

THE LETTER  
TO THE

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ROMANS

WILLIAM MACDONALD



*Developed as a study course by Emmaus Correspondence School, founded in 1942.*

*The Letter to the Romans*

William MacDonald

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# STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS

The gospel—“the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes”—is the subject of Paul’s letter to the church in Rome. The apostle offers a clear exposition of the lost condition of man, and of God’s plan to save him through Christ’s work on the cross. New believers learn of their identification with Christ and how, in the power of the Holy Spirit, they can live a victorious life. Mature believers can enjoy the deeper truths of doctrine, prophecy, and Christian living. Paul answers every objection that man can have to the gospel and God’s grace.

This concise study of Romans is enhanced by William MacDonald’s own paraphrase of the letter to the Romans as well as through the suggested questions for group discussion.

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## **Course Components**

This course has two parts: this study course and the exam booklet.

## **How To Study**

This study has twelve chapters, and each chapter has its own exam. Begin by asking God to help you understand the material. Read the chapter through at least twice, once to get a general idea of its contents and then again, slowly, looking up any Bible references given.

Begin studying immediately, or if you are in a group, as soon as the group begins. We suggest that you keep a regular schedule by trying to complete at least one chapter per week.

## **Exams**

In the exam booklet there is one exam for each chapter (exam 1 covers chapter 1 of the course). Do not answer the questions by what you think or have always believed. The questions are designed to find out if you understand the material given in the course.

After you have completed each chapter, review the related exam and see how well you know the answers. If you find that you are having difficulty answering the questions, review the material until you think you can answer the questions. It is important that you read the Bible passages referenced as some questions may be based on the Bible text.

## **How Your Exams Are Graded**

Your instructor will mark any incorrectly answered questions. You will be referred back to the place in the course where the correct answer is to be found. After finishing this course with a passing average, you will be awarded a certificate.

If you enrolled in a class, submit your exam papers to the leader or secretary of the class who will send them for the entire group to the Correspondence School.

See the back of the exam booklet for more information on returning the exams for grading.

## 1

## PAUL AND HIS PLANS

## ROMANS 1:1-17

One of the easiest ways to understand this letter (epistle) is to think of it as a series of questions and answers. As the apostle Paul wrote the letter, he was undoubtedly aware of difficulties that would arise in the minds of some, and of serious objections which would be raised by others. He therefore seems to mention these problems one by one; then he proceeds to answer them in a way that shows the book to be truly inspired of God. Someone has said that this letter shows how God meets every attitude that the mind of man takes in relation to Himself and His truth.

We will think of the letter as containing eleven main questions. If the student learns these questions, and the answers to them, he will at least have a working knowledge of the Letter to the Romans. The questions are as follows:

1. What is the subject of the letter?
2. What is the gospel?
3. Why do men need the gospel?
4. According to the gospel, how can sinners be justified by a Holy God?
5. Does the gospel agree with the teaching of the Old Testament Scriptures?
6. What are the benefits of the gospel in a person's life?



**This letter shows  
how God meets  
every attitude that  
the mind of man  
takes in relation  
to Himself and  
His truth.**



7. Does the teaching of the gospel (salvation by faith alone) encourage or even permit sinful living?
8. Does the gospel tell Christians to keep the law in order to lead a holy life?
9. How, then, is the Christian enabled to live a holy life?
10. Does the gospel, proclaiming salvation for Gentiles as well as Jews, mean that God has broken His promises to His earthly people, the Jews?
11. How should Christians show by their everyday behavior that they have been justified?

While studying these lessons, it will be necessary to use a few unfamiliar words such as *righteousness* and *justification*. However, these words will be explained as clearly as possible when they first appear, and it is important that the student thoroughly understand their meaning.

We proceed now to our study of Romans by considering the questions in order.

### **What Is the Subject of Romans?**

The theme of this letter is the gospel. Paul introduces it almost immediately. After identifying himself as the writer, he tells us that, by a divine summons, he has been sent forth to preach the gospel (v. 1). As we shall see, he mentions the gospel three other times in this first chapter—in verses 9, 15 and 16.

### **What Is the Gospel? (vv. 1-17)**

First of all, we might answer this question by referring to the dictionary. There we would learn that the word itself means *good news*. But Paul tells us at least six important facts about the gospel in this section.

1. It is the gospel of God (v. 1). This means that God is the author of the good news. It was not made up by man.
2. The gospel was promised by the prophets of the Old Testament Scriptures (v. 2). This remark might have been made especially for the benefit of Jewish people who believed the Old Testament, but who resented the gospel as a new and false teaching because they

refused to believe that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah-Deliverer that God had promised to send.

3. The gospel is good news concerning God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ (v. 3). In fact, the gospel is all about Him, this wonderful Person who is descended from David as far as His humanity is concerned, but who is demonstrated to be the eternal Son of God by His resurrection from the dead (v. 4). He is both God and Man.
4. The gospel is God's power unto salvation (v. 16). It is the instrument He uses for saving every man who believes on Christ.
5. The gospel is for all men, for the Gentiles as well as the Jews (v. 16). This is a very important point. The Jews, to whom Paul often preached, hated to hear this. Frequently, therefore, in this letter, Paul has to contend that the good news is for all, and he proves it from the Scriptures.
6. The gospel is the good news that men are saved by faith alone (v. 17). Here we come to the heart of the gospel message. God saves men on the principle of believing and not of doing.

————— ❧ —————

**The gospel is  
the good news that  
men are saved by  
faith alone.**

————— ❧ —————

### ***The Gospel Demands Righteousness***

In verse 17, we find the first occurrence of the word “righteousness” in the letter. We shall, therefore, pause to consider its meaning. Actually the word is used in several different ways in the New Testament, but we shall consider only three.

————— ❧ —————

**The righteousness  
of God is revealed  
in the gospel.**

————— ❧ —————

First of all, it is used to describe that characteristic of God by which He always does what is right, just and proper. When we say that God is righteous, we mean that there is no unfairness, dishonesty, or wrong in Him. Here in verse 17, we learn that the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel. In other words, the gospel tells how God can save ungodly sinners and still be just in doing so.

Then, secondly, the righteousness of God is used to describe the standard of perfection which God demands of His creatures (Rom. 10:3).

Since He Himself is righteous, He requires absolute righteousness from those who would dwell with Him in heaven. As we shall see, man is unable to achieve this righteousness by his own efforts.

Finally, the righteousness of God refers to the perfect standing which God provides for those who believe on His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 5:21). Thus, those who are not in themselves righteous are treated as if they were righteous because God sees them in all the perfection of Christ.

Now, then, in the opening seventeen verses of his letter, Paul has introduced his subject, and has stated very briefly some of the principal points which he will explain in greater detail as he proceeds.

## AUTHOR'S PARAPHRASE OF

### *Romans 1:1-17*

#### **Chapter 1**

**1)** This is a letter from Paul, a slave of Jesus Christ, who was chosen to be a special messenger for the purpose of proclaiming good news from God. **2)** This good news was promised by God through the prophets of the Old Testament. **3)** It is concerned with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. He was born of the lineage of David, as far as His humanity is concerned, **4)** but He is also proclaimed by the Holy Spirit to be the Almighty Son of God. The proof that He is the Son of God is that He was raised from the dead.

**5)** It is from Him that I have received the undeserved ability and the authority to go forth to all nations on behalf of His Name, calling on them to obey the Christian faith. **6)** You are among those to whom I have been sent; you are called to belong to Jesus Christ.

**7)** This letter is addressed to all the Christians living in Rome, that is, to all God's beloved ones, those who are called saints. I wish you grace and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

**8)** First of all, I should like to say that I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith in Christ is so outstanding that it is spoken of throughout the world.

**9)** In fact, God is my witness, whom I serve wholeheartedly in the gospel of His Son, that I am so grateful for your faith that I pray



for you unceasingly. **10)** I pray that in some way and at some time soon, I may be permitted by God to visit you. **11)** For I am anxious to see you, and to be of some spiritual help to you so that you will be strengthened as Christians. **12)** In that way, I shall be helped by your faith and you will be helped by mine.

**13)** I also want you to know, my brethren, that I have often planned to visit you, but have been prevented until now. You see, I desired that my ministry should have beneficial effects among you as well as among other Gentile people. **14)** For I have a sacred obligation to men of all cultures, both Greeks and barbarians, and to men of all degrees of intelligence, both wise and unwise.

**15)** Thus I stand ready and anxious to preach the gospel to you in Rome.

**16)** It was not through shame of my message that I delayed coming to you until now, for I am not ashamed of the gospel, even in Rome, for it is the power which God uses to save everyone who believes on Him. This power of God unto salvation was first made known to the Jews, and then to the Greeks and other Gentile people.

**17)** I am not ashamed of my message because the gospel reveals to us the righteousness of God, that is, it tells us how God can justify ungodly sinners who receive His Son by faith, and how God can still be right in doing so. God's righteousness is revealed on the principle of faith from first to last. Those who believe on Him are declared to be righteous. This was taught in the Old Testament by the prophet Habakkuk when he said, "The righteous person shall obtain life by exercising faith." But it is the gospel that tells us how this is possible.

## GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### *Chapter 1 — Paul and His Plans*

1. What is the meaning of the word "gospel"? How is the word "gospel" related to Romans 1:1-6?
2. Why is it important for us to have Paul's attitude in verse 16? How can we demonstrate this attitude in our own lives?
3. Look up the word "righteous" in the dictionary. How can we be righteous when we are all sinners?

4. Look at verse 5 and at verse 17. What can we learn from these verses about the results of putting our faith in Jesus Christ?

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TO THE  

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ROMANS

**EXAM BOOKLET**  
**AK '11 (2 UNITS) ROM**

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STUDENT NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

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ADDRESS

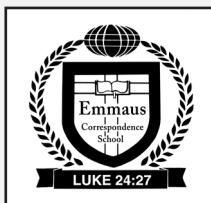
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CITY, STATE, ZIP

COURSE GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_

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INSTRUCTOR



*Exam developed by Emmaus Correspondence School, founded in 1942.*

## A NOTE ON THE EXAMS

The exams are designed to check your knowledge of the course material and the Scriptures. After you have studied a chapter, review the exam questions for that lesson. If you have difficulty in answering the questions, re-read the material. If questions contain a Scripture reference, you may use your Bible to help you answer them. If your instructor has provided a single page Answer Sheet, record your answer on that sheet. This exam contains the following types of questions:

### MULTIPLE CHOICE

You will be asked to write in the letter of the correct answer at the space on the right. Here is an example:

The color of grass is

- A. blue                      C. yellow  
B. green                     D. orange

     **B**     

### WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Questions headed this way are designed to help you express your ideas and feelings. You may freely state your own opinions in answer to such questions.

### RETURNING THE EXAM

See the back of this exam booklet for instructions on returning your exam for grading.

**DO NOT PHOTOCOPY THESE EXAM PAGES**

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**NOW I HAVE A QUESTION . . .**

As you complete the exams, you may have additional questions about the course material that have not been answered. In the area below, you may ask any question you have related to the chapters you have studied. Your instructor will respond to your questions as best as he or she can.

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# CHAPTER 1 EXAM

## PAUL AND HIS PLANS

EXAM GRADE \_\_\_\_\_

***Before starting this exam, write your name and address on the front of this Exam Booklet.***

*Directions: Read each question carefully and write the letter of the correct answer in the blank space on the right. Use the separate answer sheet if provided.*

1. Which of the following questions is **NOT** answered in Romans?
  - A. How can sinners be justified by a holy God?
  - B. Has God broken His promises to the Jews?
  - C. How is a Christian enabled to live a holy life?
  - D. What are the church ordinances?

\_\_\_\_\_
  
2. In view of Paul's emphasis in Romans, which is the best title?
  - A. I, Paul
  - B. Beware of the Cult
  - C. The gospel according to Paul
  - D. How to run a church

\_\_\_\_\_
  
3. The word "gospel" means
 

A. exciting news	C. good news
B. bad news	D. sad news

\_\_\_\_\_
  
4. The word "righteousness" used in the New Testament denotes
  - A. God's ability to always do what is right
  - B. God's perfect standard for us
  - C. the perfect standing all believers in Christ have
  - D. all the above

\_\_\_\_\_
  
5. Paul's authority to evangelize the Gentiles was given to him by
 

A. the church at Antioch	C. Jesus Christ
B. the twelve apostles	D. Simon Peter

\_\_\_\_\_
  
6. How did Paul describe the Christians at Rome?
 

A. as saints	C. as fellow laborers
B. as brethren	D. as joint-heirs with Christ

\_\_\_\_\_

- 7. Paul told the Romans that he was praying for
  - A. converts through their witness
  - B. their escape from persecution
  - C. God's will for his soon visit
  - D. them to be alert to false doctrine\_\_\_\_\_
  
- 8. Paul's obligation to preach the gospel was
  - A. universal in scope
  - B. to the Jews only
  - C. to the Gentiles only
  - D. to wise people only\_\_\_\_\_
  
- 9. Paul says the gospel is God's power to salvation and was
  - A. manifested in Christ and revealed in the Gospels
  - B. first made known to the Jews
  - C. revealed in the miracles of Jesus
  - D. first displayed on the day of Pentecost\_\_\_\_\_
  
- 10. The gospel operates on the principle of
  - A. faith from beginning to end
  - B. good works from first to last
  - C. faith at first and works at last
  - D. works at first but faith at last\_\_\_\_\_

**WHAT DO YOU SAY?**

Are you sure that you are righteous enough to go to heaven? Explain your answer.

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