

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

**(Romans 1:16)**

**The Book of Romans  
Introduces**

**The Greatest Benefits  
Ever Given to the World**

Who am I, Who is God, why was I born, where am I going? The future, life after death, eternal happiness, victory and fulfillment in life: these are the subjects of the Book of Romans. All the great questions of life are answered in its pages. It explains sin, forgiveness, redemption, justification, and sanctification. The Book of Romans is the greatest Book in the New Testament to give us an understanding of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. All of these great truths flow out of the GOSPEL; the fact that Jesus Christ died on the cross to pay for our sins and rose physically from the dead three days later. Eternal life and all the benefits God reveals in the book of Romans come to us through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His death and resurrection.

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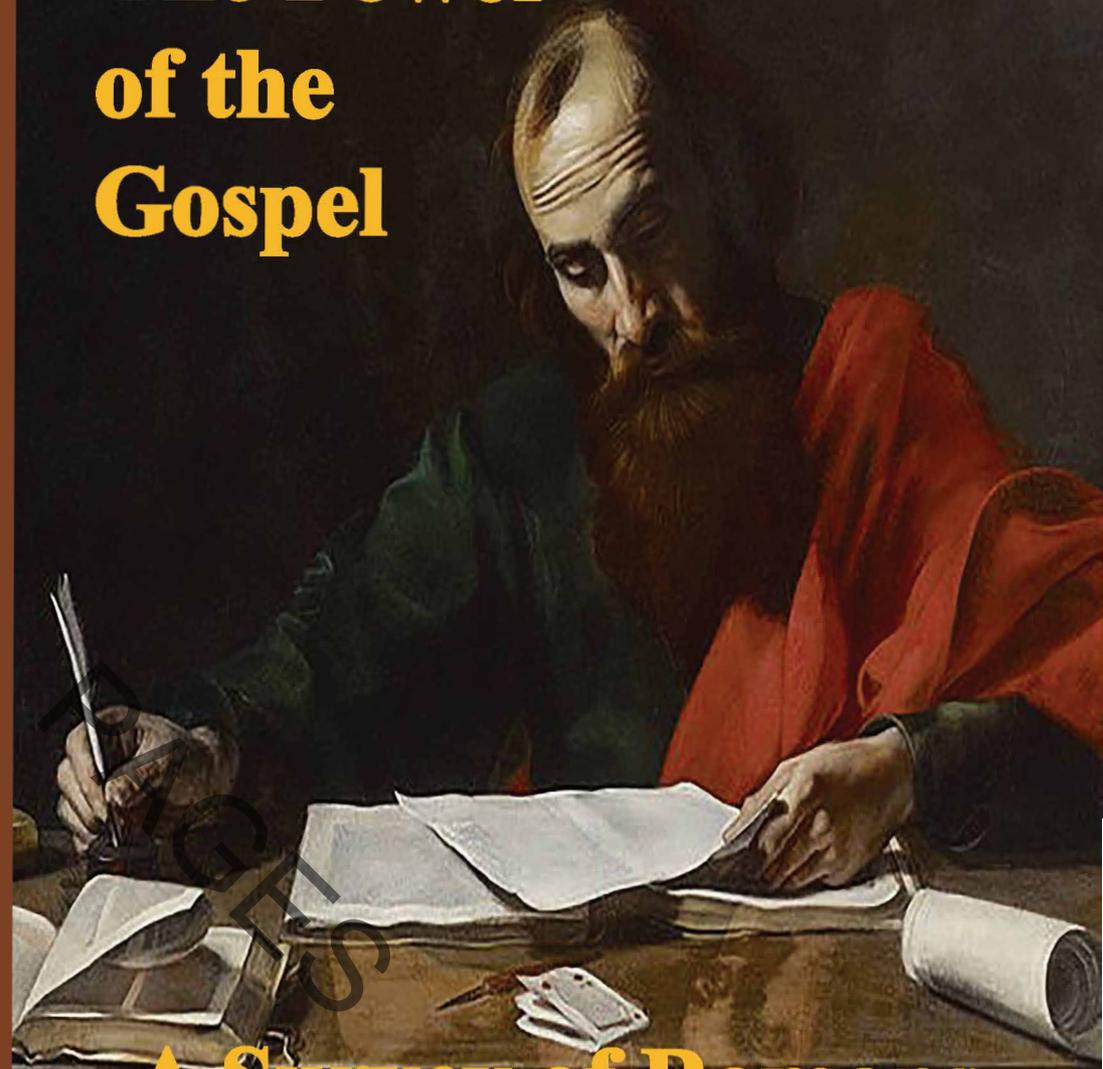
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**The Power of the Gospel**

**Steve Combs**

# The Power of the Gospel



## A Survey of Romans

**Dr. Steve Combs**

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By

**Dr. Steve Combs**

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# **Introduction to the Book of Romans**

**Rom. 1:1-17**

**T**he Book of Romans was written about 58 A.D. by Paul, the apostle, to the Roman Church; it was probably written when he was in Corinth during his third missionary journey. <sup>1</sup> Rome was the largest city in the empire at the time, boasting a population of about 4 million. It is impossible to know for certain who started the church in Rome. It was not Paul, because he had never been there as a Christian. It was not likely that Peter started the church in Rome. Peter was in Jerusalem at the conference of Acts fifteen in 49 A.D. He was not there when Paul wrote Romans, because he would have been named among the greetings of Romans sixteen. The church was already a mature church when Paul wrote (Rom. 15:14). So, Peter

probably did not start the church. A possibility is that one of Paul's converts started the church. Another possibility is that it was some of the Jews who were at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, when Peter preached and about 3000 were saved. Acts 2:10 says that among those listening to Peter's sermon were "strangers of Rome." <sup>2</sup> It could also have been Barnabas.

Paul was planning a trip to Rome (Rom. 1:10-11). He hoped to be able to minister to them and to obtain their support for traveling to Spain (Acts 15:24). The Book of Romans was written to them to perfect their understanding of salvation. It is the greatest book in the New Testament on that subject. The Book of Romans sets forth the great truths of sin, condemnation, propitiation, justification, reconciliation, propitiation, sanctification, and glorification. It presents the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of David, the Son of God, the Savior of the world, and the hope of the Jews.

There are many ways to approach the Book of Romans. We shall divide the Book into six sections plus an introduction and a conclusion. Those sections will fall out as in Table 1 on the following page. This study is a survey. That is, we will take it paragraph-by-paragraph more often than verse-by-verse.

One final consideration remains before launching into the body of Romans. I have chosen to base this exposition on the King James Version of the Holy Bible. It is necessary to mention this, because there can be only one final authority when seeking the truth. Since there are textual issues that cause other versions to be in conflict with the KJV at various places and those conflicts are based on conflicting Greek texts (the UBS Text or the Received Text

### How the Book of Romans is Organized

1:16-3:31	4:1-5:21	6:1-8:16	8:17-39
Condemnation	Justification	Sanctification	Glorification
Pain of wrath	Penalty of Sin	Power of Sin	Presence of Sin
No Salvation	Saved Spirit	Saved Soul	Saved Body
Price of Sin	Position	Practice	Predestination
Sinners	Savior	Saints	Secured
Without Righteousness	Declared Righteous	Made Godly	Growth Completed

9:1-11:36	12:1-15:7
Confirmation	Dedication
Preservation	Practical Walk
Saved Nation	Saved Walk
Promise	Purpose
Saved Jews	Standing Firm
A Great Nation	Glorifying God

Table 1

or the Majority Text), a decision must be made as to which English Version and which Greek text will be relied on as the truth and as the Word of God. An example of these differences is in Romans 8:1. The last half of the verse as it is in the KJV is missing in nearly all modern versions. After many years of study in manuscript evidence, Greek, English, and history, I am convinced that the KJV is the most accurate English Version available and the Received text it is based on is the correct Greek New Testament. I have never found an error in the KJV and I never expect to find one. Therefore, I accept the King James Version as the Word of God without error. For this reason, this exposition will be based on the wording of the KJV.

At times, illustrations and definitions may be drawn from the Greek Received Text, from which the KJV was translated. Some may actually object to this. I think, however, that their objection is based on the fact that many times references are made to the Greek and Hebrew texts for the purpose of attempting to prove the KJV is translated incorrectly. That is not what I do. I use those texts to confirm, defend, and explain the King James as it is translated.

### **Greeting and Address - Romans 1:1-8**

*Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the*

*resurrection from the dead: By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name: Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ: To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.*

Two persons and one group are identified and described in the epistle's greeting, Paul, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the saints in Rome. Paul is described as an apostle (one called and sent forth by Christ). He says his apostleship was by the will of God (2 Cor. 1:1), not of or by man (Gal. 1:1). He is "separated unto the gospel of God." That is, he was called to preach the gospel, the death burial and resurrection of Christ (1 Cor. 15:1-4). He was primarily sent to the Gentiles (Rom. 15:16-18), but according to his own statement in Romans 1:16, he had a ministry to the Jews. He said that God gave him grace and apostleship to bring people of all nations into obedience to Christ (Rom. 1:5). Paul made it clear that all he was and all he had accomplished was by the grace of God alone (Rom. 12:3; 1 Cor. 15:10), not in any way of himself (2 Cor. 3:5).

The gospel is all about the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord is "the seed of David" according to human descent. But, He is also the "Son of God," a fact proved by His resurrection. Paul's apostleship and service were given by and received from the Lord Jesus. All service for Him is given and done by His grace alone. Without Him, we can do nothing (John 15:5), but with the strength of Christ, we can

do all things (Phil. 4:13). We do not deserve a place of service; He gives it as He pleases. What a privilege it is to have a place of service for His glory!

The recipients of the letter, the Roman Christians, were “called to be saints” (Rom. 1:6-7). A “saint” is a person who has received initial sanctification, that is, they have been separated to God as His possession. When we place our faith in Jesus Christ, God chooses us to salvation and sanctifies us (2 Thess. 2:13-14). God picks us out of the masses of the world when we trust Christ and he makes us His own. He saves us from the penalty of sin. This is the beginning of the Christian life. It is the past of a Christian. As we live our lives, God leads us into a practical sanctification (1 Thess. 4:3-4), a process of separation from sin; growing and learning to live in obedience to Christ. This separation from the power of sin is the present life of a Christian. The future of a saint is bright with assurance and hope. In the future we will be conformed to the image of God’s Son (Rom. 8:28-30). This will be the ultimate sanctification, when we are separated from the very presence of sin in us.

### **Paul’s Desire to Travel to Rome Romans 1:9-17**

*For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers; Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you. For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; That is, that I may be comforted together with*

*you by the mutual faith both of you and me. Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles. I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.*

Paul prayed for a “prosperous” journey to Rome (Rom. 1:9-13). God answered his prayer, but not like Paul hoped. His journey was prosperous and his stay in Rome was prosperous in a spiritual sense, but the trip and the accommodations were not as Paul would have liked. He wanted to prosper *them* by “imparting some spiritual gift” and “have some fruit among” them. However, he came to Rome as a prisoner several years after he wrote his letter to the Romans. Paul was arrested by the Romans in Jerusalem in Acts 23. He was in prison in Jerusalem a short while and transferred to Caesarea, where he was held for two years (Acts 24:27). When Paul appealed to Caesar, he was sent to Rome by the Roman Governor, Festus. On the way to Rome they endured shipwreck, but not before Paul was able to show Christian kindness to his captors and fellow-prisoners. All of them reached the shore of the island of Melita safe (Acts 27). There Paul was able to minister to some of the islanders (Acts 28:1-10). When Paul arrived in Rome, he was

still a prisoner for at least two more years, but he was able to live in his own hired house and minister to the Jews and the Church (Acts 28:30-31). So, his journey and his stay in Rome were prosperous in a spiritual sense, but it was with difficulties and trouble.

Paul felt that He was under an obligation to preach the gospel (v. 14), so much so, that he felt himself to be in debt to the Jews and Gentiles. This feeling may have been because of his effort to destroy the church when he was unsaved (Gal. 1:23). Regardless, he knew he was called to preach the gospel and was separated to the gospel (Rom. 1:1; 1 Cor. 1:17). Paul was "ready" (v.15) to preach and he was "not ashamed" (v. 16) and he was confident in the "power" of the gospel (v.16). Part of the whole armor of the Christian is to be prepared to tell others about the gospel (Eph. 6:15). It is pictured as the shoes on our feet, indicating a readiness to go wherever God leads. The Bible says, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" (Rom. 10:15).

The gospel is defined as how "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:3-4). Its source is God's love and grace. Its effectiveness is by faith and the power of God (John 3:16; Eph. 2:8-9). Romans 1:16-17 are the key verses for the Book of Romans. The Book is all about the gospel and the life of faith. The gospel is the power of God to salvation for all. The Scripture says, "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God ... it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. 1:18, 21).

The cross makes a life of faith in the power of God possible. Without the cross there could be no life (see comments on chapter six). The Christian life is lived “by faith.” It is not lived by self-effort or self-discipline. There is effort and discipline involved as part of the self-control necessary to live godly, but self-control and discipline (called “temperance”) is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-24). It comes from the Faith that is produced in us by the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). So, we must have faith in all His truth, his promises, all His commands, and all other principles of living in the Word of God.

# Chapter One

## The Condemnation of Mankind

### Romans 1:18-3:19

The first major point made in the Book of Romans is that “all have sinned” (Rom 3:23). It is a conclusion that summarizes this first large section. This point is approached from several standpoints. First, Romans 1:18-32 traces the path of descent taken by every nation starting with recognition of God and ending with failure, wickedness, and chaos. Second, Romans 2:1-29 proves that the Jews, as well as the Gentiles, are under sin and condemnation. Finally, Romans 3:1-31 shows the utter hopelessness of all mankind without Christ. The only hope is found in the redemption that is in Christ and justification by faith in Him.

#### **The fall of the Nations (Rom. 1:18-32)**

*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness (Rom. 1:18)*