

“INSIGHT INTO THE SCRIPTURES”
Discovery Series
By Don Krow

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS
CHAPTERS 1-8

Designed for
Verse by Verse
Biblical Study
Discussion Groups

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WHY IS THIS STUDY TOOL SO VALUABLE?

Recently I heard on a Christian radio station that a survey was given to people who believed that the Scriptures were God's infallible Word to man. They concluded that 65% of the people in the survey had never even read the entire New Testament, much less the entire Bible.

The Apostle Paul said to Timothy, *"Until I come, devote yourself to the **public reading of Scripture**, to preaching and to teaching. Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you. Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. **Watch your life and doctrine closely**. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers"* (1 Timothy 4:13-16, NIV).

The Greek word for "reading" in this passage is *anagnosis* and means reading, especially the public reading of Holy Scriptures. In 1 Timothy 4:13, it refers to the public reading of the Scriptures (including the letters of the apostles) appointed to be read in public in the New Testament worship service (Colossians 4:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:27). The readers in the church whose duty it was to read, expound or give application to the passage were called *anagnomstai*, the public readers.

*"The word for 'Scripture' in Greek is 'graphe.' In the New Testament this term is used exclusively of Scripture and is used in such a way that **quoting Scripture (or reading) is understood to be the same as quoting God** (See John 10:35; Romans 4:3; 9:17; Gal. 4:30)"* (Expository Dictionary of Bible Words, p.544).

"The Scriptures were formally constituted into a 'canon' (a rule of measure that established them as being the true Word of God). The reading of them was, along with prayer, the chief part of the service of worship from the time of Ezra onwards. Indeed, it seems that the reading out of the law (the Word of God) gave the motivation [and pattern] for the first meetings for worship (in the New Testament church), where the word of God was heard. The first Christians were Jews among Jews." (Dictionary of N.T. Theology, Vol.3. pgs. 485, 493).

It was always the **practice of God's people to have the Word of God read aloud** in the congregation. This is true whether it was the Old Testament or the New Testament (Ex. 24:7; Deut. 31:11; Josh. 8:35; 2 Kings 23:2; Neh. 8:7-8; Luke 4:16; Acts 15:21; Col. 4:16; 1 Thess. 5:27). In the book of Revelation it states, "Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy (usually in the New Testament the epistles were read aloud) and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it" (that is, the blessing comes to those who obey and apply its words) (Rev. 1:3). There was also a warning that what was read was not to be added to or taken away from (Rev. 22:18-19).

To illustrate the point I am trying to make, I wrote a fictitious letter to my friend Jeff and his family.

Dear Jeff and family,

I thank God that your faith is being spoken of everywhere. You are an inspiration to all that meet you. I long to see you and be encouraged by your faith. You are the object of God's love called to be His very own.

I remember you in my prayers often especially regarding the information we have received that in December the local shopping mall will not be safe to attend. Our reliable source tells us to beware of that place. Take heed and tell others.

I am confident that you are doing well at this time and prospering in all that you do. Greet your wife and family for me. I pray to see you and your family very soon.

**God bless you!
Don Krow**

Later, I heard that Jeff was in the hospital. He had lost a leg when an explosion went off at the local mall and a friend with him was killed.

When I visited Jeff at the hospital I inquired, "Didn't you get my letter, it contained a warning about the mall?" "Yes," he replied, "But I was too busy listening to my favorite TV preacher to read all of it. The TV preacher had also received the letter and he didn't say anything about a warning." As important as the apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher is (Eph. 4:11-12), to depend on them instead of the Scriptures for your guidance is like eating predigested food that has already been chewed and spit out for you to eat. There may be some nutrition in it but it could also contain some deadly germs (2 Peter 2:1-2). We need to learn to commit ourselves to the Scriptures **first**, they contain the more sure word of prophecy, even more dependable than an audible voice from heaven (2 Peter 1:17-19).

There is several ways that Jeff could have responded to my letter (just as there are several ways that we can respond to the Word of God). **1.** Jeff could have avoided reading it altogether and just relied on his favorite teacher, tapes, CD's and books to tell him what it says. In a sense these things have replaced the Word of God as the ultimate source in Jeff's life. (See Acts 17:11). **2.** Jeff could have read only the section or verses of my letter that he liked, not heeding to my entire letter, missing my warning altogether. **3.** Upon reading the whole letter, Jeff could have said, "Don did not mean December, he must have meant July because everyone shops in December for Christmas." This letter interferes with Jeff's doctrine so he is unable to receive the warning. He goes to the mall in December and encounters the explosion. Jeff changed the letter by bringing his own private interpretation to its meaning. His doctrine would not allow him to see the truth of the letter. **4.** Upon reading the whole letter, Jeff could have said, "Don could not have meant I can't go to the mall in December. It could not be about what I do whether I go to the mall or not. He is being legalistic, he is wrong." Jeff test the word. He goes to the mall December 7th and 10th and nothing happens. He

returns on December 15th and is met with an explosion. He friend dies and he is severely crippled. **5.** Jeff could read all of the letter, heed to what it says and prosper in his doing of the word (James 1:22; 2 Peter 1:4).

My suggestion is: Take the Scriptures as a whole, they were written as letters to be read as letters (Col.4:16; 1 Thess. 5:27; Rev. 1:3, 18-19). Take advantage of the last 100 years of scholarship by reading a whole letter from many translations. Remember that correct doctrine always leads to godliness (1 Tim. 6:3-4; Titus 1:1; 2:1). There is a tension in the Scripture that must not be disturbed. For example, no one is saved apart from the grace of God, without grace it leads to legalism, false grace leads to lasciviousness, and true grace teaches to deny ungodliness (Gal. 2:21; Jude 4, Titus 2:11-12). ***Without using all the Scriptures on a subject, we will be led to wrong conclusions, resulting in wrong doctrine.***

Without instructions, boundaries and warnings there is no protection from Satan's deception (Hebrews 3:13). If we were in a perfect world and didn't have what the Bible calls "the flesh" (drawn away by our own lust), then we would not need instructions, boundaries and warnings. But since we are in a fallen and imperfect world we must guard our hearts, and look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, so that we may lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us (Heb. 12:1-2; Rom. 8:13).

The goal of all Biblical study is a revelation of God the Father and His Son Jesus the Christ (Jn. 17:3; 5:39; Lk.24:27). The New Testament is a revelation of His Person. The New Testament reveals who He is and what He looks like. For example, Jesus is not a fornicator, adulterer, liar, thief, blasphemer, covetous person, etc. Instead of looking at the New Testament instruction as law to be obeyed, we must look at it as Christ to be expressed. To depend upon Christ to express Christ is the heart of New Testament teaching (Gal. 2:20; Rom.7:24-25; 8:2). The apostles revelation of Scripture led them to a life of faith, a life of dependence, that renounced one's own ability and turned to Christ and His ability. This is the life of grace, this is the life of faith.

May God's blessing be upon you as you seek not the black and white letter of His book, but His Spirit behind the letter of His book. The Word was God, and the Word is God, the revelation of His Person (Jn. 1:1).

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IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS FOR RIGHTLY DIVIDING GOD'S WORD OF TRUTH

1. Each book of the New Testament was given as a letter, to be read as a whole.
2. Consider each chapter & what it contains.
3. What is the unit of thought that each paragraph contains?
4. What is the unit of thought that each verse contains?
5. Consider the meaning of each individual word in its own context.

A. You must consider (first of all) that Romans was written as a letter (just as you would write a letter to your family or friends). You must consider it as a whole, as a unit, to be understood in its whole context of thought. There is 9,447 words that fit into a complete unit of context. The context is that which proceeds and/or follows any part of a discourse. The context often affects the meaning of a verse.

B. A few hundred years ago this letter was divided into chapters. Romans has sixteen chapters. I encourage you to back away and look at the unit of thought that each chapter contains. The New Living Translation, as well as many other translations further breaks these chapters down by supplying headings. Headings break the chapter into units of thought or subjects. For instance, the New Living Translation has the following headings in Romans chapter one: Greetings from Paul (verses 1-7), God's Good News (verses 8-17) and God's Anger at Sin (verses 18-32).

C. Within this last century the letter of Romans was also divided into paragraphs. Some translations divide the paragraphs differently. Before looking closely at each verse, consider the unit of thought that is found in each paragraph. The symbol ¶ shows you where each paragraph begins and ends.

D. Each individual word has a meaning within its own context. For example, the word "grace" may mean "the undeserved favor of God, the divine influence of God upon the heart, or the free liberality of giving, etc." The context (that which proceeds or follows any part of a discourse) determines which definition would be appropriate.

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USING VARIOUS TRANSLATIONS FOR BIBLE STUDY

Koine Greek is the Greek in which the New Testament was originally written. It was the everyday language of the common people. This has given great incentive to the fast-growing movement of translating the Bible into everyday speech and idioms. The word “translate” means “to express in another language, systematically retaining the original sense.” The primary reason for Bible translation is to help others understand the Word of God.

There are basically three different kinds of translations: (1) A “literal” translation, seeking a word-for-word rendering of the original text. (2) “Free” translating. This is the translators attempt to create the same sense or content of the original but not necessarily the same grammatical form. (3) A “paraphrase.” A paraphrase is restatement of a text giving the meaning in different words.

In the study of 2 Timothy I have consulted around twenty-five to thirty translations for each verse and then narrowed it to five to ten translations for your consideration of the meaning of each passage. A good translation should say the same thing only in different styles. If differences in translations are not just a matter of style, realize that the meaning of the verse is difficult and that two or more meanings of words or phrases may be possible in Greek. In this study you are drawing on perhaps as many as six hundred and fifty-seven of the best scholars of the past one hundred years. Why should we get off track by going to a lot of different commentaries when we can take advantage of hundreds of the most gifted scholars of the past one hundred years communicating the same message in different words?

Although I personally adhere to the Western Text family of the Greek manuscripts, which is the foundation for the King James Version, Tyndale’s Bible, Martin Luther’s Bible, New King James Version, Young’s Literal Translation, etc., why not use a full set of tools for our Biblical studies? A Greek word may require several or even several dozen English words to render it adequately. The Greek scholar A.T. Robertson points out one reason for this: *“Language was originally pictographic... Words have never gotten wholly away from the picture stage... There is no single Greek word that has an EXACT equivalent in a single English word”* [A Beginner’s Reader-Grammar for N.T. Greek].

No translation can ever hope to reproduce completely all the shades of meaning found in the Greek New Testament. As Kenneth Wuest points out: *“In a translation which keeps to a minimum of words, that is, where one English word for instance is the translation of one Greek word, it is impossible for the translator to bring out all the shades of meaning in the Greek word”* [Untranslatable Riches from the Greek N.T.].

This is why I have sought in the letter of Romans to use the various translations and paraphrases to help build and see a complete picture of that which the Apostle Paul was trying to portray in his letter. The primary reason for a translation in the first place is to help readers understand God’s Word. I have used the Authorized King James

Version as a foundational translation while using the various translations and paraphrases as a kind of commentary on the passage. By reading various translations I believe a person will acquire a fuller understanding of the thought and content of the original Greek. **Why not take advantage of hundreds of the most gifted scholars of the past one hundred years communicating the same message in different words? Remember, good translations should say the same thing only in different styles.** *Don W. Krow*

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CREATING A GROUP DISCUSSION

After you have read these instructions, continue to the next page where you will find instructions for reading the entire book and each chapter.

As you continue to proceed you will come to a section where you will find verses from several translations. In your group read aloud all the translations as you would a paragraph. Read also the “additional information” provided. The “additional information” is not meant to be an interpretation of the scripture, but rather to help you understand more clearly the meaning of words or phrases that you may be unfamiliar with. Remember when reading the verses to consider the context. The context is that which proceeds and/or follows any part of a discourse. The context often affects the meaning of a verse. As a group discuss the insights you see from the verses.

After you have read and discussed an entire chapter, which may require several separate sessions, the leader of your group should go to the section that is called “Questions and Answers.” The leader should read the questions to the group and ask them to answer each question according to that which is stated in the Scriptures. This should reinforce what you have already seen and discussed in your group discussions.

This biblical discussion program is designed to make the scriptures themselves the final authority of one’s life. God bless you as you seek Him in the pages of the scripture. *Don Krow*

THE LETTER OF ROMANS

Introduction to the Book

AUTHOR AND DATE: Written by Paul in A.D. 57-58 on Paul’s 3rd missionary journey, from Corinth (Rom. 16:23; 1 Cor. 1:14). At the time of writing Paul had never been to Rome. He reached Rome three years after he wrote this letter.

POSTMASTER: Phoebe, she lived in a suburb of Corinth and was going to Rome (Rom. 16:1-2).

RECIPIENTS OF LETTER: A mixed congregation of Jews and Gentiles. The church was probably formed as a result of the feast of Pentecost (Acts 2:10). Twenty-eight years has past since the forming of this church, it is now a large congregation with many of Paul’s own friends and converts who had migrated there (Rom. 16).

PAUL'S MARTYRDOM: History says that Paul's martyrdom took place in Rome (by beheading) about eight years after this letter was written.

A QUICK LOOK AT ROMANS 1-8: Doubtless Paul's Letter to the Romans is the most widely read book of the New Testament, except for the Gospels themselves. In fact, if the apostle Paul had written nothing else, he would still be recognized as one of the outstanding Christian thinkers of all time on the basis of this letter alone. What gives Romans this appeal? Why is it so highly valued?

Above all else, the appeal of Romans is its theology, especially its statement of "how God puts men right with himself...through faith, from beginning to end" (Rom. 1:17). This is the heart of the letter, its very essence, and it forms the basis for all else that Paul says throughout the letter. Paul states this thesis in Romans 1:17, and then develops his argument to show how all people, Jews and Gentiles alike, stand in need of being put right with God.

Paul first underscores the sinful condition of the non-Jewish world (Rom. 1:18-32). He points out how its rebellion against God's revelation of himself in nature and in the human conscience has led to terrible distortions of the natural order and to the worship of "what God has created instead of the Creator himself" (Rom. 1:25). The result of this is the revelation of God's wrath against "all the sin and evil of men whose evil ways prevent the truth from being known" (Rom. 1:18).

The first part of the second chapter (Rom. 2:1-16) speaks to both Jews and Gentiles. Paul has already demonstrated how the pagan corruption of life has brought down God's wrath. Now in these verses he indicates that Jews and Gentiles alike, whether or not they have committed these moral abuses, stand guilty before God's judgment: the self-righteous man, whether Jew or Gentile, will receive the same condemnation as the pagans described in Romans 1:18-32.

In Romans 2:17-3:20 Paul addresses himself directly to the Jews, indicating that the possession of the Law is of no advantage to them, unless they obey it. Theoretically, they should have had an advantage over the Gentiles, because "God trusted his message to the Jews" (Rom. 3:2); but the Jews' unfaithfulness made void any advantage that they may have had. So then, the only valid conclusion is that the Jews are in no better condition than the Gentiles: "Jews and Gentiles alike are all under the power of sin" (Rom. 3:9).

Having shown how all men stand in need of fellowship with God, in Romans 3:21-4:25 Paul turns again to the subject of how God puts sinful men right with himself. It is through faith, and "has nothing to do with law" (Rom. 3:21), as the example of Abraham indicates (Rom. 4:1-25).

Chapters 5-8, though introducing a new section in the letter, are also primarily theological. Each of these chapters emphasizes from different perspectives what it means to be put right with God. In Romans 5:1-11 Paul shows how all the graces of the Christian life grow out of a right relation with God, while in the last half of the chapter (Rom. 5:12-21) he contrasts the old humanity with the new humanity and the way of death with the way of life.

There is a parallelism between chapters 6 and 7: Romans 6 affirms that sin no longer has power over the believer, and chapter 7 illustrates how the Christian is set free from the power of the Law. Chapter 8 serves as the climax to all that Paul has said

in chapters 5-7: it is God's Spirit who enables the believer to conquer the power of sin (Rom. 8:1-17) and to have hope in the glorious future that awaits God's people (Rom. 8:18-30). This chapter concludes with an expression of thanksgiving for God's love in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:31-39).

Although Romans is primarily theological, it is also practical in that it shows that there is a relation between Christian theology and Christian living (Helps for Translators, Barclay M. Newman & Eugene A. Nida, pgs. 1-2).

GENERAL INFORMATION: Romans is the forty-fifth book of the Bible. It contains sixteen chapters, four hundred and thirty-three verses, and nine thousand four hundred forty-seven words.

ROMANS CHAPTERS 1-8

As a Student, Read Romans 1-8 several times before you come together as a group. Read each chapter in various translations (if possible). What were the thoughts and ideas that the writer or apostle was trying to express? Take a notebook and summarize your thoughts of the book. What is the book saying as a whole? Share these thoughts with your group.

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ROMANS CHAPTER 1

In Your Group Read Romans chapter one (aloud) in a modern translation or read it in the King James Version (below). As a Group, Discuss the general content of the chapter.

THE LETTER OF ROMANS CHAPTER 1 King James Version

ROMANS 1: [1] Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, [2] (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) [3] Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; [4] And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: [5] By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name: [6] Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ: [7] 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. [8] ¶ First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. [9] 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; [10] Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you. [11] For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; [12] That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me. [13] 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. [14] I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. [15] So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. [16] ¶ 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. [17] For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, **THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH (Habakkuk 2:4).** [18] For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; [19] ¶ Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shown it unto them. [20] For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: [21] Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. [22] Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, [23] And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. [24] Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: [25] Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. [26] For this cause God gave them up unto vile

affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: [27] And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. [28] And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; [29] Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, [30] Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, [31] Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: [32] Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE GROUP: Read and Discuss each verse and translation along with the “Additional Information” in each box provided.

**ROMANS CHAPTER 1
VERSES 1-4**

Romans 1: [1] Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, [2] (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) [3] Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; [4] And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: (King James Version)

¹This letter is from Paul, Jesus Christ’s slave, chosen by God to be an apostle and sent out to preach his Good News. ²This Good News was promised long ago by God through his prophets in the holy Scriptures. ³It is the Good News about his Son, Jesus, who came as a man, born into King David’s royal family line. ⁴And Jesus Christ our Lord was shown to be the Son of God when God powerfully raised him from the dead by means of the Holy Spirit. **(New Living Translation)**

I, Paul, am a devoted slave of Jesus Christ on assignment, authorized as an apostle to proclaim God’s words and acts. I write this letter to all the Christians in Rome, God’s friends. The sacred writings contain preliminary reports by the prophets on God’s Son. His descent from David roots him in history; his unique identity as Son of God was shown by the Spirit when Jesus was raised from the dead, setting him apart as the Messiah, our Master. (verses 1-4) **(The Message)**

[1] This letter is from Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, who called me to serve as an apostle. And I’m writing to all of you living in Rome whom God loves and has called to be His people. God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ send you their love which no one deserves, and their peace. I have been chosen to spread God’s Good News, **[2]** which tells about things God promised a long time ago, when He spoke through His

prophets in the holy Bible. **[3]** This Good News is about His Son, Jesus our Lord, who came into the world as a member of David's family, if we're talking about His human body. **[4]** But if we're talking about His pure and sinless spirit, He was shown to be God's Son in a powerful way when He came back to life again after He died. **(New Testament in Everyday American English)**

[1] From Paul, a bond servant of Jesus Christ (the Messiah) called to be an apostle, (a special messenger) set apart to [preach] the Gospel (good news) of *and* from God, **[2]** Which He promised in advance [long ago] through His prophets in the sacred Scriptures – **[3]** [The Gospel] regarding His Son, Who as to the flesh (His human nature) was descended from David, **[4]** And [as to His divine nature] according to the Spirit of holiness was openly designated the Son of God in power [in a striking, triumphant and miraculous manner] by His resurrection from the dead, even Jesus Christ our Lord (the Messiah, the Anointed One). **(Amplified New Testament)**

Additional Information: The Roman church had no New Testament because the Gospels were not yet being circulated in their final written form. Thus this letter may well have been the first piece of Christian literature the Roman believers had seen. Written to both Jewish and Gentile Christians, the letter to the Romans is a systematic presentation of the Christian faith (Life Application Bible, p. 2025).

(Verse 1) – “Paul.” When Paul, a devout Jew who had at first persecuted the Christians, became a believer, God used him to spread the gospel throughout the world. Although it was as a prisoner, Paul did eventually preach in Rome (Acts 28), perhaps even to Caesar himself (Ibid., p. 2025).

“Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ.” For a Roman citizen – which Paul was – to choose to be a servant was unthinkable. But Paul chose to be completely dependent on and obedient to his beloved Master (Ibid., p. 2025). Paul and other Christians called themselves servants or slaves (Greek *doulos*) of Jesus Christ. By using this term, Christians testify that Jesus is the Lord of their lives. He is the Master, and His followers do His will (Matt. 7:21) (Disciple's Study Bible, p. 1416).

“Called to be an apostle.” Paul's apostleship was often challenged by his opponents because he was not one of the original twelve apostles. He asserted, nevertheless, that he, too, had been called an apostle by the risen Christ, who commissioned him to preach to the Gentiles (Rom. 11:13; Gal. 1:16; 2:8). He considered this to be a grace given to him (Eph. 3:7) that was not based on his personal merit. He was a witness of the resurrection of Christ and had received his gospel directly from Him (Gal. 1:11-12). He performed the signs of an apostle (2 Cor. 12:12). The churches he founded were a seal of his apostleship (1 Cor. 9:2). Paul did not hand his apostleship down to one of his younger preachers. It was a unique office for eyewitnesses of Christ (Ibid., p. 1416). Although Paul is not one of the twelve, he considers his apostleship as equal with theirs (See 1 Cor. 9:1-2) (Help for Translators, Newman & Nida, p. 6).

(Verse 2) – “Which He (God) had promised before.” The gospel was announced in promise form in the biblically recorded preaching of the prophets, from which the apostolic presentation of the gospel is drawn (See Rom. 16:25-27) (New Geneva Study Bible, p. 1766).

“The Holy Scriptures” is a reference to the Old Testament. Some of the prophecies predicting the Good News regarding Jesus Christ are Genesis 12:3; Psalms 16:10; 40:6-10; 118:22; Zechariah 9:9-10; 12:10; Malachi 4:1-6 (Life Application Bible, p. 2025).

(Verse 3) – “Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord” expresses the subject of the gospel. The gospel is not about Jesus Christ, the gospel is Jesus Christ (Liberty Bible Commentary, Vol. 2, p. 339). The phrase **“our Lord”** may be expressed as “the one who rules us” (Helps for Translators, p. 9).

“Which was made of the seed of David.” The Old Testament had prophesied that Messiah would be in the lineage of David (2 Sam. 7:12-13; Ps. 89:3-4, 24; Isa. 11:1-5; Jer. 23:5-6). Both Mary, Jesus' mother, and Joseph, his legal father (Matt. 1:6, 16; Luke 1:27; Luke 3:23, 31), were descendants of David (MacArthur Bible Commentary, p. 1502).

ROMANS CHAPTER 1
VERSES 5-6

Romans 1: [5] By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name: [6] Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ: (King James Version)

[5] Through him and for his name's sake, we received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith. **[6]** And you also are among those who are called to belong to Jesus Christ. **(New International Version)**

⁵ Through Christ, God gave me the special work of an apostle, which was to lead people of all nations to believe and obey. I do this work for him. ⁶ And you who are in Rome are also called to belong to Jesus Christ. **(New Century Version)**

[5] *And now*, through Christ I have received the gracious privilege of *being* an apostle, in order to lead people of every nation to obedient faith *in Him*, for *the glory of His name*. **[6]** And you too are among those called *by God* to belong to Jesus Christ. **(The New Translation)**

[5] Through Christ, God gave me the special work of an apostle. God gave me this work to lead people of all nations to believe and obey God. And I do this work for Christ. **[6]** And you people in Rome were also called to belong to Jesus Christ. **(The Easy-to-Read New Testament)**

Additional Information: (Verse 5) - "Obedience to the faith." Note that Paul, both at the beginning of the epistle to the Romans and at the end (Rom. 1:5; 16:26; also 1 Pet. 1:2), connects faith with obedience.

ROMANS CHAPTER 1
VERSE 7

Romans 1: [7] 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. (King James Version)

[7] I send greetings to all of you in Rome whom God loves and has called to be his dedicated people. Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. **(New English Bible)**

[7] *This letter is written* to all of God's loved ones in Rome, called *to be* His holy people. May wonderful, undeserved favor and peace be yours from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. **(The New Translation)**

[7] So I write to all of you in the city of Rome. God loves you and has chosen you to be set apart for Himself. May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you His loving-favor and peace. **(The New Life Testament)**

[7] To [you then] all God's beloved ones in Rome, called to be saints *and* designated for a consecrated life: Grace *and* spiritual blessing and peace be yours from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. **(Amplified New Testament)**

ROMANS CHAPTER 1

VERSE 8

Romans 1: [8] ¶ First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. (King James Version)

[8] First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you because the news of your faith is spreading all over the world. **(God's Word to the Nations)**

[8] First of all, I keep thanking my God, through Jesus Christ, for all of you. This is because the whole world knows of your faith in Christ. **(The New Life Testament)**

Additional Information: The testimony of the church in Rome was so strong that, in A.D. 49, the emperor Claudius expelled all the Jews because of the influence of "Chrestus," which was undoubtedly a reference to Christ (See Acts 18:2) (MacArthur Bible Commentary, p. 1502).

ROMANS CHAPTER 1

VERSES 9-10

Romans 1: [9] 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; [10] Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you. (King James Version)

[9] God, whom I serve with my whole heart in preaching the gospel of his Son, is my witness how constantly I remember you **[10]** in my prayers at all times; and I pray that now at last by God's will the way may be opened for me to come to you. **(New International Version)**

⁹God knows how often I pray for you. Day and night I bring you and your needs in prayer to the one I serve with all my might, telling others the Good News about his Son. ¹⁰And one of the things I keep on praying for is the opportunity, God willing, to come at last to see you and, if possible, that I will have a safe trip. **(The Living Bible)**

⁹⁻¹⁰Every time I pray I always remember you. God knows this is true. God is the One I worship (serve) in my spirit by telling people the Good News about his Son. I pray that I will be allowed to come to you. It will happen if God wants it. **(The Easy-to-Read New Testament)**

[9] And God, whom I serve with everything that's in me by preaching the Great News about His Son, is my witness that I continually talk to Him about you in my prayers, **[10]** always pleading that somehow He will finally clear the way for me to visit you, if He is willing. **(The Last Days Bible)**

Additional Information: (Verse 9) – "Whom I serve with my spirit." In the New Testament, this Greek word for "serve" always refers to religious service, and is sometimes translated "worship" (MacArthur Bible Commentary, p. 1504). In the present context "spirit" refers to Paul's inner being (one might say to his total being), and for this reason the NIV translates "with my whole heart." In some languages the equivalent would be "completely," "without in any way holding back," or "with all of myself" (Helps for Translators, p. 15).

"I make mention of you always in my prayers." Paul's prayer life is intertwined with his life of service (Liberty Bible Commentary, p. 340). Virtually all Paul's recorded prayers are for the purpose of

advancing God's work and kingdom. Even his petition to go to Rome, personal as it seems, had spiritual purposes in view (Disciple's Study Bible, p. 1416).

(Verse 10) – “**A prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you.**” On the basis of Romans 15:22-29 it is obvious that Paul plans to stop in Rome on his way to Spain; he does not plan to stay permanently in Rome, perhaps only a few weeks or months (Helps for Translators, p. 16). When he finally arrived in Rome, it was as a prisoner (See Acts 28:16).

ROMANS CHAPTER 1 VERSES 11-12

Romans 1: [11] For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; [12] That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me. (King James Version)

¹¹ For I long to visit you so I can share a spiritual blessing with you that will help you grow strong in the Lord. ¹² I'm eager to encourage you in your faith, but I also want to be encouraged by yours. In this way, each of us will be a blessing to the other. **(New Living Translation)**

¹¹ I want very much to see you, to give you some spiritual gift to make you strong. ¹² I mean that I want us to help each other with the faith we have. Your faith will help me, and my faith will help you. **(New Century Version)**

I so want to be there to deliver God's gift in person and watch you grow stronger right before my eyes! But don't think I'm not expecting to get something out of this, too! You have as much to give me as I do to you. (verses 11-12) **(The Message)**

[11] I want to see you so I can share some special gift of the Holy Spirit with you. It will make you strong. **[12]** Both of us need help. I can help make your faith strong and you can do the same for me. We need each other. **(The New Life Testament)**

[11] I want so very much to see you, in order to share with you some spiritual gift that will help you to become even more firmly grounded in the faith. **[12]** That is, that thru each other's faith and faithfulness – both yours and mine – we can encourage each other as we spend time together. **(The Last Days Bible)**

Additional Information: (Verse 11) – “Spiritual gift.” Paul longed to visit the Roman church not simply for social reasons, but to impart some spiritual gift to them in order to strengthen them. “Gift” (Greek *charisma*) is the same word used in Romans 12:6 and in 1 Cor. 12. Paul here adds the adjective “spiritual” (Greek *pneumatikos*), emphasizing that it is from the Holy Spirit, even though Paul's ministry may be the means the Holy Spirit uses to impart a gift to them (Spirit Filled Life Bible, p. 1687).

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ROMANS CHAPTER 1
VERSES 13-15

Romans 1: [13] 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. [14] I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. [15] So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. (King James Version)

¹³I want you to know, dear brothers and sisters, that I planned many times to visit you, but I was prevented until now. I want to work among you and see good results, just as I have done among other Gentiles. ¹⁴For I have a great sense of obligation to people in our culture and to people in other cultures, to the educated and uneducated alike. ¹⁵So I am eager to come to you in Rome, too, to preach God's Good News. **(New Living Translation)**

[13] I want you to know, brethren, that many times I have planned and intended to come to you, though thus far I have been hindered and prevented, in order that I might have some fruit (some result of my labors) among you, as I have among the rest of the Gentiles. **[14]** Both to Greeks and to barbarians (to the cultured and to the uncultured), both to the wise and the foolish, I have an obligation to discharge *and* a duty to perform *and* a debt to pay. **[15]** So, for my part, I am willing *and* eagerly ready to preach the Gospel to you also who are in Rome. **(Amplified New Testament)**

Additional Information: (Verse 13) – “That I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.” By the end of his third missionary journey, Paul had traveled through Syria, Galatia, Asia, Macedonia, and Achaia. The churches in these areas were made up mostly of Gentile believers (Life Application Bible, p. 2026).

(Verse 14) – “I am debtor.” As a result of his “apostleship” (Rom. 1:5) to the Gentiles, Paul felt obligated (lit. “I am a debtor”) to the entire human race to proclaim God’s good news (Rom. 1:14-15). Paul’s sense of debt to the Gentile world produced an eagerness (Rom. 1:15) to evangelize it, including Rome, capital of the empire (The Bible Knowledge Commentary, p.441).

“To preach the gospel to you that are at Rome.” See Acts 19:21; 23:11.

ROMANS CHAPTER 1
VERSES 16-17

Romans 1: [16] ¶ 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. [17] For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH (HABAKKUK 2:4). (King James Version)

¹⁶For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes—Jews first and also Gentiles. ¹⁷This Good News tells us how God makes us right in his sight. This is accomplished from start to finish by

faith. As the Scriptures say, “It is through faith that a righteous person has life.” (**New Living Translation**)

¹⁶ I am proud of the Good News, because it is the power God uses to save everyone who believes—to save the Jews first, and also to save those who are not Jews. ¹⁷ The Good News shows how God makes people right with himself—that it begins and ends with faith. As the Scripture says, “But those who are right with God will live by trusting in him. (**New Century Version**)

[16] I am not ashamed of the Good News. It is the power of God. It is the way He saves men from the punishment of their sins if they put their trust in Him. It is for the Jew first and for all other people also. **[17]** The Good News tells us we are made right with God by faith in Him. Then, by faith we live that new life through Him. The Holy Writings say, “A man right with God lives by faith.” (Habakkuk 2:4) (**The New Life Testament**)

Additional Information: (Verse 16) – “I am not ashamed of the gospel (the good news) of Christ.” Paul had been imprisoned in Philippi ((Acts 16:23-24), chased out of Thessalonica (Acts 17:10), smuggled out of Berea (Acts 17:14), laughed at in Athens (Acts 17:32), regarded as a fool in Corinth (1 Cor. 1:18, 23), and stoned in Galatia (Acts 14:19), but he remained eager to preach the gospel in Rome – the seat of contemporary political power and pagan religion (MacArthur Bible Commentary, p. 1505).

“It is the POWER of God unto salvation.” The English word *dynamite* comes from this Greek word. Only God’s power is able to overcome man’s sinful nature and give him new life (1 Cor. 1:18, 23-25; 2:4-5; 4:20) (Ibid., p. 1505). This **“salvation”** denotes a right relationship with God. God forgives the repentant sinner, whom He had pronounced guilty through the law and condemned to eternal death, restores him to divine favor, and sets him in a right relationship (fellowship) with Himself and His will (The Full Life Study Bible, p. 315).

“To every one that believeth.” “Believeth,” when used of salvation, is usually in the present tense which stresses that faith is not simply a one-time event, but an ongoing condition (Ibid., p. 1505). The Greek word *pisteuo* (believe) is a profound word. It means trust or personal commitment, to the extent of handing over one’s self to another person (See Acts 16:31 in the Amplified Bible) (Wycliffe Bible Commentary, p. 501).

“To the Jew first.” While this was true in terms of the history of redemption (Rom. 2:9-10; John 4:22), it was also the pattern of Paul’s missionary outreach. Hence, in visiting the cities of the Roman world he began by expounding Scripture in the synagogues where possible, and he preached Christ as the fulfillment of the Old Testament Messiah (Acts 9:20; 17:1-3; 18:5, 28; 19:8) (New Geneva Study Bible, p. 1767).

(Verse 17) – “The righteousness of God.” The subjective genitive (lit., “of God”) identifies this as a righteousness that God provides for people on the basis of and in response to faith in Christ. In response to faith this righteousness is imputed by God in justification and imparted progressively in regeneration and sanctification, culminating in glorification when standing and state become identical (The Bible Knowledge Commentary, p. 441).

“From faith to faith.” Righteousness is received by faith in Christ Jesus and is in turn revealed in faithful living. Thus, in answer to the question, “How are the righteous to live?” Paul quotes Habakkuk 2:4, “The just shall live by faith.” This faith implies more than mere acceptance of Christ’s righteousness for salvation. It implies a life style that is characterized by faith (Liberty Bible Commentary, Vol. 2, p. 342).

“The just shall live by faith.” Paul is quoting Habakkuk 2:4. Habakkuk may have understood “shall live” to mean this present life only. But Paul extends this statement to include eternal life. As we trust God, we are saved; we find life both now and forever (Life Application Bible, p. 2027). This expression emphasizes that true faith is not a single event, but a way of life (Ibid., p. 1506). The gospel declares that God puts persons right with Him through faith in Christ. The gift of righteousness is at the same time a call to be righteous, not by rigidly following a legalistic list of rules and traditions, but by letting trust in God control every action of life (Disciple’s Study Bible, p. 1417). From first to last, godly living means trusting in God and depending on His grace (New Geneva Study Bible, p. 1767).

ROMANS CHAPTER 1
VERSE 18

Romans 1: [18] For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; (King James Version)

¹⁸ But God shows his anger from heaven against all sinful, wicked people who push the truth away from themselves. **(New Living Translation)**

¹⁸ God's anger is shown from heaven against all the evil and wrong things people do. By their own evil lives they hide the truth. **(New Century Version)**

¹⁸ From heaven God shows how angry he is with all the wicked and evil things that sinful people do to crush the truth. **(Contemporary English Version)**

[18] God's wrath is revealed coming down from heaven upon all the sin and evil of men whose evil ways prevent the truth from being known. **(Today's English Version)**

[18] For we see divine retribution revealed from heaven and falling upon all the godless wickedness of men. In their wickedness they are stifling the truth. **(New English Bible)**

[18] But God's anger is revealed from heaven against all the insolence and wickedness of those who, by their evil ways, stifle the truth *about God*. **(The New Translation)**

Additional Information: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven." The first step in the revelation of the righteousness that God provides for people by faith is to set forth their need for it because they are under God's judgment (Jn. 3:36) (The Bible Knowledge Commentary, p. 441). The righteousness and wrath of God both express divine action toward man. Righteousness is God's response toward faith or trust; wrath is his reaction to godlessness and unrighteousness (Wycliffe Bible Commentary, p. 502). The most graphic revelation of God's holy wrath and hatred against sin was when He poured out divine judgment on His Son on the Cross (MacArthur Bible Commentary, p. 1506).

The wrath (Gk. *orge*) of God is an expression of His righteousness. It is God's reaction to all sin (Ezek. 7:8-9; Eph. 5:6), provoked by the wicked behavior of individuals (Gen. 18:25; Psa. 7:11; 68:2) and nations (Isa. 10:5; Jer. 50:13; Ezek. 30:15) and by the apostasy and unfaithfulness of His people (Num. 25:3; 32:10-13; Deut. 29:24-28). In the future the wrath of God will include a coming day of judgment for all people and nations (Acts 24:24-25; Matt. 25:31-46). Ultimately it involves eternal punishment for the unrepentant (Luke 13:3, 5). God's wrath is not His final word to humans, for He has provided a way of escape or salvation from His wrath (Rom. 5:9; 1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9). A person may repent of sin and turn in faith to Jesus Christ (Acts 20:21; 13:38-39).

ROMANS CHAPTER 1
VERSES 19-20

Romans 1: [19] ¶ Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shown it unto them. [20] For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are

made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: (King James Version)

¹⁹For the truth about God is known to them instinctively. God has put this knowledge in their hearts. ²⁰From the time the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky and all that God made. They can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse whatsoever for not knowing God.

(New Living Translation)

¹⁹For the truth about God is known to them instinctively; God has put this knowledge in their hearts. ²⁰Since earliest times men have seen the earth and sky and all God made, and have known of his existence and great eternal power. So they will have no excuse when they stand before God at Judgment Day. **(The Living Bible)**

Additional Information: God holds all people responsible for their refusal to acknowledge what He has shown them of Himself in His creation. Even those who have never had an opportunity to hear the gospel have received a clear witness about the existence and character of God – and have suppressed it (MacArthur Bible Commentary, p. 1506). Does anyone have an excuse for not believing in God? The Bible answers an emphatic *no*. God has revealed what he is like in and through his creation. Every person, therefore, either accepts or rejects God. Don't be fooled. When the day comes for God to judge your response to him, no excuses will be accepted (Life Application Bible, p. 2028).

ROMANS CHAPTER 1 VERSES 21-23

Romans 1: [21] Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. [22] Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, [23] And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. (King James Version)

²¹Yes, they knew about him all right, but they wouldn't admit it or worship him or even thank him for all his daily care. And after a while they began to think up silly ideas of what God was like and what he wanted them to do. The result was that their foolish minds became dark and confused. ²²Claiming themselves to be wise without God, they became utter fools instead. ²³And then, instead of worshiping the glorious, ever-living God, they took wood and stone and made idols for themselves, carving them to look like mere birds and animals and snakes and puny men. **(The Living Bible)**

[21] Since they knew God but did not honor Him as God, nor did they thank Him. Instead, their thoughts became total nonsense, and their ignorant hearts were darkened. **[22]** While claiming to be wise, they became fools; **[23]** they exchanged *the glory* of the immortal God *for the likeness of an image* of mortals, and of birds, and of four-footed animals, and of crawling creatures. **(God's Word to the Nations)**

[21] But even though they knew about God, they didn't honor and glorify Him as God, nor were they thankful. But they became foolish in their speculations. Then their irresponsible hearts and minds became darkened. **[22]** Even though they claimed to be wise, they became utter fools instead. **[23]** Instead of worshiping, obeying, and

rejoicing in our glorious and ever-living God, they carved images made to look like mortal man, birds, animals, and crawling creatures, and worshiped them. **(The Last Days Bible)**

Additional Information: (Verse 23) – How could intelligent people turn to idolatry? Idolatry begins when people reject what they know about God. Instead of looking to him as the Creator and sustainer of life, they see themselves as the center of the universe. They soon invent “gods” that are convenient projections of their own selfish plans and decrees. These gods may be wooden figures, but they may also be goals or things we pursue such as money, power, or comfort. They may even be misrepresentations of God himself – making God in our image, instead of the reverse. The common denominator is this – idolaters worship the things God made rather than God himself. Who or what do you worship? (Life Application Bible, p. 2028).

ROMANS CHAPTER 1 VERSES 24-25

Romans 1: [24] Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: [25] Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. (King James Version)

²⁴ So God let them go ahead and do whatever shameful things their hearts desired. As a result, they did vile and degrading things with each other's bodies. ²⁵ Instead of believing what they knew was the truth about God, they deliberately chose to believe lies. So they worshiped the things God made but not the Creator himself, who is to be praised forever. Amen. **(New Living Translation)**

²⁴ So God let these people go their own way. They did what they wanted to do, and their filthy thoughts made them do shameful things with their bodies. ²⁵ They gave up the truth about God for a lie, and they worshiped God's creation instead of God, who will be praised forever. Amen. **(Contemporary English Version)**

So God said, in effect, “If that's what you want, that's what you get.” It wasn't long before they were living in a pigpen, smeared with filth, filthy inside and out. And all this because they traded the true God for a fake god, and worshiped the god they made instead of the God who made them – the God we bless, the God who blesses *us*. Oh, yes! (verses 24-25) **(The Message)**

[24] And so, as they followed the lusts of their hearts, God handed them over to live immorally by dishonoring their bodies with one another. **[25]** He did this because they traded the truth of God for a lie, that is, they worshiped and served what was created instead of the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen! **(God's Word to the Nations)**

[24] So, because of their inflexible determination to do only what they themselves wanted to do, God stopped holding them back and abandoned them to the filthy desires of their hearts, allowing them to dishonor and shamefully degrade their bodies among themselves. **[25]** So they threw overboard the truth about God in exchange for the lie,

and worshiped and served created things instead of the Creator, who is to be praised forever! And may He indeed ever be praised. **(The Last Days Bible)**

Additional Information: (Verse 24) – “Wherefore God also gave them up to...” This is a judicial term in Greek, used for handing over a prisoner to his sentence. When people consistently abandon God, He will abandon them (MacArthur Bible Commentary, p. 1508). (See 2 Chronicles 15:2; 24:20; Psa. 81:11-16; Hosea 4:17; Matt. 15:14; Acts 7:38-42; 2 Tim. 2:12; Heb. 6:4-6; 2 Pet. 2:20-22). Romans 1:24, 26, 28 all repeat the same solemn phrase: **God handed them over unto**. The Lord hands men over to the consequences of that which they have chosen for themselves. Idolatry consists in worshiping and serving the creature (Rom. 1:25); in sensuality man worships and serves himself (Wycliffe Bible Commentary. P. 504). Mankind made himself his god in place of the true God.

(Verse 25) – “Who changed the truth of God into a lie.” People tend to believe lies that reinforce their own selfish, personal beliefs. Much of TV, music, movies, etc. constantly oppose the truths of the Bible. Scripture is the only standard of truth. Evaluate all opinions in light of its teachings.

ROMANS CHAPTER 1 VERSES 26-27

Romans 1: [26] For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: [27] And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. (King James Version)

²⁶ Because people did those things, God left them and let them do the shameful things they wanted to do. Women stopped having natural sex and started having sex with other women. ²⁷ In the same way, men stopped having natural sex and began wanting each other. Men did shameful things with other men, and in their bodies they received the punishment for those wrongs. **(New Century Version)**

Worse followed. Refusing to know God, they soon didn't know how to be human either – women didn't know how to be women, men didn't know how to be men. Sexually confused, they abused and defiled one another, women with women, men with men – all lust, no love. And then they paid for it, oh, how they paid for it – emptied of God and love, godless and loveless wretches. (verses 26-27) **(The Message)**

God therefore handed them over to disgraceful passions. Their women exchanged the normal practices of sexual intercourse for something which is abnormal and unnatural. Similarly the men, turning from natural intercourse with women, were swept into lustful passions for one another. Men with men performed these shameful horrors, receiving in their own personalities the consequences of their perversity (verses 26-27) **(Phillips Translation)**

Additional Information: The effect of perverting the instinct to worship the true and living God is the perversion of other instincts from their proper functions (New Geneva Study Bible, p. 1768). Sexual perversion always accompanies idolatry (Liberty Bible Commentary, p. 345). The phrase “vile affection” (v. 26) is identified in verses 26-27 as homosexuality, a sin condemned in Scripture (Gen. 19; Lev. 18:22; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:3-5; 1 Tim. 1:9-10; Jude 7) (MacArthur Bible Commentary, p. 1508). The New Testament offers forgiveness and a new life orientation to homosexuals (1 Cor. 6:11) as well as to other sinners (Disciple's Study Bible, p. 1418).

ROMANS CHAPTER 1
VERSES 28-31

Romans 1: [28] And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; [29] Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, [30] Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, [31] Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: (King James Version)

²⁸So it was that when they gave God up and would not even acknowledge him, God gave them up to doing everything their evil minds could think of. ²⁹Their lives became full of every kind of wickedness and sin, of greed and hate, envy, murder, fighting, lying, bitterness, and gossip. ³⁰They were backbiters, haters of God, insolent, proud, braggarts, always thinking of new ways of sinning and continually being disobedient to their parents. ³¹They tried to misunderstand, broke their promises, and were heartless—without pity. **(The Living Bible)**

[28] And because they didn't want to continue knowing what they so definitely knew about God, God gave them over to a morally corrupt mind. The result was that they continued indulging in those acts that should never be indulged in. **[29]** Their lives have become glutted with all kinds of wicked thoughts and actions – sexual immorality, desire for what belongs to others, envy, desire to harm others, quarrels and fights, even murder, lies, and malicious hatred. **[30]** They gossip and speak evil of one another. They hate God. They are violent, proud, arrogant, and boastful. And they're always thinking up new ways of sinning, and added to that, they're disobedient to their parents. **[31]** They have no conscience, so they can't be trusted. They don't even love their own family members. They are unforgiving and unmerciful. **(The Last Days Bible)**

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ROMANS CHAPTER 1
VERSE 32

Romans 1: [32] Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them. (King James Version)

[32] And although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them. **(New American Standard Bible)**

[32] Who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them. **(New King James Version)**

³²They were fully aware of God's death penalty for these crimes, yet they went right ahead and did them anyway and encouraged others to do them, too. **(The Living Bible)**

[32] They know what God's verdict is: that those who behave like this deserve to die – and yet they do it; and what is worse, encourage others to do the same. **(Jerusalem Bible)**

[32] Though they know God's decree that people who practice such vice deserve death, they not only do it themselves but applaud those who practice it. **(Moffatt Translation)**

Additional Information: The deeply irrational nature of sin is seen in the fact that even hardened sinners still know in their hearts that their actions are *deserving of death*. Nevertheless, they go on sinning and even drag others down with them when they *approve of those* who do the same things (Spirit Filled Life Bible, p. 1689). The extreme of sin is applauding, rather than regretting, the sins of others (NIV Study Bible, p. 1707). The word "have pleasure" (Gk. *suneudokeo*) means "are pleased with," "delight in," or "give approval to," and points to the enjoyment of the sins of others that prevails in human society (Full Life Study Bible, p. 316). According to Romans 1:32 there is a revelation of the righteous judgment of God that will judge man (and he knows it) (Matt. 25:46; Acts 17:30-31).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

SPECIAL THANKS AND APPRECIATION FOR THE FOLLOWING TRANSLATIONS AND THEIR TRANSLATORS

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

(Romans Chapter 1)

Instructions for Group Leader: Do not let the group read the following questions and answers. The leader of your group should ask the group the following questions and encourage the group to discover the answers by going to the appropriate Scriptures. **Discuss and answer (as a group) the questions correctly by using the Scripture(s). Turn to Romans Chapter 1.**

1. **Read Romans 1:1.** Paul identifies himself as: a. a servant. b. an apostle. c. as one separated unto the gospel (that is, chosen to preach the good news). d. all of the above.
2. **Read Romans 1:2.** In Romans 1:2 Paul is stating that the gospel is not some kind of new religion, but was promised long ago by God's prophets in the Holy Scriptures. True or False.
3. **Read Romans 1:3, 16.** The gospel is the good news of: a. heaven. b. happiness today and tomorrow. c. Christ (which includes his redemptive work).
4. **Read Romans 1:4.** Jesus' unique identity as Son of God was shown when Jesus was raised from the dead, setting him apart as the Messiah, our Master. True or False.
5. **Read Romans 1:5.** The apostle Paul received grace and apostleship to lead people of all nations to: a. believe and obey God. b. the prosperity message. c. to attend church more often.
6. **Read Romans 1:6.** We are invited by God to belong to Jesus Christ and obtain eternal salvation. True or False.
7. **Read Romans 1:7.** The apostle Paul described Christians as: a. beloved of God, the object of His love. b. saints, designated to be set apart to God. c. all of the above.
8. **Read Romans 1:8.** The whole world was hearing: a. how the Romans taxes were raised. b. about new Christian TV stations. c. of the Romans faith in Christ.
9. **Read Romans 1:9.** Paul served God: a. with his whole heart. b. in preaching the gospel of His Son. c. all of the above.
10. **Read Romans 1:10.** Paul prayed that he may be allowed to come to Rome. True or False.

11. **Read Romans 1:11.** Paul wanted to come to the Christians in Rome: a. to impart unto them some spiritual gift. b. so that they would be strengthened. c. all of the above.
12. **Read Romans 1:12.** Paul was a one man show, needing no one but himself. True or False.
13. **Read Romans 1:13.** Paul wanted to see Christian fruit produced among the Romans. True or False.
14. **Read Romans 1:14-15.** Paul wanted to communicate the gospel: a. to Greeks & non-Greeks. b. to educated and non-educated people. c. to the people of Rome. d. to everyone. e. all of the above.
15. **Read Romans 1:16.** The gospel is referred to as: a. good news. b. bad news. c. the good news of Jesus the Christ (the Messiah).
16. **Read Romans 1:17.** Righteousness or right-relationship with God is revealed within the gospel. True or False.
17. **Read Romans 1:17-18.** What two things have been revealed by God in Romans 1:17-18? a. A right relationship with God through Christ. b. God's wrath against the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. c. there is no problems in this world.
18. **Read Romans 1:19-20.** God holds all people responsible for their refusal to acknowledge what He has shown them of Himself in His creation. True or False.
19. **Read Romans 1:21.** Even though mankind knew about God: a. they didn't honor and glorify Him as God. b. they did not worship Him. c. they did not thank Him for His many blessings. d. all of the above.
20. **Read Romans 1:22.** When man rejected God, they professed to be wise but in reality they were fools. True or False.
21. **Read Romans 1:23.** Man changed the glory, splendor and beauty of the uncorruptible God into an image and likeness of: a. corruptible depraved man. b. birds. c. animals. d. reptiles. e. all of the above.
22. **Read Romans 1:21-23.** Idolatry is not a form of man seeking for God but rather a result of man turning from God. True or False.
23. **Read Romans 1:24.** When man turned from God, God gave them up to: a. a good time. b. more freedom for all. c. uncleanness.
24. **Read Romans 1:25.** Man gave up divine truth for: a. a while. b. more education. d. a lie.

25. **Read Romans 1:26-27.** Because man changed the truth about God into a lie and worshipped and served what God had created instead of the Creator, God gave them up to: a. more understanding about science. b. the evolution theory. c. vile affections, a pathological disorder in behavior.

26. **Read Romans 1:28.** Because man did not want to continue knowing what they so definitely knew about God, God gave them over to a morally corrupt mind. True or False.

27. **Read Romans 1:29.** When men choose to sin, they must put God out of their minds (at least temporarily). True or False.

28. **Read Romans 1:29-31.** As a result of man not glorifying God, not being thankful, and not wanting to retain God in their knowledge, mankind became filled with: a. a fun loving life. b. all kinds of riches and money. c. all kinds of unrighteousness.

29. **Read Romans 1:32.** God gave a revelation of Himself through creation, a revelation of salvation through Jesus Christ, and a revelation to mankind of a coming: a. new order. b. day of prosperity. c. judgment.

30. **Read Romans 1:29-31.** Man's actions described in Romans 1:29-31 carry the penalty of: a. death (Rom. 6:23). b. separation from God forever. c. everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord (2 Thess. 1:9). d. all of the above.

31. **Read Romans 1:32.** Not only does fallen mankind continue in his own sinful lifestyle, but he also has pleasure when others do the same. True or False.

DID YOU KNOW?

There are basically 3 kinds of translations. See page 7

657 Scholars were used in this study book (over 100 years of scholarship).

This Bible study tool causes you to meditate the Scriptures. Like food, each verse you chew over and over by reading and discussing the translations.

A "lexicon" is a dictionary for words used in the Bible (example: Strong's, Vine's, Thayer's).

An "autograph" means the original manuscript written by the original author. For example, Paul's letter to the Romans written and hand signed by Paul.

"Canon" of Scripture means the officially accepted books of the Bible recognized and accepted as God's Word.

The primary standard applied to a New Testament book was that it was written by an Apostle or by someone close to the Apostles. The early church continued in the apostle's doctrine by reading the Scriptures (the whole letter written to them) and applying the truths of that letter (Acts 2:42). Apostolic writings carried ultimate authority.

I personally adhere to the first-century church and what the early believers understood when they first heard a New Testament letter read to them. I personally do not believe that we should take Scriptures out of context (that which proceeds and/or follows any part of a discourse). I personally do not adhere to a twentieth-century mystical interpretation that reads into the passage doctrines that the early church did not know nor perceive.
Don W. Krow

"Context" is that which proceeds and/or follows any part of a discourse.

"Interpretation" means our attempt to determine the Bible's intended meaning. What does the passage actually say? What did the author mean?

Currently we have over 5,000 early Greek manuscript portions and over 20,000 early translations of the New Testament.

The "Septuagint" is the Greek translation of the Old Testament. This translation became very popular among Jews in the first two centuries before Christ. Early Christians used it as their Bible.

John Wyclif and his associates were the first to translate the entire Bible into English from Latin in 1384.

William Tyndale completed his translation in 1525. It is estimated that one-third of the King James Version is worded as Tyndale and 90% of Tyndale's work is reproduced in the King James Version. Tyndale was burned at the stake for his translation work.

William Tyndale completed in 1525 his Bible translation and smuggled 15,000 copies into England between 1525 and 1530. Church authorities confiscated and burned these copies and there are only parts of 3 editions remaining today.

The Geneva Bible (1560) was the Bible brought to America by the Pilgrims. It took almost 50 years for the King James Version to achieve a higher place than the popular Geneva Bible.

The "original Greek." There are two basic Greek text families. The "Byzantine" or "Western" text, and the "Alexandrian" or "Eastern" text. The western text contains about 15% more material than the eastern text. The eastern text relies heavily on only a few manuscripts, the Vaticanus and Sinaiticus.

"The Older manuscripts." The late Edward W. Goodrick (a translator of the NIV) stated, "Nor should the textual critic go by the age of the manuscript alone as if the older would always be the better, for we don't know how old the parent manuscript was when its offspring was born. A seventh century manuscript might have been copied from a sixth century manuscript, but a fifteenth century manuscript might have been copied from a third century manuscript."

Is a translation the Word of God? The King's speech before Parliament, when translated into French, Dutch, Italian, and Latin, is still the King's speech although it is not always translated with as good a style or as apt a phrase or exact a sense. There is no reason, therefore, why one should deny that a translation is the Word of God. (Is My Bible the Inspired Word of God? p.80).

What if a translation differs from another? Realize that sometimes the meaning of a verse is difficult, two or more meanings of words or phrases may be possible in Greek.

The Bible was written over a period of 1500 years with over 40 different writers from different walks of life.

When the rich man that had died ask for someone to come back from the dead so that they might go to his brothers and warn them (lest they come to the place of torment that he was in), he was told, "Moses and the prophets (The Word of God) have warned them. Your brothers can read their writings anytime they want to. If they won't listen to the Word of God , they won't listen even if someone rises from the dead" (Luke 16:19-31 NLT).

Jesus said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by 'EVERY WORD OF GOD'" (Luke 4:4). A "damnable heresy" (2 Pet. 2:1) means "that which leads to spiritual ruin or destruction." "Heresy" means "to pick or to choose a self-willed opinion" (See Strong's Greek Lexicon). If there is 40 scriptures on two pages and you choose only 10 that you will acknowledge and believe, then you are already in "heresy." Do I become your enemy because I tell you the truth? (Gal. 4:16)

Good translations should say the same thing in different styles.

Good translations can be used as commentaries (bringing insights into a passage), communicating the same message in different words and styles.