

God and Man—Like It Is

Chapter Ten

Audio lesson: New Testament 40



Objective: To introduce the book of Romans and its major themes.



I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

—Romans 1:16-17

The Book of Romans is Paul’s theological masterpiece, compiled after years of fruitful ministry. Although addressed to the Romans, it is in fact for the entire Church and explains the crucial doctrine of justification—that God declares the unrighteous to be completely righteous because of the work of Jesus Christ.

This complex book can be divided into four sections: chapters 1-4 deal with the human family as sinners; chapters 5-8 explain how those who are “declared righteous” should live and the struggles to do so; chapters 9-11 address Israel, its future, and the world; and chapters 12-16 discuss how to apply these doctrinal truths practically.

In the first four chapters, Paul explains justification and how all of us are contaminated by sin. He goes on to show how God makes certain charges against us, His response to this dilemma in “giving us over” to freely choose unrighteous behaviors, and the destructive result of these choices. Despite this bad news that we are separated from a righteous God by our sin, our decision to continue in it, and His holy wrath toward us, there is a hope. The cross of Jesus Christ can make us righteous.

1. True or false? The letter to the Romans is the first letter Paul wrote.
2. True or false? The letter to the Romans dealt with very specific issues relevant only to the church at Rome.
3. True or false? One of the major themes in Romans is “justification”—being made righteous before God, as though we had never sinned.
4. True or false? The book of Romans gives us the most complete statement of salvation in the Bible.
5. True or false? In Romans, Paul skips from one theme to another without ever really making a clear argument.



Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

6. Match the following sections of Romans with the group of people each one addresses:
- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| a. Chapters 1-4 | 1. Israel |
| b. Chapters 5-8 | 2. Sinners |
| c. Chapters 9-11 | 3. Everyone who applies the gospel to their lives |
| d. Chapters 12-16 | 4. Those who are justified |
7. What did God do when Jews rejected the salvation He offered?
- He offered it to the non-Jewish world.
 - He vowed never to deal with Israel again.
 - He forced them to believe.
 - He decided to do nothing for now other than wait until they do believe.
8. Why do people often suppress the truth?
- They are not smart enough to understand it.
 - They want to justify an unrighteous lifestyle.
 - They do not agree with it.
 - They are too educated to believe in God.
9. What does it mean when God “gives people over” to their sins?
- He gives up hope that they can be saved.
 - He turns them over to Satan to be punished.
 - He lashes out in anger at them.
 - He allows them to choose what they want and to suffer the consequences.

10. What happens to those who repeatedly choose to sin? (choose all that apply)
- a. They become lustful.
 - b. They exchange the truth of God for a lie.
 - c. They discover that God does not really mind if they sin.
 - d. They become fools.
 - e. They learn to overcome sin in their own strength.
 - f. They realize there is no difference between a Christian and a non-Christian.
 - g. They develop a depraved mind.
 - h. They become filled with all kinds of idolatry and unrighteousness.
11. Who or what is the absolute standard of righteousness?
- a. Paul
 - b. The laws of nature
 - c. Jews
 - d. God
12. What is God's wrath?
- a. His unrestrained anger
 - b. The dark side of His personality
 - c. His opposition to whatever harms His loved ones
 - d. His judgments against people He does not like



What is God's answer to sin? Why must we understand that we are sinners if we are going to experience salvation from God? Have you confessed your sins and asked God to justify you? If so, what changed in your life? If not, will you consider doing that now?



Thank God that His salvation is not for those who are righteous but for sinners like us. Ask Him to continue to save you from every effect of sin in your life. Also ask Him, as we begin to study Romans, to help you understand the deep truths of the good news of salvation and justification.



Going Deeper

1. How can you relate and apply the fall of the human race, as recorded in the early chapters of the book of Romans, to the fall of man as it is recorded in the early chapters of the book of Genesis? _____

2. What is a good definition of the wrath of God as it is described in the early chapters of Romans? _____

3. State clearly and apply the thesis, or the argument, of the book of Romans that begins in chapter 1, verse 17 and concludes in chapter 11 verse 36. _____

4. As you trace that argument through the first four chapters as it relates to righteousness and unrighteousness:

- a. What is God? _____
- b. What does God want? _____
- c. What does God demand? _____
- d. What does God condemn? _____
- e. What does God know? _____
- f. What has God done? _____
- g. What does God want us to do? _____

5. According to God's plan of justification as presented in the first four chapters of this letter:

- a. Who is the Author of this plan? _____
- b. What is the dynamic that makes this plan work? _____
- c. What is the principle that applies this plan to you and me personally? _____
- d. How did God guarantee this plan? _____
- e. What is the proof that we really do have the principle that makes this plan work for you and me? _____

6. According to the third chapter, what is the specific dimension of sin that declares all of us to be sinners? _____

7. According to this argument, in chapter five (verses 12-17), who are four kings who enter, abound and reign while believers who have been declared righteous are attempting to live like people who have been declared righteous? _____
