

# Romans

February 23, 2025

Welcome to the Beamsville Church of Christ online ministry. The title of the message this week is Romans. Thank you to Earl, Paul, Don, and everyone who made this service possible. The scripture reading is Romans 1, 1 to 7. Happy birthday this week to Tim and to Martin.

## Scripture Reading

I will be reading from Romans chapter 1 verses 1 to 7. It says,

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God—the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures regarding his Son, who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David, and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. Through him we received grace and apostleship to call all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith for his name's sake. And you also are among those Gentiles who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.

To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people:

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

## Sermon

Good morning, everyone. Thank you very much for being with us on this wintery day. Glad that you are able to be with us today. The Book of Romans is, in my mind, not the easiest book to read. It's a wonderful book, but it uses words that we don't use very often. I mean, think with me for just a minute. When was the last time that you used the word justification? Or when was the last time that you used the word sanctification? Or when was the last time you used the word righteousness? But they're all specific words by the Apostle Paul particularly. Now, some of us remember the fact that the Apostle Paul, or before he was an apostle, was someone who did not believe in Jesus.

And he was there giving the thumbs up that Jesus would be persecuted and that he would be killed. And Saul becomes Paul, and Paul never looked back. His faith continued, and he was very, very strong in his faith. And he says some things that I just wanted to share with us today.

There's words exactly that he used, and it's words that are not easy to understand. The word justification, the action of showing something to be right or reasonable. Theologically, it's the action of declaring or making righteous in the sight of God, living and doing these things that please God. Sanctification literally means to be set apart for a special purpose or a special use. Being set apart and made holy through the Holy Spirit of God. And then there's the word righteousness. To live justly, honestly, and faithfully according to God's instruction. Jesus describes not only fasting and prayer, but also giving generously to the poor. Forgiving others, maintaining love, even to those who are enemies. We rely on the righteousness of Jesus and sharing that righteousness with others.

So it's just kind of a couple of words that I wanted to share with you, but then I wanna get into this book of Romans, a profound book. And we don't have time to read through all of it because there are some special scriptures that I wanna share with you. We talked about previously, no one is righteous. Here's what he says. "We know that whatever the law says, "it says to those who are under the law," meaning the Old Testament, "so that every mouth may be silenced "in the whole world held accountable to God. "Therefore," listen to this, "no one will be declared righteous in the sight "by observing the Old Testament law. "Rather, through the law, "we became aware of our own sin." But now, a righteousness from God, apart from the Old Testament law, has been made known for all of us, to

which the law and the prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ, and listen to this, to all who believe. And if you believe, you have this righteousness as a gift given by God.

And Paul is bringing us along with faith. And I think that's true for all of us. When we first become Christians, we learn a little bit, and then we learn some more, and we learn some more, and we get deep into it, and it's a wonderful time to share. And some of the things that are said, again, Paul writes the majority of the New Testament, it's not the easiest to understand. Let me share with you what I mean.

Where then is boasting? It is excluded. On what principle? On that of observing the old law. No, but on that of faith. We maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from observing that law. Is God the God of the Jews only? Is he not God of the Gentiles too? Yes, of the Gentiles too. Since there's only one God who will be justified and circumcised by faith, do we then nullify law by faith? Not at all, rather we uphold the law. Okay, let me repeat that again. It's just not the easiest thing to grasp. And I have to go over it, and go over it, and go over it. And it's Paul really wanting to share that God loves us, that Jesus is in us, that we have the Holy Spirit surrounding us. And he brings us back to the Old Testament, some of those amazing experiences that took place.

And so Paul is trying to help us to be encouraged. For example, great chapter in chapter five of Romans. Therefore, since we've been justified through faith, faith being that we're here, that we're believing, since we have been justified through faith, listen now, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him, we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. But not only so, we rejoice in our sufferings. Because we know that our suffering produces perseverance, meaning hanging in there, character, and character, hope, and love, all by the Holy Spirit. And then he says, you see, at just the right time, we were still powerless. Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man, someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this. While we were or are still sinners, Christ died for us. Forgiveness. And then verse nine, since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from the wrath of God? Not only is this true, but we rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, whom we have now received that reconciliation.

So these are words that we don't use very often. I don't know about you, but everything that I've just said, I've had to read it and reread it and reread it and try to grasp everything that he's trying to say. But basically, I think the entire book of Romans is Jesus Christ, who loves us, who lives in us, let's demonstrate that to the people whom we love. So Romans is a wonderful book, and he talks about righteousness again over and over again. And he says this, "But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit that we reap brings us holiness." So these are words that are profound. And out of all of the book of Romans, I suspect that chapter eight is the most significant chapter. Let me just read some of this with you.

"Therefore, because of all of these things, therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Jesus, because through Christ Jesus, the law of the spirit of life, God's Holy Spirit, has set us free from the law of sin and death." Wonderful. God did this by sending his own son. And then he goes on to say, "Those who live according to their sinful nature have their mind set apart on those desires, but those who live with the spirit have their minds of God. However, we are controlled not by our sinful nature, but by the spirit. If the spirit of God lives in you, and if anyone does not have the spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. But if Christ is in you, us, your body is dead, but your spirit is alive." So it's kind of a rhyming thing going through this. And it's Paul saying, "Christ has brought himself to us, not just one day a week, but he's with us always." And he says, "And if the spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead, if he's living in you, he also will live in us. Therefore, we have an obligation." And the obligation, of course, is to share that to others. And then he says, "For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave," again, to fear, "that you receive the spirit makes you sons of God."

And then in chapter eight, in verse 28, "And now we know," again, wonderful passage, "And now we know that in all things, God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." And I don't know about you, but that's a scripture that I've leaned on for many, many years. And we know that in all things, there's been some difficult things in life that all of us have had to go through. But he says to us, and we know that in

all things, God does work for the good. It may not seem like it at the time, but he does, especially to those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. And that's us. We've been called according to the purpose of God.

And then he says, "In all these things," all of us, "we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither hyped nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." If you wanted to remember something, that's something to remember. It is one of the most profound scriptures in all the Bible, written some 2,000 years ago and just as relevant today. Because we know, each of us know, that we've gone through difficult times. But God's been with us. Jesus has been with us. The Holy Spirit has been with us. We just sometimes forget about that, that he's with us, never leaving us alone. And so Paul, when he writes, he says, "We are heirs of God. We are co-heirs with Christ. And the Holy Spirit makes that happen for us."

So this book of Romans is profound. And through this book, it goes back into the Old Testament many, many times in bringing us back to the future of where we are. He says, "How then can they call on someone whom they do not know or whom they have not believed?" And that's why we come together on Sundays. If we can just share, think about these things. And let's face it, most of us who have come here on Sundays, we believe in all of these things. But it's good to remember, and it's not always easy. The book of Romans brings us way back into the Old Testament, brings us into the New Testament, and brings us to here today. And it says this, "The voice of God through Jesus has gone out into all the earth. Their words to the ends of the world."

That's what God gives us throughout all eternity. And then again, he goes back into the Old Testament and shares a number of teachings, and then he wants to bring it to the conclusions. So there are sacrifices in the Old Testament, many, many, and many. It says in chapter 12, "Therefore I urge you brothers and sisters in view of God's mercy to offer yourselves as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, which is your spiritual worship." So on a daily basis, we offer ourselves.

We wanna be like Jesus on any given day, sharing, helping people with love and joy and peace and patience and kindness and goodness and faithfulness and gentleness and control and anything else that we can do by helping others. And so this cerebral book is helpful to me. And he talks about, "Let no debt remain outstanding," talking about spiritual things, "except the continuing debt to love one another. For he who loves his fellow man has fulfilled the law. The commandments do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not cover," and so forth and so forth. Here is the love of all. Love your neighbor as yourself, and love is the fulfillment of that law. And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber. And then he says, "Put on the armor, the armor of light." God is light. Accept people whose faith is weak. Do not argue about anything. Share with one another. You then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God, but we don't have to worry about that because of Jesus living in us, remembering that we will see him. Imagine seeing God face to face. Seeing Jesus face to face. Seeing the spirit of God right from creation face to face. Seeing our loved ones again.

And then he says, "May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth, you may glorify God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Accept one another, just as Christ has accepted you." And then he says, "He's convinced that we can share this knowledge and instruct one another with love."

And then at the end of the book, there are these personal comments. And here's what he says. "I commend to you our sister Phoebe." I love that. I love the fact that it's not just men who were apostles or servants or shares of the gospel, but there are many women who've shared great, great faith notes and love and understanding of scripture. So I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchraea I ask you to receive her in Lord in a way that's worthy of the saints and to give her any help that she may need, for she has been a great help to so many

people." And then he talks about a few more people. Talks about Priscilla and Aquila and others, Mary and so forth, and even those who have been put in prison because of their faith.

And so I wanna conclude this brief message in chapter 16. Again, unique. "I urge you brothers and sisters to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way contrary to the teaching that you've learned. Keep away from them, for such people are not serving our Lord, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery, they deceive the minds of naive people. Everyone who has heard about your obedience, so I'm so full of joy over you, but I want you to be wise about what is good and innocent about what is evil. The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. One day, no more Satan, no more deception, no more, no more. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you." And then he talks about a few other people that we don't really know. We know Timothy, fellow worker, but someone by the name of Lucius, Jason, Sosipater, and then he puts in and my relatives. Rates about other people that we don't know. Tertius who wrote down this letter, greet you in the Lord. Gaius, whose hospitality and I and the whole church here send you greetings. There are people all over the world that share faith.

And he concludes with these words. Now to him, meaning Jesus, now to him who was able to establish you by my gospel and proclamation of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God so that all nations might believe and obey him to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ. And he concludes with these words. Amen and amen.

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