






## Day 1


 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.


 Conventions used in these StudySheets:

- † “Christ Jesus:” we in the United States are traditionally given birth names with a first, middle, and surname (last-name or family-name). Back in the time of Jesus, people were called ‘first-name, son of father’s first-name’ (e.g., Jesus, son of Joseph). Because “Christ” is Jesus’ title, these StudySheets will frequently refer to Jesus as ‘Christ Jesus’. The purpose is to avoid the American naming convention that might indicate “Christ” is Jesus’ last name (surname). By the way the Apostle Paul seems to use Christ Jesus or Jesus Christ interchangeably.
- † Pencil icon () indicates comments or notes; since commentary is not Holy Scripture, comments are purposely less prominent (i.e., font-size is smaller).
- † Pronunciation helps: I have added some ‘helps’ to aid in pronouncing some of the more difficult names within the verses of this Book. While I am not attempting to provide a pronunciation key to the ancient dialect, I am hopeful the helps will provide a common pronunciation when reading some of these more difficult names.


 The Godhead: The best analogy I have heard to describe the Godhead of God the Father, Christ Jesus the Son, and the Holy spirit is to envision a three-fingered hand (or a three-leaf clover). While each finger has a separate name, the three-fingers are all part of the same hand – the Godhead. The Jewish faith is unflinching monotheistic (belief in one God), so the concept of Christ Jesus the Son is blasphemous to them. The Book of Genesis is the first book in the Holy Bible and is the first book in what Judaism calls the Pentateuch or Torah, which refers to the first five books of the Old Testament (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy). Within the pages of Genesis are three different verses that refer to God by using the pronouns of “us” and “we”. Both words refer to two or more. That said, in his commentary on Genesis, Jewish Commentator Dennis Prager conveniently explained-away (or ignored) these plural pronouns of “us” and “we” that are written in Genesis 1:26, 3:22, and 11:7 [©2019 by Dennis Prager, The Rational Bible Genesis, published by Regenera Faith. Pages 24-25, 59, & 150].

 “Christian” label: a Biblical student may notice that these StudySheets refer to a follower of Christ Jesus as a “Believer,” thus avoiding the “Christian” label. In our world today, Satan has poisoned the label “Christian” to such an extent that it is safest to refer to a follower of Christ Jesus as a Believer. If a student examines the writings, the actions, the speech, of many people today who declare themselves “I am a Christian!”, the student should be stunned by the hypocrisy, the judgment, the hate, the vitriol, the lack of empathy, the uncaring attitudes, and the plain, old evil actions of these so-called “Christians”. Jesus wants Believers to minister to nonbelievers so that they will come to Him in faith. These so-called “Christians” will cause many nonbelievers, with whom they come in contact through face-to-face or media encounters, to turn-away from Christ Jesus in confusion and disgust at their outright hypocrisy, saying “If that is Jesus, I want nothing to do with Him!” For me, I am a Believer in the saving grace of my Savior Christ Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of the living God! And I pray for you, the student, to believe in the same Savior, with an even deeper faith and enthusiastic passion than I.

 Wrong teachings: We should be on-guard against wrong teachings. We do well to remember the praise recorded in Acts 17:11: “*Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.*” The Bereans verified Paul’s preaching against the foundation of Scripture and found Paul’s teachings to be in harmony with what we now call the Old Testament. We, too, should verify sermons, teachings, and even these StudySheets against Scripture. The Holy Bible must be our rock, and our foundation of Biblical knowledge, of God’s character, of Jesus’ Gospel message and His servant-examples, of our behavior in the world, and of our interactions with other Believers.

 False Teachings: If it takes a great deal of effort (i.e., a convoluted explanation) to reach a certain Biblical conclusion, then it is probably false. I pray that this concept is readily apparent as you work through these StudySheet lessons. While the Bible is a wonderfully written, historical narrative, it also provides us with descriptions of God: His character, His desire for all humanity, His [agapé love](#) for all, and His abhorrence of sin. By the way, sin is the barrier between God and humankind; Jesus destroys that barrier for all who believe in His saving grace – Jesus died for you, and for me. Praise God!!! Praise Jesus!!!

## Lesson 1: Romans 1:1-17

 ‘Cherry-picking’ verses: It is easy to take one verse or a partial verse, say it is God’s Word, and demand that others follow it because “God said!”. We, who believe, must always be on-guard against Satan and his minions and their messages of half-truths, lies, and discouragement.


In our present time, the Apostle Paul has come under scrutiny and ridicule for teachings in which he provides God-ordained guidelines for behavior . . . for Believers. Believers were the intended audience for Paul’s Letters.


Unfortunately, some so-called ‘Christians’ take Paul’s words, apply them to the culture-at-large, and use them to dominate (or judge) others with their supposed God-ordained superiority or gender or knowledge. They judge (discernment plus punishment) the character of the world. They fail to remember the Apostle Paul’s admonition, “*God will judge those outside [the church]*” (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 5:13<sup>a</sup>), which is to say ‘God will judge nonbelievers’ — it is not in the Believers’ job description to judge nonbelievers.

Believers are to encourage belief. Believers are to love by example. A command “You shall follow Jesus!” will not lead a soul to Christ Jesus — it will be head-knowledge, not heart-felt, not soul-indwelt. Faith in Jesus grows and blossoms in a nonbeliever through the loving example of an authentic, caring, trusted friend who is then able to provide words and encouragement just as Paul observed in his Letter to the Roman church in Romans 10:17: “*So faith comes from hearing the Good News. And people hear the Good News when someone tells them about Christ.*” Faith is evolutionary, not revolutionary (unless the person has an Apostle Paul type of encounter, Acts 9).

And then some nonbelievers point to verses, declaring them hypocritical. An example is found in Paul’s Letter to the Ephesians (5:22), “*Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.*” To our present-day culture, to nonbelievers, this is akin to blasphemy! However, three verses later Paul goes on to say (5:25), “*Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her*”; and in (5:28), “*In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.*” (See the [StudySheet for Ephesians 5:22-33](#).) In these Ephesians 5 verses, Paul places an extraordinary demand on husbands: be like Christ Jesus, and [agapé love](#) your wife with self-sacrifice, kindness, tenderness, thoughtfulness, mercy, and compassion; her work is your work; you are to lead, so lead by example. It is not dominance, but partnership. I willingly submit to Christ Jesus, because of His example and His agapé love for me! I trust Him. I consider Him my friend. I want to be like Him. I love Him. I want to be with Him.

These StudySheets will not ‘cherry-pick’, but will provide context from surrounding verses, from other books and verses in the Holy Bible, and most importantly specify Paul’s intended audience. Know the Bible! Be on-guard against those who twist the Word of God and, by so doing, demonstrate their ignorance in the Holy Bible and ultimate subservience to the ‘prince of this world’ [NIV: John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11]!

 StudySheet questions: These StudySheets (lessons) are self-contained with Scripture (using text primarily from the 1984 New International Version) and commentary that will provide you, the Bible Study student, with thought-provoking questions, and guidance to answers. These StudySheets may be used by students new to a Bible study or long-time students; while some questions may seem elementary, they serve to provide those, who are new to Bible studies, with a foundation as all students move toward the more consequential questions.

 The following Scripture references provides some background on Paul (who in his early years was also known as *Saul*).

### Acts 7:54-8:3 [NIV-1984]

<sup>54</sup> When they [the priests of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish ruling council] heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him.

<sup>55</sup> But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

<sup>56</sup> “Look,” he said, “I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”

<sup>57</sup> At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, <sup>58</sup> dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. <sup>59</sup> While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” <sup>60</sup> Then he fell on his knees and cried out, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he fell asleep [died].

<sup>8:1</sup> And Saul was there, giving approval to his death.

On that day a great persecution broke out against the church at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. <sup>2</sup> Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for

## Lesson 1: Romans 1:1-17

him. <sup>3</sup> But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he [Saul] dragged off men and women and put them in prison.

### Acts 9:1-19 [NIV-1984]

<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest <sup>2</sup> and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem.

<sup>3</sup> As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. <sup>4</sup> He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"

<sup>5</sup> "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked.

<sup>6</sup> "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

<sup>7</sup> The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone.

<sup>8</sup> Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So, they led him by the hand into Damascus. <sup>9</sup> For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.

<sup>10</sup> In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, "Ananias!"

"Yes, Lord," he answered.

<sup>11</sup> The Lord told him, "Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. <sup>12</sup> In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight."

<sup>13</sup> "Lord," Ananias answered, "I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your saints in Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup> And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name."

<sup>15</sup> But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. <sup>16</sup> I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."

<sup>17</sup> Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord — Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here — has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

<sup>18</sup> Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, <sup>19</sup> and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

### Acts 13:9 [NIV-1984]

Then Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked... [This is the first time the name "Paul" is used.]

### Acts 22:3 [NIV-1984]

Then Paul said: "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city. Under Gamaliel I was thoroughly trained in the law of our fathers and was just as zealous for God as any of you are today..." [Paul was born a Roman citizen — very prestigious — and then well educated. Gamaliel was a well-respected 'professor' at the time.]

### Galatians 1:1 [NIV-1984] [Paul writes]

Paul, an apostle — sent not from men nor by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead... [Note the *Who*: the person who had sent Paul.]

## Lesson 1: Romans 1:1-17

### Galatians 1:11-17 [NIV-1984] [Paul writes]

<sup>11</sup> I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel I preached is not something that man made up.

<sup>12</sup> I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.

<sup>13</sup> For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it. <sup>14</sup> I was advancing in Judaism beyond many Jews of my own age and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers. <sup>15</sup> But when God, who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace, was pleased <sup>16</sup> to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not consult any man, <sup>17</sup> nor did I go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was, but I went immediately into Arabia and later returned to Damascus. [The humble Paul – not one to boast – was taught by Jesus, himself!]




As you examine the map (↑), Paul did not visit Rome until his last missionary journey when a Roman military escort took him to Rome. So, the question arises – how did Paul know that a Christian Church existed in Rome?


In Acts 2:10<sup>c</sup>-11, we read, “<sup>10c</sup> visitors from Rome <sup>11</sup> (both Jews and converts to Judaism)” heard the Apostles; after the Holy Spirit came upon them in “tongues of fire,” they each heard the Apostles speak and teach in their own ‘home’ language. Based on this reference, we can infer that there was a Jewish enclave in Rome, and these Roman visitors to Jerusalem were among the first to be taught the Gospel of Christ Jesus. They returned to Rome and began a Church devoted to the Gospel of Christ Jesus and His worship. In Acts 18:2, Paul meets Aquila and Priscilla, who were recent exiles from Rome (The MSG). In the next chapter of Acts, Paul states, “*I must visit Rome also*” (Acts 19:21). Then, as retold in Acts 23:11, God tells Paul that he must “*testify [about me] in Rome*”.

Scholars believe that Paul wrote the Epistle (Letter) to the Romans, while he was in Corinth (Greece) during his Third Missionary Journey, in the years of 55-57 A.D.

# Lesson 1: Romans 1:1-17

## Day 2

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

 It was the custom of the time to structure letters with the (1) writer's name first, so that the recipients knew immediately who had written them, (2) the recipients (or group), and (3) the body of the letter. Paul follows this letter-writing structure with his Letter to the Romans.

<sup>1a</sup> Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, <sup>1b</sup> called to be an apostle and <sup>1c</sup> set apart for the gospel of God – <sup>2</sup> the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures <sup>3</sup> regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David, <sup>4</sup> and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.

Q1. Verse 1<sup>a</sup>: To Whom did Paul serve?

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Q2. Verses 1<sup>c</sup> & 2: To Whom does the “He” in the phrase “the gospel he promised beforehand” refer?

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Q3. Verse 2: In the first century A.D. to what did the “Holy Scriptures” refer? Was it our Holy Bible, which is comprised of 66 books: 39 Old Testament and 27 New Testament books?

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Q4. Verse 2: What is the dictionary definition of “prophecy”?

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Q5. Verse 2: Are there Old Testament passages that speak to a coming Messiah [Hebrew] or Christ [Greek]? (Messiah or Christ is defined as the Anointed One: The One anointed by God)

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## Lesson 1: Romans 1:1-17

 The following Old Testament passages are a sample of the prophecies that foretell of the coming Christ.

**Genesis 1:26** [NIV-1984] [God is speaking of the Creation of mankind:]

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

**Genesis 3:15** [NIV-1984] [God is speaking to the serpent (Satan)]

<sup>15</sup> And I [God] will put enmity between you [Satan] and the woman [Eve], and between your offspring and hers; he [Jesus] will crush your head, and you will strike his heel [Jesus' crucifixion]."

**Deuteronomy 18:15 & 18** [NIV-1984]

<sup>15</sup> The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him. . . . <sup>18</sup> I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him.

**Psalms 16:9-10** [NIV-1984]

<sup>9</sup> Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure, <sup>10</sup> because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay [Jesus' Resurrection].

**Psalms 22:1, 14-18** [NIV-1984] [Excerpts (↓); Psalm 22 foretells of Christ Jesus from His birth (vs 9) to His crucifixion (1, 14-18) and resurrection (vs 30-31).]

<sup>1</sup> My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning? . . . <sup>10</sup> From birth I was cast upon you; from my mother's womb you have been my God. . . .

<sup>14</sup> I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax; it has melted away within me. <sup>15</sup> My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death. <sup>16</sup> Dogs have surrounded me; a band of evil men has encircled me, they have pierced my hands and my feet. <sup>17</sup> I can count all my bones; people stare and gloat over me. <sup>18</sup> They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing. . . .

<sup>30</sup> Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord. <sup>31</sup> They will proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn — for he has done it.

**Psalms 110:1** [NIV-1984]

The Lord says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet."

**Isaiah 7:14** [NIV-1984]

Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel [means 'God is with us'].

**Isaiah 9:6-7** [NIV-1984]

<sup>6</sup> For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup> Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.



## Lesson 1: Romans 1:1-17

### Micah 5:2 [NIV-1984]

<sup>2</sup> "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."

### Zechariah 9:9 [NIV-1984] [The event commemorated by Palm Sunday, the Sunday before Easter.]

<sup>9</sup> Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

### Malachi 3:1-3<sup>a</sup> [NIV-1984]

<sup>1</sup> "See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the Lord Almighty.

<sup>2</sup> But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap. <sup>3a</sup> He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites [Jewish religious leaders] and refine them like gold and silver.

Q6. Verse 3: *Son, who . . . was a descendant of David*: Who was "David"? Why was it important that Jesus be a "descendant of David"? And was David a descendant of Abraham? [FYI: Jesus' lineage is listed in the Gospels of Matthew chapter 1 and Luke chapter 3]  
David?

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Important to Jesus?

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Abraham?

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### 1 Samuel 16:13 [The Message (MSG)] [A paraphrase]

[The prophet] Samuel took his flask of oil and anointed him [David], with his brothers standing around watching. The Spirit of God entered David like a rush of wind, God vitally empowering him for the rest of his life. Samuel left and went home to Ramah.

### 1 Samuel 18:12 [The Message (MSG)] [A paraphrase]

Now [King] Saul feared David. It was clear that God was with David and had left Saul. So, Saul got David out of his sight by making him an officer in the army. David was in combat frequently. Everything David did turned out well. Yes, God was with him. As Saul saw David becoming more successful, he himself grew more fearful. He could see the handwriting on the wall. But everyone else in Israel and Judah loved David. They loved watching him in action.

 See also Isaiah 9:6-7 (↑)

 King David wrote many of the Psalms that comprise the Book of Psalms. And as a commentator wrote: "King David is one of the most important figures in the Bible and Jewish history. He was a strong military leader who united the 12 tribes of Israel, establishing Jerusalem as his capital. David was also chosen by God to be the ancestor of the Messiah." [\[https://www.christianwebsite.com/why-was-king-david-so-special-to-god/\]](https://www.christianwebsite.com/why-was-king-david-so-special-to-god/)

## Lesson 1: Romans 1:1-17

Q7. Since the source of “Jesus” is contained in one book – the Holy Bible – could “God” and “Jesus” be the result of one writer’s imagination? (This is called apologetics – defense of the faith.)


Yes? No? Why did you circle that answer?

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### Day 3

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

<sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>And you also are among those who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.

Q8. Who are the gentiles?

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Q9. What is “grace”?

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Q10. What does “obedience that comes from faith” mean to you?

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Q11. Are we also “called to belong to Jesus Christ”?

Yes? }  
No? } Why?

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## *Lesson 1: Romans 1:1-17*

<sup>7</sup> To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Q12. To whom is Paul's letter addressed? Does this include us today?

To whom?

Are present-day Believers included? Yes? No? Why?

### *Day 4*



Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

<sup>8</sup> First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world.

Q13. The first item in the 'body' of Paul's letter was his thanks to "my God through Jesus Christ for all of you". Why might this be important?

To God?

To Paul?

To the Roman Church? (and to us today)

Q14. What might "your faith is being reported all over the world" mean?

## ***Lesson 1: Romans 1:1-17***

<sup>9</sup>God, whom I serve with my whole heart in preaching the gospel of his Son, is my witness how constantly I remember you <sup>10</sup>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.

Q15. Who does Paul serve?

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Q16. How does Paul serve?

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Q17. Paul said he remembered them in his “prayers at all times”. What might this mean?

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Q18. How might we, who believe in His saving grace, serve?

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### **Romans 15:23-29 [NIV-1984]**

<sup>23</sup> But now that there is no more place for me to work in these regions, and since I have been longing for many years to see you, <sup>24</sup> I plan to do so when I go to Spain. I hope to visit you while passing through and to have you assist me on my journey there, after I have enjoyed your company for a while.


<sup>25</sup> Now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem in the service of the saints there. <sup>26</sup> For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. <sup>27</sup> They were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in the Jews' spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings. <sup>28</sup> So after I have completed this task and have made sure that they have received this fruit, I will go to Spain and visit you on the way. <sup>29</sup> I know that when I come to you, I will come in the full measure of the blessing of Christ.

### **Acts 19:21 [NIV-1984]**

After all this had happened, Paul decided to go to Jerusalem, passing through Macedonia and Achaia. "After I have been there," he said, "I must visit Rome also."

## Lesson 1: Romans 1:1-17

### Day 5

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

<sup>11</sup>I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong – <sup>12</sup>that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith.

Q19. Since commentators generally agree that at the time Paul wrote this letter to the Romans, no apostle had yet visited Rome. Would a visit – or a letter – provide better communication? And what “spiritual gift” might Paul provide during a personal visit?

Visit? Or letter? Why?

Spiritual gift?

Q20. Why might it be important to “mutually encourage . . . each other”? Is a church the only place where mutual encouragement might occur?

Importance?

Where? (Examples?)

**Matthew 18:20** [English Standard Version (ESV)]

For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.”

<sup>13</sup>I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that I planned many times to come to you (but have been prevented from doing so until now) in order that I might have a harvest among you, just as I have had among the other Gentiles.

Q21. What is Paul talking about when he states, “that I might have a harvest”? What is harvested?

What is “I might have a harvest”?

What is harvested?

**Matthew 9:37, 38, & 10:1** [The Message (MSG)] [A paraphrase]

Then Jesus made a circuit of all the towns and villages. He taught in their meeting places, reported kingdom news, and healed their diseased bodies, healed their bruised and hurt lives. When he looked out over the crowds, his heart broke. So confused and aimless they were, like sheep with no shepherd.

## Lesson 1: Romans 1:1-17

“What a huge harvest!” he said to his disciples. “How few workers! On your knees and pray for harvest hands!”

<sup>10:1</sup> The prayer was no sooner prayed than it was answered. Jesus called twelve of his followers and sent them into the ripe fields. He gave them power to kick out the evil spirits and to tenderly care for the bruised and hurt lives.

**Matthew 13:18-23** [The Message (MSG)] [A paraphrase] [Jesus told a parable to His audience and then privately explained it to His disciples:]

<sup>18-19</sup> “Study this story of the farmer planting seed. When anyone hears news of the kingdom [of God] and doesn’t take it in, it just remains on the surface, and so the Evil One comes along and plucks it right out of that person’s heart. This is the seed the farmer scatters on the road.

<sup>20-21</sup> “The seed cast in the gravel — this is the person who hears and instantly responds with enthusiasm. But there is no soil of character, and so when the emotions wear off and some difficulty arrives, there is nothing to show for it.

<sup>22</sup> “The seed cast in the weeds is the person who hears the kingdom news, but weeds of worry and illusions about getting more and wanting everything under the sun strangle what was heard, and nothing comes of it.

<sup>23</sup> “The seed cast on good earth is the person who hears and takes in the News, and then produces a harvest beyond his wildest dreams.”

Q22. Paul wrote, “I planned many times to come to you (but have been prevented from doing so until now)”. Do we know what may have “prevented” Paul from visiting the Romans?

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**Acts 16:6-8** [J.B. Phillips New Testament (PHILLIPS)] [A paraphrase]

<sup>6-8</sup> They made their way through Phrygia and Galatia, but the Holy Spirit prevented them from speaking God’s message in Asia. When they came to Mysia they tried to enter Bithynia, but again the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them. So, they passed by Mysia and came down to Troas

<sup>14</sup> I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish. <sup>15</sup> That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are at Rome.


Q23. To what was Paul “obligated”?

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 Since societies at this time were class-conscious and nationalistic, Paul wanted to make the audience of his letter (and his mission) as inclusive as he could. For example, the Romans believed a Roman citizen was simply the best and other cultures were barbarous – subordinate. The Greeks believed that anyone who spoke Greek was civilized and others were uncultured / uncouth. It seems that because Paul wrote this letter from Corinth (Greece), he adopted a Greek identity and then included everyone else – non-Greeks.

## Lesson 1: Romans 1:1-17

### Day 6

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

<sup>16</sup> I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

Q24. Are you “ashamed of the Gospel”? What would your children, your spouse, or your co-workers say about your belief in the Gospel of Christ Jesus?

Your thoughts on the Gospel?

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Others say?

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Q25. Why does Paul state that it was “first for the Jew”?

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<sup>17</sup> For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

Q26. What is the dictionary definition of “righteousness”?

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Q27. What is the “righteousness from God [that] is revealed”?

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## Lesson 1: Romans 1:1-17

Q28. What does this mean: “The righteous will live by faith”? “Live” for how long? “Faith” in what?

“The righteous will live by faith”?

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“Live” for how long?

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“Faith” in what?

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Q29. How do you explain the meaning of the “first to last” phrase?

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### **Revelation 1:8** [English Standard Version (ESV)]

[The words alpha (Α or α) and omega (Ω or ω) are the first and last letters in the Greek alphabet.]

“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

### **Revelation 21:6a** [NIV-2011]

He said to me: “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.

### **Revelation 22:13** [English Standard Version (ESV)]

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”

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