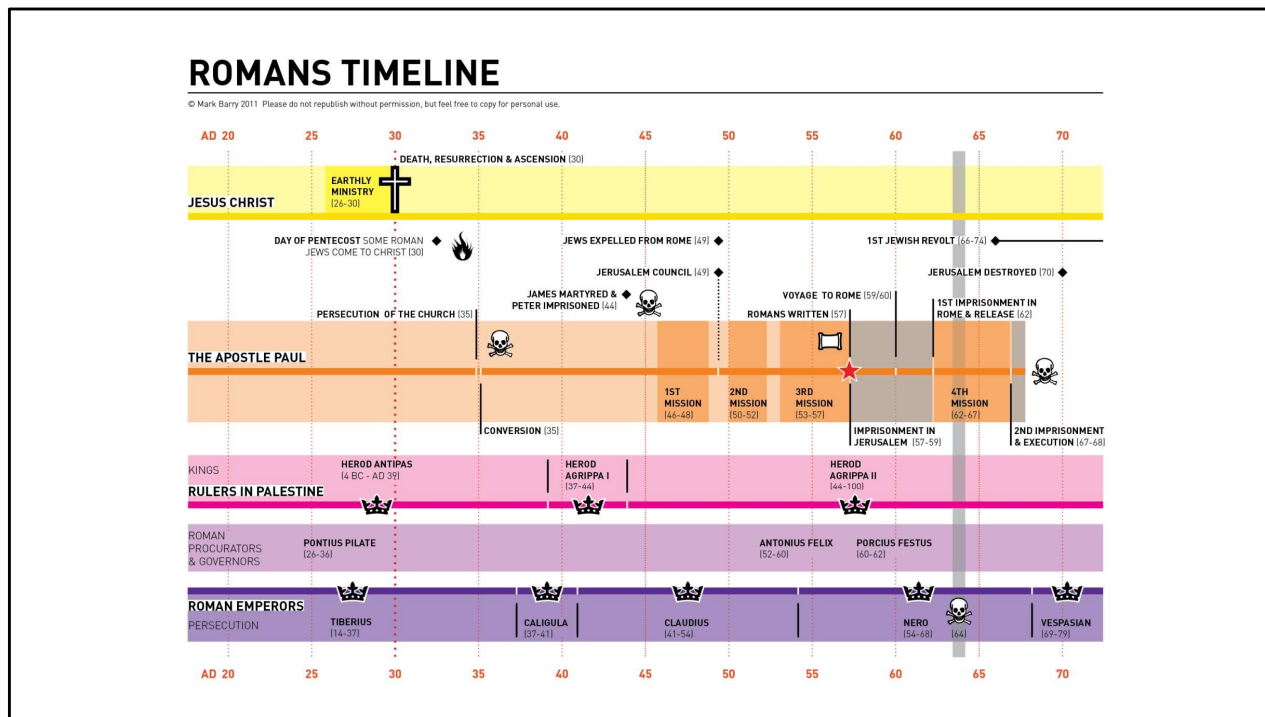
The book of Romans is one of the longest and most significant things written by the Apostle Paul. It was written to about 6-10 house churches in Rome. The letter is a declaration about God's righteousness. The perfection and holiness of God has been seen in the life and death of Jesus Christ; and that this perfection is offered to us, as a free gift,

through the life and death of Jesus Christ. Paul shows us not only how God makes sinners righteous, but also how *this righteousness produces deep and massive changes in our behavior and our character.* The letter provides a concise summary of the Gospel.

Other themes:

- All people are in need of a relationship with God
- God has prepared for that relationship through his own sacrifice. Jesus has rescued humanity
- Justification by Faith – people are not brought closer to God by their own actions but by placing their faith in Jesus.
- Forgiveness is available from God to anyone
- Love unites the diversity of the Church and everyone should use their gifts to serve one another
- Paul explains that God's wrath will be revealed at the last day as punitive judgment.
- The Gospel is the power of God

**The Power of God:** Paul is saying that the gospel is not *merely* a concept or a philosophy. In the gospel, words and power come together. But the very message of the gospel is what God has done and will do *for us*. And Paul says that therefore the gospel, appropriately, is a power. He doesn't say it brings power or has power, but that it actually is power. The gospel message is actually the power of God in verbal, cognitive form. It lifts people up; it transforms and changes things. When it is articulated or reflected upon, the power is released.



The Book of Romans offers an expanded and detailed look at God’s special plan for the human race. It shows the “before and after” conditions of your life in relation to Jesus Christ. It’s about the transforming power of Jesus. Paul wrote this letter to a group of Christians in Rome to lay out his Christian doctrine after years of missionary work. He had not yet visited Rome, but thought highly of believers there and wanted to spend time with them. The other letters Paul wrote were to churches he founded. It is likely Paul wrote the letter from Corinth cAD 57, as he entrusted Phoebe of nearby Cenchreae to deliver it. Paul

employed a scribe named Tertius to compose the letter. It is likely Paul had been planning for some time to journey west to Rome and then on to Spain as he evidently wanted to have the Roman church as a base of operation. For this plan to materialize, Paul needed to present to the elders a concise explanation of the gospel he had been sharing with his churches for more than 20 years. The result was a letter that has since become one of the foundational documents in helping believers understand Christian doctrines and the tenets of their faith.

## Righteousness of God

- God is always right and just and is the standard of what is right and just
- God always acts in a way that is consistent with his own character.
- God is consistent with his own moral demands.
- God in his own perfection is the essence and standard of what is right.
- Four aspects of divine righteousness
  - Rectoral Righteousness
  - Retributive Righteousness
  - Redemptive Righteousness
  - Remunerative Righteousness



The righteousness of God is the divine attribute that God is always right and just in his nature, thoughts, feelings, and actions. It also refers to the fact that God is the ultimate standard of what is right and just, and that he is not influenced by favoritism in his commands, rewards, and punishments. God always acts in a way that is consistent with his own character. The Psalmist declares that “righteousness and justice” (*tsedek* and *mishpat*) are the foundation of God’s throne. That is, he is himself right, just, and true. Righteousness is essential to his very being and characterizes all that he does: God *is* morally and ethically *right*, and he *acts* only in keeping with what is right and just. This theme is common in Scripture. “The judge of all the earth shall do right” ([Gen 18:25](#)). He is a “righteous judge” ([2Tim 4:8](#)).

The primary words which the biblical writers use (*tsedek* and *dikaiousune*) denote, in a physical sense, “being straight,” or in a moral sense, “being right,” and hence, “conformity to an ethical or moral standard,” being and doing what is right. One who is righteous “lives up” to expected obligations; he acts in accordance with what *should* be done. A righteous man is one who is *right* and who does what is suitable, one who maintains a “right relation with”-what is expected.

Theologians describe God’s righteousness as the ethical dimension of his holiness, or as his “transitive holiness,” or as a “mode” of his holiness. It is that aspect of his holiness which



distinguishes him as consistent with his own moral demands. The idea is not that God is bound to some abstract rule external to himself – that would imply that there is some standard above God himself, some superior rule to which he must conform. Of course there could be no standard above God. That righteous standard to which God conforms is himself. It is God’s own nature and will that determine what is right and wrong, and when Scripture affirms that God is righteous it assures us that God always conforms *to himself* – he faithfully adheres to his own perfections. He acts only and always according to the very highest principle of justice: himself. God is sovereign, and as such it is his nature and will that constitute the very essence of righteousness. God in his own perfection is the essence and standard of what is right.

God is ever concerned to glorify himself in all that he does, and his “righteousness” tells us just that. It is for this reason man’s “unrighteousness” ([Rom 1:18](#)) is described in terms of “not glorifying God as God” (v. 21). Righteousness consists in glorifying God and nothing less. The law to which men are bound is *God’s law* – not a law that is “above Him” but a law that is “within Him.” And this standard, being nothing other than the nature and will of God, is the standard to which the immutable God has bound himself: he acts always in a way that is consistent with his own perfection.

It is one thing to know that God is sovereign and so rules the world by his own will. But it is something more indeed to know that he rules in righteousness. For all the apparent inequities of life, for all the patient favors he shows the wicked, and for all the afflictions that fall upon the righteous, it is necessary indeed that we know that God is just and that he will always do what is right – however difficult it may be for us to see it at a given moment. He judges according to what is right and in a way that is consistent with himself, that he will not condemn the innocent or clear the guilty. Unlike the “gods” of the heathen, the true God is not whimsical or capricious. He is righteous – immutably righteous.

God’s “rectoral” righteousness is that aspect of His nature which *demands or requires* righteousness of all His creatures. This is perhaps what we normally think of when we speak of God’s righteousness. Because God is himself righteous he requires the same of all his creatures. All the requirements God has imposed on us are themselves just ([Psa 119:144](#)). They are not unfair; they are right and necessary as expressions of his own being.

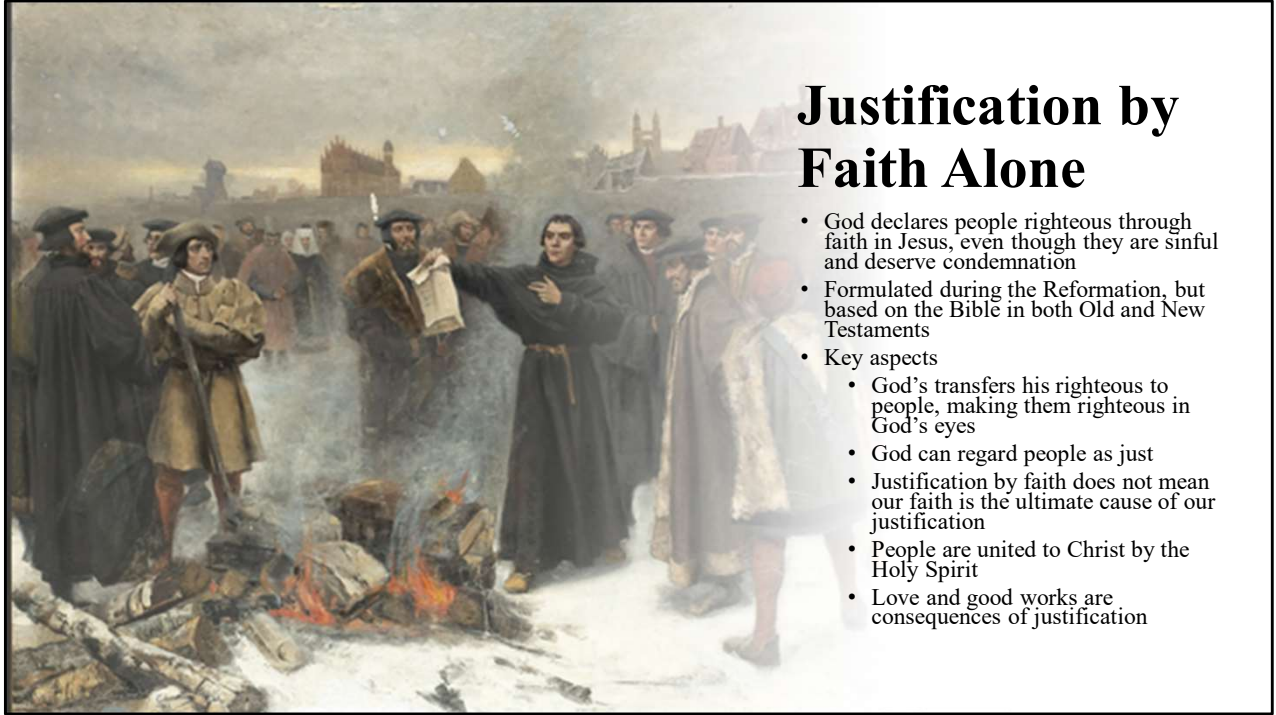
God’s “retributive” righteousness is that aspect of his nature which inflicts punishment for all unrighteousness in his creatures. It is variously referred to as his “punitive” or “vindictive” or “avenging justice.” It has to do with the infliction of penalties for failure to conform to his righteousness. From the Garden to the flood to Babel to Sodom and Gomorrah to Egypt to the Canaanites to the captivity to Ananias and Sapphira this threat has proven to be real (cf. [Rom 1:18](#)). God’s retributive righteousness finds its final expression in the eternal punishment of the wicked in hell. The object of God’s retributive righteousness is not reformation or rehabilitation. God’s retributive righteousness is retributive, vindicatory. The punishment of sin is a function of divine righteousness ([Amos 5:24](#)). Punishment and the



satisfaction of justice is the objective.

If God will redeem sinners it will only be so as he can do so *righteously*. He cannot side-step justice ([Exod 34:7](#)). He *need* not save anyone, of course, for by the nature of the case no sinner merits rescue. But if God in mercy will save, it can only be on the basis of a satisfaction of his righteous demands. God's (rectoral) righteousness demands righteousness on our part, and it demands punishment for all our unrighteousness (retributive righteousness). If punishment for sin is demanded, how possibly could a sinner be saved? Biblical writers frequently insist that it is *in righteousness* that God saves us ([Psa 71:2](#); [Isa 45:21](#); [51:6](#) [54:17](#); [61:10](#); cf. [Psa 51:14](#)). This is another dimension of God's righteousness – his “redemptive” righteousness – that aspect of God's righteousness by which he *provides* righteousness for his offending creatures and himself makes satisfaction for their unrighteousness. Indeed, the apostle Paul defines the gospel in these terms – the gospel is a revelation of God's righteousness ([Rom 1:17](#)). The gospel is a revelation of God's love and grace also, of course, but it is necessarily a message of his righteousness. Amazingly, God is *righteous in forgiving sin* ([1Jn 1:9](#)). God has not surrendered his just demands. Rather, he “sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins” ([1Jn 4:10](#); cf. [Rom 3:25](#); [Heb 2:17](#); [1Jn 2:2](#)). In the Lord Jesus we have all that God's righteousness requires of us. He the sinless one, standing in the place of sinners, offered himself in sacrifice and endured the righteous curse against sin. Christ took our sin and gave us his righteousness. He was “made sin for us” ([2Cor 5:21](#)), and he “became to us righteousness” ([1Cor 1:30](#); cf. [Jer 23:6](#); [Phil 3:9](#)). In grace our record became his, and so he died under the righteous wrath due us. But through faith his righteous record became ours, and we are justified. It is in this way God's righteousness is revealed in the gospel. Amazingly, God “justifies the ungodly” ([Rom 4:5](#)). God is “both just and the justifier of him that believes in Jesus” ([Rom 3:26](#)).

Remunerative righteousness has to do with the distribution of rewards according to justice. God's “remunerative” righteousness is that aspect of his righteousness by which he *rewards* his creatures for the righteousness which they have done. For God it is a matter of justice / righteousness to God that he rewards his servants for their faithful service. It is not simply a matter of goodness or kindness but of justice. When we have obeyed and served him, we have only done what is our duty ([Luke 17:10](#)). All that we are, we are only “by the grace of God” ([1Cor 4:7](#)), and our faithfulness is due only to his working in us ([Phil 2:13](#)). It seems strange that God would view our rewards as a function of his justice. The point here is not that God is obligated to us, simply, but that he has obligated himself to us by promise ([Jas 1:12](#)). God's remunerative righteousness is that aspect of his righteousness by which he rewards us for the obedience and service that he righteously demands of us and that he graciously enables us to give him. Put otherwise, God rewards us, his servants, for the very thing that he has purchased and freely provided. Surely, he alone is worthy of praise ([Rev 4:10](#)).



## Justification by Faith Alone

- God declares people righteous through faith in Jesus, even though they are sinful and deserve condemnation
- Formulated during the Reformation, but based on the Bible in both Old and New Testaments
- Key aspects
  - God's transfers his righteous to people, making them righteous in God's eyes
  - God can regard people as just
  - Justification by faith does not mean our faith is the ultimate cause of our justification
  - People are united to Christ by the Holy Spirit
  - Love and good works are consequences of justification

Justification by faith is a Christian doctrine that states that God declares people righteous through faith in Jesus Christ, even

though they are sinful and deserve condemnation. This doctrine is based on the idea that people cannot be justified before God through their own works or good deeds. Instead, people are justified by faith in Christ's righteousness, which is imputed to them through

the Holy Spirit.

Some key aspects of justification by faith include:

- God's righteousness is imputed to people: God transfers Christ's righteousness to people, making them righteous in God's eyes.

- People are regarded as just: God can regard people as just before him.
- People are united to Christ: The Holy Spirit unites people to Christ through faith in Jesus.
- Love and good works are consequences of justification: Although they are not necessary

# for justification, love and good works are natural consequences of being justified.

The formal articulation of the doctrine of justification by faith stems from the Reformation of the western church beginning in the sixteenth century. But the doctrine of justification by faith had been taught and experienced by Christians long before the Reformation. We have already seen this in the Bible, but we also read of this doctrine in the church fathers. It is based on Bible passages such as Romans 4:5, which states, "To the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness". The doctrine is also found in the Old Testament. Genesis tells us that Abraham, in response to God's promise, "believed the LORD, and it was counted to him as righteousness" ([Gen. 15:6](#)). Job sought to justify himself before God and in the end renounced his own righteousness (e.g., [Job 32:2; 42:1–6](#)). David was a man after God's own heart, and yet he speaks of the blessing of justification apart from works: "Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered" ([Ps. 32:1](#)); "Enter not into judgment with your servant, for no one living is righteous before you" ([Ps. 143:2](#)). Isaiah prophesies that the servant of the Lord will "make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities" ([Isa. 53:11](#)). And Habakkuk teaches us that "the righteous shall live by his faith" ([Hab. 2:4](#)), a truth which he also exemplified in his own life ([Hab. 3:16–19](#)). Finally, Jesus himself teaches this doctrine in his parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector, a parable he told "to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt" ([Luke 18:9](#)). Thus, justification by faith is a doctrine taught by the whole Bible. But it is most clearly taught in Paul's letters.

Most agree that the doctrine of justification by faith is seen most clearly in Paul's letters, and

especially in his letters to the Romans and Galatians. Paul sums up the point of his letter to the Romans in [Romans 1:17](#): “For in it [the gospel] the righteousness of God is revealed by faith to faith, as it is written, ‘The righteousness shall live by faith.’” Justification by faith is another way of saying we are not justified by our own works. As Paul says it in Romans, “we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law” ([Rom. 3:28](#)). He also draws an enlightening contrast between the worker and the believer: “Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness” ([Rom. 4:4–5](#)). Recall that Jesus also teaches that the one who is justified before God is not the one who boasts in his or her own righteousness but the sinner who cries out to God for mercy. Isaiah prophesies that our justification will come about through the suffering of the servant for our transgressions. And David teaches that “no one living is righteous before you.” This means that none of us will be justified by our righteous works or our obedience to the law. Rather, we are justified through faith in Christ.

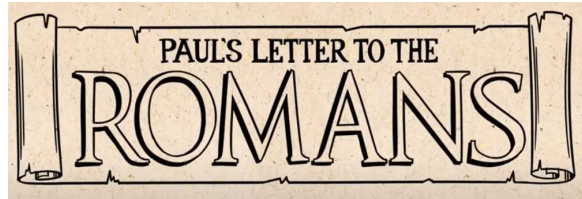
Justification by faith does not mean our faith is the ultimate cause of our justification. The ultimate reason that we are justified is this: Christ “was delivered up [by God] for our trespasses and raised [by God] for our justification” ([Rom. 4:25](#)). Why then does Paul say that we are justified by our faith? Because our faith is the thing that rests upon and unites us to the Christ who was crucified for our sins and raised for our justification. Faith is belief in the truth of the gospel as well as trust in the God of the gospel. It is an act of the whole inner person (the heart, [Rom. 10:9](#)), which is directed toward the word of God, God himself, and especially toward the crucified and risen Christ. The doctrine of justification by faith excludes our works of obedience to the law as a means or cause of our justification before God. But it also affirms that acts of love and good works necessarily follow from our faith as the fruit of our faith.

One necessary conclusion from Paul’s doctrine of justification by faith is the idea that God will therefore justify both Jewish believers and Gentile believers. If “all have sinned” and “are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” ([Rom. 3:23–24](#)), then it follows that God is the God not only of Jewish believers but of Gentile believers. Paul makes this point in [Romans 3:29–30](#): “Or is God the God of the Jews only? Is he not God of the Gentiles also? Yes, of the Gentiles also, since God is one—who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.” Again, in [Romans 4:9](#) he asks “Is this blessing [of righteousness apart from works] then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised?” Paul concludes strongly in favor of the latter option. The inclusion of the Gentiles is a point rightly emphasized by the New Perspective on Paul, although scholars who hold this view tend to wrongly see Gentile inclusion as the essential meaning of justification by faith rather than as a necessary result of the doctrine of justification by faith. We see then that justification by faith has corporate entailments. Our justification before God by faith results in the creation of a family of faith that includes all believers, Jewish or Gentile, slave or free. Nevertheless, the doctrine still speaks fundamentally about the individual’s standing before God, something which has been captured well by its theological formations in church history.

## Romans Part 2

[Video Link](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0SVTI4Xa5fY&t>





## The New Adam

- Paul contrasts Adam and Jesus
- Two kinds of bodies: natural and spiritual
- Adam's sin brought sin and death; Jesus undoes the consequences of Adam's sin and brings eternal life
- Natural life comes first then spiritual. We are born into this earth and live here. We then obtain spiritual life.
- At this time all are like Adam. One day, all believers will be like Christ.
- The guilt of Adam's sin is reckoned to humanity, rendering us all guilty and under the sentence of death. By trusting in Jesus' death for us, the guilt of our sin is reckoned to Him on the cross — where His death satisfies God's anger toward us. Christ's perfect obedience is reckoned to us through faith so that we are regarded as righteous. This is how the new Adam (Jesus) undoes the horrible consequences of the first Adam's sin.



In the fifth chapter of Romans (vv. 12–21), Paul contrasts two key figures in redemptive history — Adam and Jesus. The former (Adam) is a type of the latter (Jesus), making Jesus a “new Adam” (v. 14). Paul explains how the curse (death) associated with Adam’s fall comes upon the entire human race, while salvation comes to the people of God through the death and obedience of Jesus (the second Adam). The Apostle Paul tells us in his first letter to the church in Corinth, “The first man Adam became a living being; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven. As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the man from heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven” ([1 Corinthians 15:45-49](#)).

Paul’s contrast between Adam and Jesus takes place against the backdrop of the creation account ([Gen. 1–2](#)), wherein Adam is depicted as both the biological and federal head of humanity. When Adam sinned against God ([Gen. 3:6–7](#)), he did so as God’s chosen representative of the human race. In [Romans 5:12](#), Paul speaks of the consequences of Adam’s rebellion against God: “Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned.” Because sin entered the world through Adam’s act of disobedience, sin and its consequence (death) spread to all. Sin and death are not natural to humanity — they are the result of Adam’s

fall. We are born as sinners (by nature), and we are guilty for Adam's sin (imputed to us). This is why death inevitably comes upon the entire human race.

Paul is pointing out the difference between two kinds of bodies, i.e., the natural and the spiritual. [Genesis 2:7](#) speaks of the first man, Adam, becoming a living person. Adam was made from the dust of the ground and given the breath of life from God. Every human being since that time shares the same characteristics. However, the last Adam or the "second Adam"—that is, Christ—is a life-giving Spirit. Just as Adam was the first of the human race, so Christ is the first of those who will be raised from the dead to eternal life. Because Christ rose from the dead, He is "a life-giving spirit" who entered into a new form of existence. He is the source of the spiritual life that will result in believers' resurrection. Christ's new glorified human body now suits His new, glorified, spiritual life—just as Adam's human body was suitable to his natural life. When believers are resurrected, God will give them transformed, eternal bodies suited to eternal life.

Paul tells us in verse 46 that the natural came first and after that the spiritual. People have natural life first; that is, they are born into this earth and live here. Only from there do they then obtain spiritual life. Paul is telling us that the natural man, Adam, came first on this earth and was made from the dust of the earth. While it is true that Christ has existed from eternity past, He is here called the second man or second Adam because He came from heaven to earth many years after Adam. Christ came as a human baby with a body like all other humans, but He did not originate from the dust of the earth as had Adam. He "came from heaven."

Although Adam's act of rebellion brought sin and death, the new Adam (Jesus) undoes the consequences of Adam's treason: "But the free gift is not like the trespass" (v. 15). The comparison of the free gift and the trespass is a broad one. The damage wrought by Adam pales in comparison to what Jesus Christ has accomplished on behalf of those for whom He dies. As Paul gets more specific, in verse 15 he notes that "if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many." When used in regard to Adam, the "many" refers to the entirety of the human race. Adam represents every person who has ever lived since he is both the biological and federal head of our race. When Paul refers to the "many" in reference to Jesus, he is speaking of those for whom Christ accomplishes His redemptive work. Adam stands at the head of all of humanity, while Christ stands as the head of God's elect.

Then Paul goes on: "As was the earthly man [Adam], so are those who are of the earth; and as is the man from heaven [Christ], so also are those who are of heaven. And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven" ([1 Corinthians 15:48-49](#)). Because all humanity is bound up with Adam, so every human being has an earthly body just like Adam's. Earthly bodies are fitted for life on this earth, yet they are limited by death, disease, and weakness because of sin which we've seen was first brought into the world by Adam.


Adam's sin has disastrous consequences for humanity. We are all born with a sinful nature. We will all die. But Paul does not despair. Where sin is present, God's grace in Christ abounds all the more! As all die through the act of the first man, God's grace ensures that salvation comes to all those represented by Christ.

Notice too that "the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass [that of Adam's] brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ" (vv. 16–17). What Adam brought upon the human race, Christ has undone. Jesus' sacrificial death and perfect obedience provide the only ground upon which Adam's fallen children can be reckoned righteous in Christ and acceptable to God.

In verses 18–19, Paul finally returns to his point in verse 12: "Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Adam's sin brought down the curse of death upon all humanity. Jesus' sacrificial death upon the cross pays for our sins. While Adam's act renders us sinners, through Christ's act of obedience the many will be accounted "righteous," as Christ's perfect righteousness is imputed to us through faith.

However, the good news is that believers can know with certainty that their heavenly bodies will be just like Christ's—imperishable, eternal, glorious, and filled with power. At this time, all are like Adam; one day, all believers will be like Christ ([Philippians 3:21](#)). The Apostle John wrote to the believers, "Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is" ([1 John 3:2](#)).

There are three transactions in [Romans 5:12–21](#). First, the guilt of Adam's sin is reckoned to humanity, rendering us all guilty and under the sentence of death. Second, by trusting in Jesus' death for us, the guilt of our sin is reckoned to Him on the cross — where His death satisfies God's anger toward us. Third, Christ's perfect obedience is reckoned to us through faith so that we are regarded as righteous. This is how the new Adam (Jesus) undoes the horrible consequences of the first Adam's sin.



## The Holy Spirit and Salvation

- A person without the Spirit does not belong to Christ
- Believers are led by the Spirit to do what is pleasing to God
- Salvation comes from a personal bond with Christ through the Spirit
- The Kingdom of God is characterized by righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit
- The Holy Spirit received when Christ received as their Savior.

The Holy Spirit, given to all Christians without exception, plays a central role in salvation in the Bible, as described in Romans, and is considered to be a personal bond with Christ. The Holy Spirit is received when a person receives Christ as their Savior. The Holy Spirit indwells believers, and the filling of the Spirit is an ongoing process in the Christian life. Active as God's presence and power in the world the Holy Spirit helps Christians towards salvation as it is God's force and inspiration at work in the world. Romans makes the following claims about the Holy Spirit:

- Romans 8:9 States that a person without the Spirit does not belong to Christ, and that the Spirit is an identifying factor of salvation.
- Romans 8:14 states that believers are led by the Spirit, and that the Spirit leads them to do what is pleasing to God.
- Romans 10:9–17 links faith, hearing, and the Word of God, and states that salvation comes from a personal bond with Christ through the Holy Spirit.
- Romans 14:17 states that the kingdom of God is characterized by righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Without the gracious purpose of the Father, there is no salvation. Without the satisfactory work of the Son, there is no salvation. Without the faithful agency of the Spirit, there is no salvation. For the Holy Spirit of Christ is “the key that unlocks for us the treasures of the Kingdom of Heaven.”



## Discussion

Paul wants Christians to get along together. What are some things that contemporary Christians argue about? What are things that divide the church today? How do you work for a balance between the desire for unity and the desire to maintain truth?



# Overview of Philippians

- Likely written while Paul imprisoned in Rome
- Written in appreciation and affection for the believers in Philippi
- Encourages them to live out their faith in joy and unity
- A community of believers living in harmony results from mutual humility modeled by Jesus
- True joy found by centering life on Christ. Humble faith in the saving work of Jesus and serving others brings joy.
- Christians should be joyful and steadfast in their faith, and practice self-giving in response to the good news of righteousness.

## Big Ideas in PHILIPPIANS

Paul, the author of this little book, models joy in the middle of suffering

Believers should imitate Christ, who models humility and service to others

A selfless attitude prevents believers from being at odds with others

Paul is thankful for the Philippians' maturity and assistance to him

The goal of the Christian life is the prize at the end: eternal life in heaven

Paul ministered at Philippi during his second missionary journey, spending about three months in the city. The ministry at Philippi marked Paul's entrance into Macedonia, which came about as a result of a vision he had in the city of Troas, just across the northeastern corner of the Aegean Sea from the port city of Neapolis and its close neighbor Philippi ([Acts 16:8-12](#)). During this first stay in Philippi—he later briefly visited the city on his third missionary journey (20:6)—Paul brought to faith in Christ people who would form the core of the burgeoning congregation in the city. Among them were Lydia, a businesswoman who opened her home to Paul and his coworkers (16:13-15), and the Philippian jailer, who was converted under Paul's ministry after an earthquake miraculously broke open the prison (16:22-34).

Of the four Prison Epistles, Paul likely wrote Philippians last, near the end of his Roman imprisonment in AD 61 or 62. Paul sent the other three Prison Epistles—Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon—by the hand of Tychicus, as their destinations were near one another. However, the letter to the Philippians was to be delivered by Epaphroditus, who had come to Paul in Rome with financial help from the church at Philippi ([Philippians 2:25](#); [4:18](#)). But during his time in Rome, Epaphroditus took ill, which delayed his return home and, therefore, the delivery of the letter (2:26-27).

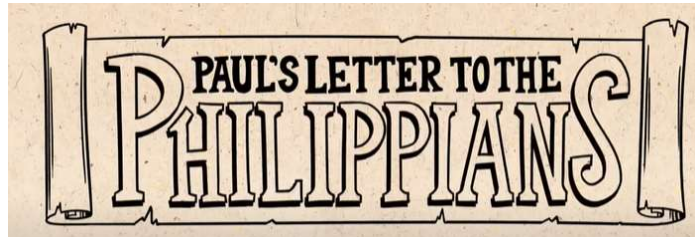
Paul did not write Philippians in response to a crisis, as he did with Galatians and Colossians. Instead, he wrote to express his appreciation and affection for the Philippian believers. Paul's affection for these people is clear throughout the letter as he encouraged them to live out their faith in joy and unity (1:3-5, 25-26; 4:1). Paul's joy at the mere thought of the Philippian church is undeniable in the letter, and it's that same joy that he wanted the recipients to possess as well. To lead the Philippians to this truth, Paul took them directly to Jesus, teaching them that a community of believers living in harmony with one another comes only through mutual humility modeled after the Savior. Paul wrote that he poured out his life as an offering for the sake of Christ, leading Paul to find great joy and contentment in Christ's service. His letter to the Philippians showed them that by centering their lives on Christ, they, too, might live in true joy.

Paul knew, as did the Philippians, that true joy comes only through humble faith in the saving work of Jesus Christ, joining ourselves in harmony with His followers, and serving others in the name of Christ. This was the life experienced by the Philippian believers, and it is a life available to us today. Living as a Christian means seeing our own story as a living expression of Jesus' story. We are to imitate Jesus' way of life so that even in suffering we can find contentment and purpose through Jesus' example. Christians should be joyful and steadfast in their faith, and practice self-giving in response to the good news of righteousness.

## Philippians

[Video Link](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oE9qqW1-BkU&t>





## Paul's Partnership with the Philippians



- Philippi was an ancient city of Macedonia
- Philippians supported Paul in his missionary work
- Lydia provided hospitality in her home while Paul was in Philippi
- Philippians sent him gifts to help him in his work while traveling
- Philippians were not wealthy but were generous
- Contributed to Jerusalem offering

Philippi is located in north eastern Greece (Macedonia). This was an ancient city with beginnings going back to the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC when it was occupied by the Tracians. Philip II of Macadonia (Alexander the Great's father) took over the city and named it after himself. It became a military stronghold to protect acquired lands and nearby gold mines. It was also an important land route across Asia. In 168 BC Philippi became part of the Roman empire when the Romans defeated the Persians and Macedonia was divided into districts. Philippi is famous for one particular event. In 42 BCE Mark Antony and Octavian defeated Brutus and Cassius, the assassins of Julius Caesar, in a battle at Philippi. Later in 31 BCE when Octavian defeated Antony and Cleopatra at Actium, he assumed the named Augustus and rebuilt the city of Philippi. He placed retired soldiers there to ensure loyalty to Rome and established it as a military outpost. He also gave the new colony the highest privilege obtainable by a Roman provincial municipality—the *ius italicum*. Colonists could buy, own, or transfer property and maintained the right to civil lawsuits. They were also exempt from the poll and land tax. When Paul came to the city around 49 CE, Philippi was an urban center at the eastern end of the plain, a few miles northwest from Neapolis. The people there were both Romans and Greeks and spoke predominantly Greek even though Latin was the official language.

When Paul speaks of partnership, he is speaking of the practical hospitality and material help that the Philippians had given to him ever since he first met them. The first Philippian

convert, Lydia, had invited Paul and his companions to stay at her house during their visit to the city ([Acts 16:15](#)). More than any other church, the believers in Philippi offered Paul material support for his ministry ([2 Corinthians 8:11](#); [Philippians 4:15-18](#)). When Paul left Philippi and pressed westward along the Egnatian Way to Thessalonica, the Philippians more than once sent him gifts to help him in his work ([Phil. 4:16](#)). Even after he left the province of Macedonia, they and they alone continued to help him in practical ways ([4:15](#)). Although poor, they contributed generously to the collection for the saints in Jerusalem ([2 Cor. 8:1-5](#)), and they had most recently sent Paul both money and the companionship of Epaphroditus ([2:25](#); [4:18](#)). It is no wonder that as some Christians where Paul was imprisoned sought his harm ([1:17](#)), he longed for this beloved congregation ([1:8](#); [4:1](#)).





## Readings for October 14

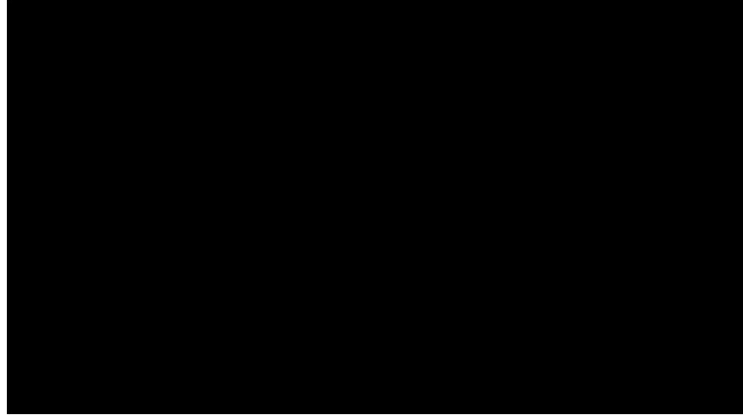
### Letters of the Apostles

Acts 27:1-15; 28:16-31  
Phelomen: 1:1-25  
Colossians 1:1-4:18  
Ephesians 1:1-6:24  
Titus 1:1-6:21  
1 Timothy 1:1-6:21  
2 Timothy 1:1-4:22  
1 Peter 1:1-5:14  
Jude 1:1-25  
2 Peter 1:1-3:18

# Closing Hymn

[Video Link](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WyxXGdG3-lo>



In Romans, Paul develops and defends the truth of the gospel, encouraging believers to rely solely on God's grace for salvation. Following a logical progression of thought, Paul begins by stating that all people are sinners, but then asserts that believers are free from sin's control, the demands of the law and fear of God's punishment. Armed with such freedom, believers can grow in their relationship with Christ and live in the power of the Holy Spirit. Paul recounts our sin and God's righteous judgment and we thankfully acknowledge God's patience and mercy. We rejoice that we can establish a righteous relationship with God and are awed that the Creator of the universe longs to be our Father.

Paul, the "apostle to the Gentiles", teaches that although the people of Israel rejected the Messiah, Israel still has a role in God's plan of redemption. Paul admonishes believers to behave like God's children in service to one another and with respectful submission to authority. Sin and selfishness drive a wedge between us and God that can only be removed by our repentance and God's forgiveness. A person living in faith and trust in God will manifest a Christ-like spirit of humility, a unity with believers, and a strength of character that can carry us to victory in hard times. Romans, then, teaches us that the Gospel is about righteousness! Simply put, by Max Lucado, "The cost of your sins is more than you can pay. The gift of your God is more than you can imagine." A person is made right with God through faith, Paul explains, not through mindlessly obeying the law.

In his letter to the Philippians, Paul shared the joy he experienced in the hopes of relieving the Philippians distress over his imprisonment in Rome. How striking that in prison, where few would believe it is possible to be happy, Paul finds so many sources of joy. He radiates with reasons to be thankful, joyful and content. There is always room for joy in a believer's heart. If we fill our hearts with Jesus and a desire for his attitudes of thankfulness, humility and contentment, nothing is able to wipe out our joy. Following Jesus is about progress...not perfection. Our confidence is not in ourselves or in our achievements, but in God's power to constantly lift us beyond ourselves.

### Weekly Reading Plan (pp. 1343-1373)

Day 1: RO 1:1 - 4:25  
Day 2: RO 5:1 - 8:39  
Day 3: RO 9:1 - 15:13  
Day 4: RO 15:14 - 16:27; AC 20:3b - 21:16  
Day 5: AC 21:17 - 24:27  
Day 6: PHP 1:1 - 4:23  
Day 7: AC 25:1 - 26:32

### Outline

The Letter to the Romans (Days 1-4)  
Travelling to Jerusalem (Day 4)  
Paul Arrested in the Temple (Day 5)  
Paul Escorted to Caesarea (Day 5)  
Letter to the Philippians (Day 6)  
Paul Appeals to Caesar (Day 7)

Key Characters		Key Locations		Key Terms	
Paul	Romans	Jerusalem	Macadonia	Gentiles	Grace
Israelites	Phoebe	Troas	Assos	Righteousness	Judgment
Priscilla	Aquila	Miletus	Ephesus	Faithfulness	Faith
Timothy	Tertius	Caesarea		Peace	Hope
Gaius	Sopater			Sin	The Law
Eutychus	Ephesians			Holy Spirit	Suffering
Agabus	James			Glory	Sacrifice
Ananias	Sanhedrin			Humility	Love
Felix	Tertullus			Submission	Unity
Porcius Festus	Drusilla				
Epaphroditus	Euodia				
Syntyche	Agrippa				
Bernice					

### Key Verses

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. [RO 1:16]

They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator – who is forever praised. [RO 1:25]

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. [RO 3:23-24]

Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. [RO 8:5]

I thank God every time I remember you. [PHP 1:3]

And this is my prayer: that your life may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ – the glory and praise of God. [PHP 1:9-11]

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place, and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. [PHP 2:6-11]

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. [PHP 4:6-7]

I can do all things through him who strengthens me. [PHP 4:13]

## Chapter Summaries (from @biblesummary)

Rom1: Paul, to the saints in Rome. I am eager to preach the gospel to you. The unrighteous have no excuse. God gave them up to their lusts.

Rom2: In judging you condemn yourself. The doers of the law will be justified. Do you boast in the law but break it? A Jew is one inwardly.

Rom3: The Jews were given the oracles of God. But no one is justified by the law. All have sinned and are justified through faith in Jesus.

Rom4: Abraham was counted righteous by faith before he was circumcised. He is the father of all who believe. The promise depends on faith.

Rom5: Therefore we rejoice in hope. While we were sinners, Christ died for us. As sin came through one man, so grace abounds through Christ.

Rom6: We were baptised into Christ's death. So consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God. Offer yourselves to God for righteousness.

Rom7: You have died to the law. Is the law sin? No, sin produced death in me. I do not do what I want to do. My flesh serves the law of sin.

Rom8: The law of the Spirit has set you free. We are children of God and co-heirs with Christ. Nothing can separate us from the love of God.

Rom9: I grieve for my kinsmen. But not all Israel are Israel. God has mercy on whom he wills. Israel did not pursue righteousness by faith.

Rom10: Everyone who calls on the Lord will be saved. How will they hear if no one preaches? Moses says of Israel, "I will make you jealous."

Rom11: Even now there is a remnant of Israel. You Gentiles have been grafted into the tree. All Israel will be saved. Glory to God forever!

Rom12: Present your bodies as a living sacrifice to God. We are one body in Christ. Love one another as brothers. Overcome evil with good.

Rom13: Submit to authorities. Pay taxes to those due taxes. Owe nothing except love, which fulfils the law. Clothe yourselves with Christ.



## Chapter Summaries (from @biblesummary)

Rom14: Accept those who are weak in faith. Everything is clean but it is wrong to cause anyone to stumble. Whatever is not of faith is sin.

Rom15: Each of us should build up our neighbours. Christ confirmed the promises given to the patriarchs. I hope to see you as I go to Spain.

Rom16: I commend to you Phoebe. Greet Prisca, Aquila, Andronicus, Junia and Rufus. Avoid those who cause divisions. Glory to God forever!

Acts20: We sailed to Troas. Paul raised Eutychus after he fell from the window. Paul encouraged the Ephesian elders to care for the flock.

Acts21: Paul was warned not to go to Jerusalem. He said, "I am ready to die." We went there and saw James. Paul was arrested in the temple.

Acts22: Paul said, "Jesus appeared to me and sent me to the Gentiles." The crowd threw dust. Paul told the tribune, "I am a Roman citizen."

Acts23: Paul caused a dissension between the Pharisees and Sadducees. The Jews plotted to kill him. The tribune sent him to governor Felix.

Acts24: Tertullus accused Paul before Felix. Paul said, "I simply went to worship in the temple." Felix kept Paul in prison for two years.

Php1: Paul, to the saints in Philippi. I thank God for you. My imprisonment has advanced the gospel. To live is Christ and to die is gain.

Php2: Have the mind of Christ, who humbled himself even to a cross. Work out your salvation with trembling. I hope to send Timothy to you.

Php3: We put no confidence in the flesh. I count all things as loss compared to Christ. I press on towards the prize. Brothers, imitate me.

Php4: Rejoice in the Lord always! The peace of God will guard your hearts. I rejoice at your concern for me. My God will supply your needs.

Acts25: Festus arrived and summoned Paul. Paul said, "I appeal to Caesar." Festus brought Paul before King Agrippa to decide the charges.

Acts26: Paul said, "I opposed the name of Jesus. He appeared to me and made me a witness." Agrippa said, "This man could have been freed."

## What did I learn about God?

- What are some things that you have observed in nature that confirm to you that God exists?
- How hard is it for you to accept the fact that “the same Lord is Lord of all” (RO 10:12)? What about rapists and child abusers? What about foreigners? What about your neighbors? What about people who have directly harmed you?
- In RO 15, God is described as the God of Hope and the God of Peace. What does this mean to you? How can you know God in this way, especially since Paul began his letter to the Romans by revealing the God of wrath?
- Why do you think God allows periods in our life that are “dead time” – when nothing seems to be happening?

## What did I learn about human nature?

- In RO 1:18-32, Paul describes the fall of mankind. Do you think our society has changed for the better or the worse since Paul wrote this description?
- Paul wants Christians to get along together? What are some things that contemporary Christians argue about? What are things that divide the church today? How do you work for a balance between the desire for unity and the desire to maintain truth?
- In RO 13, Paul gives advice on authority. Is it wrong to rebel against authority? What about when there are moral problems with the authority? What if the authority interferes with your core beliefs? Where should you show your support of government authority and where should you challenge it?
- Who do you admire because they truly put the needs of others ahead of their own interests?
- What is the difference between being “well acquainted with the Way” [ACTS 24:22] and being a true believer? How long were you “well acquainted” before you became a believer?

## What did I learn about my life/relationship with God?

- In what ways do you still functionally put trust in your own works for salvation? How can you grow in living from Christ's righteousness and not your own?
- Looking over your schedule and priorities this past month, what would you say is your ambition in life? Is that what you want it to be? How do your ambitions compare with Paul's in terms of clarity? Value? Concern for God's kingdom?
- Are you more likely to strive for excellence in your secular life or your spiritual life?
- In AC 20, Paul is more the loving friend than hard-driven missionary. Has your preoccupation with a task of ministry or of other work ever caused you to miss out on loving people? How would you complete the sentence: “The one thing I must accomplish at any cost is \_\_\_\_\_?”
- How do you decide when you should bend for the sake of others and when you should stand for your principles?