

**St John's Richmond**  
**Bible Studies (Jan - June 2024)**  
**ROMANS**

**STUDY 1 Romans 1.1-17**      *The Power of God for Salvation*

1      What does the Apostle say in these verses about himself? See vv. 1,5, and each verse from 9-16. With v.14, cf 1Cor 4.1; 9.16,17.

2      What does Paul say about the Gospel - its origin; content; purpose; power; and propagation? How eager, or obliged, should a Christian be to share the Gospel?

*Note.* Verse 17. The phrase 'the righteousness of God', here and at 3.21, means "a righteousness provided for men by God, in Christ." (A. Stibbs). It should be distinguished from the 'justice of God' (3.5) or 'God's righteousness' (3.25), which mean God's character, as righteous.

**STUDY 2 Romans 1.18-32**      *God's Present Anger*

1      How does Paul show the sin of man to be (a) deliberate, and (b) inexcusable? How did this begin, and what spiritual, mental, moral, and physical effects does it have?

2      How is God's wrath said to manifest itself? Notice the three stages, in vv. 24,26, & 28. Cf. Ps. 81.12; Acts 7.42. In what ways do you see God's wrath at work in the world today? Cf. Rom. 12.19; 13.4.

**STUDY 3 Romans 2.1-29**      *God's Future Anger*

1      What four things are said about God's judgement in vv. 2, 6, 11, 16? What else does the passage teach us about judgement?

2      By what 'general test' will God judge men? (See vv. 7-10). How will this bring condemnation on (a) the self-righteous person; (b) the Gentile; (c) the Jew? Why does God *delay* the Day of wrath?

3      In vv. 17-20 Paul enumerates a number of privileges upon which the Jews of his day were inclined to congratulate themselves. Name ten. Substitute "Christian" for "Jew": how does the argument apply to the Church?

4      Jews relied upon circumcision as the seal of God's covenant with them. What else does Paul; here show to be required, without which the outward sign ceases to have value? Cf. 1Sam 16.7. Frame the argument for Christian baptism.

*Notes*

1. Vv. 7 & 10 in no way contradict the truth that salvation cannot be earned by works. Paul is not dealing here with the *method* of salvation, but with the *nature of the test* in the day of judgement. The test is 'righteousness' (cf 1Jn 3.7,10): if one is not righteous in heart and life, they will be condemned. Later in Romans, Paul will show that the only way to become righteous in God's sight is through faith in Christ.

2. Vv. 12-15. The meaning is that people will be judged by the light they have received. If they've been 'under the Law of Moses' they will be judged by that Law; if not, they will be judged by the standards they possess by nature, through reason and conscience.

**STUDY 4 Romans 3.1-20**      *Rendered Speechless*

1      In vv. 1-8 the Apostle answers four objections which he found that were raised against the Gospel - stated in vv. 1, 3, 5, 7, & 8a; the answers are given in vv. 2, 4, 6, & 8b. How in particular does Paul describe the Old Testament Scriptures? To what two attributes does he hold fast? What kind of conduct does he strenuously repudiate?

2      In vv. 10-18 Paul gives the general verdict of Scripture upon humanity in our fallen condition. What does the Bible say (a) about the "general trend" of human life (vv. 10-12, cf. Isa 53.6a); (b) about our speech (vv. 13,14); and about our conduct and inner attitude to God (vv. 15-18)? How does this witness confirm the verdict of experience already given in 1.18-32 & 2.17-29, leading to the conclusion of 3.19,20?

3      Do you assent to the truth that it is impossible for anyone, by their own efforts, to escape condemnation at the "bar" of God's judgement? Why?

*Notes*

1. V. 20. 'Works of the law': a phrase which occurs also in v. 28. It denotes conduct achieved by a person's own efforts in obedience to a divinely-given statute. Cf. Gal 3.10-12.  
2. V. 20. 'Justified' means 'declared' or 'pronounced' righteous.

**STUDY 5 Romans 3.21-31***Just and the Justifier*

1 The answer to the question how guilty people can be saved is found in the revelation of 'a righteousness of God', *ie.* a righteousness *provided by* God (see Study 1, Note). Clarify - say in your own words - exactly what Paul says about this righteousness, in this all-important paragraph (vv. 21-26) in the twelve to fifteen points he makes.

2 What two inferences follow from these points? See vv. 27, 28, and vv. 29, 30 (*cf.* 1Cor 1.29-31; Gal 3.28). What is Paul's answer to an 'objector', who might say that the Gospel of 'salvation by faith' which Paul preached, made the Law of no account?

**STUDY 6 Romans 4.1-25***Sharing in the Faith of Abraham*

Paul has made three statements which were directly opposite to the Jewish interpretation of Scripture. The first was in 3.20, that 'by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified'; the second, in 3.30, that 'God would justify the Gentiles through faith' without circumcision; and the third, in 3.19 & 28, that salvation is given independently of the Law. Paul now proceeds, therefore, in Ch 4 to show that Scripture supports these propositions. He bases his argument mainly on Gen 15.

1 Abraham, and David also, were men pre-eminently in the favour of God (*cf., eg.* Isa 41.8; Acts 13.22). On what basis, then, according to Scripture, was righteousness 'reckoned' to them? See vv. 1-8.

2 At what *time* in Abraham's life was his faith reckoned to him as righteousness? How does this vitally affect the question at issue regarding the admission of Gentiles? See vv. 9-12.

3 Consider the correspondences between Abraham's faith and our own, for example, (a) the promise made to Abraham (Gen 15.5,6) and the corresponding promise to us (vv. 20-24); (b) the inability of Abraham in himself (vv. 18,19) and our corresponding inability (see 3.20); (c) the God in whom Abraham believed (v. 17) and the God in whom we believe (v. 24); (d) the result to Abraham (v. 18) and to us (5.1,2).

**STUDY 7 Romans 5.1-11***The Key to Christian Joy*

1 Vv. 1, 2, 9-11. What blessing does justification bring with it? Name things we now enjoy, and note how much is covered by these statements. What ought such awareness make us do?

2 Someone, however, may say: 'But what of the sufferings attending the Christian life? Do they not detract from its blessedness?' What is Paul's answer to this? See vv. 3-5. What is the *value* of suffering, and how may we be certain our hopes are not merely wishful thinking?

3 Verses 5-8. By what evidence may we be doubly-sure that God loves us? Note the importance of having at least two witnesses. *Cf.* Dt 19.15; 2Cor 13.1. In what ways are the witnesses mentioned here different, and complementary?

**STUDY 8 Romans 5.12-21***How We Become Immortal*

1 What are the consequences for us (a) of Adam's fall into sin, and (b) of Christ's 'obedience' or 'act of righteousness'? In what respects are the latter both similar to, and different from, the former? What ought we to recognize about the character of the benefit which becomes ours in Christ?

2 What four 'reigns' are spoken of in the passage? Two of them are the sad experience of us all; but how do the other two operate? What benefits do they impart? How do we enter into enjoyment of them?

**STUDY 9 Romans 6.1-14***You Have Been Set Free*

1 What is the position of those who are spiritually united with Christ (a) in relation to sin, and (b) in relation to God? How has this change been accomplished?

2 This being our position in Christ, how are we so to enjoy and express it, and to live a life of victory over sin? See vv. 11-14; and, note the key-words 'consider', 'let not', 'yield'.

*Notes*

1 The question in v. 1 arises out of what Paul has said in Ch. 5, especially v. 2.

2 Vv. 3-10 are an exposition of v. 2.

3 V. 6. 'The sinful body' means 'the body in which sin ruled', whose members were 'employed in sin's service' (see vv. 13 & 19).

4 V. 7. A statement of the general principle that death ends all obligations and relationships (*cf.* 7.1,2), is here applied to our former relationship to sin.

**STUDY 10 Romans 6.15-7.6** *Fruitful and Spiritual Service*

Two questions may arise out of Paul's argument so far; the first, "Shall we then continue to sin?" And the second, 'How is it possible to be not under Law?' The first is answered in 6.15-23, and the second in 7.1-6.

1 In 6.15-23, what two masters are contrasted? What kinds of service do they respectively demand, and with what result? In view of all these things, what is the only possible answer to the question whether we should continue in sin?

2 To answer the second question ('How is it possible to be not under Law?') Paul finds in the marriage tie an illustration of a person being subject to law and subsequently set free from in (vv. 1-3), and applies it to the case of the Christian (v. 4). In the case of the Christian, by whose death is his old position under Law brought to an end? Who is the new husband? And what are the fruits of this new union, as contrasted with those of the old? See vv. 5 & 6.

*Note.* 7.4. When Christ's body was broken in death, He passed to a life free from all subjection to legal ordinances, and we, having died with Him, are also set free. Sharing in His resurrection life, we are able to live no longer in legal bondage but in the glad obedience of love.

**STUDY 11 Romans 7.7-25** *The Conflict within the Christian*

Mankind's true life under the law, frustrated and spoiled by sin.

1 Vv. 7-13. To speak of passions being aroused by the Law might suggest that the Law itself is sinful. What evidence does Paul Marshall in these vv's to show that the Law is holy and good, and yet (a) reveals sin; (b) provokes sin; (c) results in death? What does it thus reveal concerning the character of sin?

2 Vv. 14-25. Which is the stronger force in someone's life, the Law or sin? What, then, is the inevitable result of life lived under the Law, even at its best?

*Note.* In vv. 14-25 the Apostle expands what he means by 'the old written code' (7.6). The Law of God commands *from without*, but sin as a power *within* compels obedience to its own dictates. Two things are needed: (i) deliverance from the condemnation which the Law of God pronounces, and (ii) a power greater than that of sin to enable us to do God's will. *Both* are provided by Christ, as Paul shows in Ch. 8, an expounding the meaning of his words, 'the new life of the Spirit' (7.6).

**STUDY 12 Romans 8.1-17** *Fulfilling the Law*

1 Vv. 1-4. What is the happy condition of those who are 'in (union with) Christ Jesus'? How has their deliverance been brought about, and what is God's purpose in effecting it?

2 Vv. 5-17. Life according to the flesh, and life according to the Spirit, are here contrasted. What is it that effects the change from one to the other? How do we know that life in the Spirit carries with it also the ultimate victory over death? If this life is ours, what is our present duty, and why? What are our present privileges?

*Notes*

1 V. 1. 'Condemnation' probably means 'the punishment following sentence', *ie.* penal servitude.

2 V. 2. The Spirit, sin, and death are regarded as powers exercising authority; the Spirit. Proves to be the stronger. *Cf.* Gal. 5.16-17.

3 V. 3. 'In the death of His own Son, who has come into our nature to make atonement for sin, God has pronounced the doom of sin, and brought its claims and authority over men to an end.' (Denny).

4 Vv. 5-8, 12, 13. 'Flesh' here denotes our corrupt human nature.

**STUDY 13 Romans 8.18-27** *From Groaning to Glory*

1 What threefold grounds of confidence does Paul give in vv. 18-27 that the present time of suffering will issue in glory? See vv. 18-22; 23-25; 26-27. Note especially the words, 'groan' and 'sigh'. *Cf.* Ex. 2 23-25; Rom 5.3-5.

2 What does the Apostle mean by 'hope' in vv. 24-25? How is this different from 'wishing' something were true?

**STUDY 14 Romans 8.28-39** *Nothing Can Separate Us from Christ's Love*

1 In vv. 28-39 how many distinct reasons does Paul give for the Christian to rejoice, though everything in this world should seem to be against them?

2 Vv. 29-30 are traditionally known as the 'Golden Chain of Salvation'. How are the several 'links' related to each other?

*Note.* V. 28. *Cf.* NEB 'in everything, as we know, He (the Spirit, v. 27) co-operates for good with those who love God.' *Cf.* 1Cor 2.9.

**STUDY 15 Romans 9.1-29***Paul's Sorrow and Anguish over Israel*

In chapters 9-11 Paul deals with the great problem of the rejection of their Messiah by the bulk of the Jewish nation, and God's consequent rejection of them. Two questions arise: (i) 'Has God broken His promises?'; (ii) 'If not, then how are they to be fulfilled?' Paul answers the first in Ch's. 9 & 10, and the second in Ch. 11.

1 Ch. 8 is full of triumphant joy. How then can Paul speak of having 'great sorrow and unceasing pain' in his heart? (See, esp. 9.3). What has made him sorrowful? How much of such joy, and sorrow, do we know as Christians?

2 Vv. 9-13, The question with which Paul is here dealing is this: 'If God rejects those Jews who reject Jesus as Messiah, has His Word then come to nought? For were the promises not made *to the Jews*' (v. 4)? How does Paul answer this? And, what two principles of the doctrine of 'election' does he find in the stories of (a) Isaac, and (b) Jacob and Esau?

3 How does Paul show that in His election God retains absolute liberty of action (a) without compromising His own righteousness, and (b) without giving any just ground for complaint? See vv. 14-22, and at the same time, note how Paul lays emphasis upon God's mercy (vv. 15, 16, 23-25). What is the purpose of God's election, and how do the Scriptures which Paul quotes illuminate this?

**STUDY 16 Romans 9.30-10.21***Paul's Desire and Prayer for Israel*

1 What are the two ways of seeking acceptance with God which are here contrasted? How are they shown to be mutually-exclusive? See 9.30-10.9. What was the cause of Israel's failure?

2 'Righteousness by faith' (10.8-15). What does the Apostle say regarding its (a) simplicity; (b) its universal application; (c) the necessity of proclaiming it?

3 What light does 10.14-21 throw upon humans' responsibility (a) in proclaiming the Gospel; (b) in hearing it?

**STUDY 17 Romans 11.1-36***Paul's Strategy for Saving Israel*

1 If we trip and stumble, we may either rise again, or else remain fallen and perish. What reasons does Paul give here for his confidence that Israel's rejection is not final? What lessons ought we to learn for ourselves from God's dealings with Israel?

2 What is God's ultimate purpose for Israel, and how do the Scriptures cited confirm that purpose? By what successive steps has God acted - and will He still act - to bring about the result stated in v. 32? (Consider the 'plan of God' as revealed in Ch's. 9-11)

**STUDY 18 Romans 12.1-2***True Worship*

In the second ('application') part of the letter, Paul now shows what quality of life should characterize those who now believe the Gospel as set out in Ch's. 1-11. The close connection between belief and conduct is emphasized by the word, 'therefore', in 12.1.

1 What should characterize the believer's attitude (a) to God, and (b) to the world, as expressions of Christian worship?

2 What results should such a correct, godly attitude produce? What hinders this from full expression?

*Note.* V. 2. 'Transformed': the same Gk. word is used three other times in the NT: Mt.17.2, & Mk. 9.2 ('transfigured'); and in 2Cor 3.18 ('changed').

**STUDY 19 Romans 12.3-21***Genuine Love*

1 Suggest one word that might sum up the teaching of vv. 3-8. How far is this true in the Church today?

2 Vv. 9-21 illustrate the theme of 'love', in transformed relationships. What does the Apostle teach as required of the Christian, and how much can we fall short of these standards?

*Note.* V. 20. 'Burning coals': a figurative emblem of severe pain, here the great pain of contrition and shame.

**STUDY 20 Romans 13.1-14**      *Submission and Love*

1            What three reasons does Paul give in vv. 1-7 why it is right to submit to the civil power? How will this submission express itself in practice?

2            What single guiding principle should control the Christian's life in society? See vv. 8-10.

3            Vv. 11-14. Paul gave in 12.1 one powerful motive for living the life set forth in the following chapters, namely, 'the mercies of God'. What further motive does he present here? What will wearing 'the armour of light' mean, (a) positively, and (b) negatively?

*Note.* V. 2. 'The state can rightly command obedience only within the limits of the purpose for which it has been divinely-instituted - in particular, the state not only may but must be resisted, when it demands the allegiance due to God alone.' (*Romans* (F.F. Bruce, TNTC), p. 237).

**STUDY 21 Romans 14.1-12**      *Welcome the Weak*

1            'A Christian is a most free ruler of all, subject to no one' (M. Luther). What does this passage teach about Christian liberty?

2            'A Christian is the most dutiful servant of all, subject to all' (M.L.). For what reasons should Christian liberty be qualified? What are the most important things to be preserved at all costs, in the Christian community?

3            If in doubt ourselves about the lawfulness of an act, can we do it because we see other true Christian people doing it? Why, or why not?

**STUDY 22 Romans 14.13-15.13**      *Do Not Destroy*

1            The counsel given in vv. 1-2 is by no means easy to follow. What three sources of help and encouragement are suggested in vv. 3-5?

2            What does following Christ's example involve (vv. 7-12)? Why does Paul lay such emphasis on the inclusion of the Gentiles?

3            What should characterize the life of the Christian Church? See vv. 2, 5-7, 13.

**STUDY 23 Romans 15.14-33**      *Worldwide Ambitions*

The Epistle, from 1.16 onwards, has been much more like a treatise than a letter. Paul now resumes the 'epistolary form', and there are many links between this closing section and the beginning of the letter, 1.1-15.

1            How does Paul in vv. 15-21 describe his own work - in relation to its (a) nature; (b) scope; (c) power; and (d) results? How far is this description applicable to our own work in connection with the Gospel?

2            What matters lay nearest to Paul's heart at this time, as shown in vv. 20-25? Also, what may we learn of the importance which the Apostle attached to intercessory prayer?

*Notes*

1    V. 16. The figure here is that of the sacrifices of the OT ritual. Paul's ministry was to bring the Gentiles to God as an 'offering', sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

2    The contributions of the Gentile Churches to the poor of the Church in Jerusalem were the result of much labour on Paul's part, and he looked for important results in the drawing together of Jewish and Gentile believers. *Cf.* 2Cor 8 & 9, esp. 9.12-15.

**STUDY 24 Romans 16.1-27**      *Workers and Wolves*

1            What may we learn about Phoebe (a) from her name and the place where she lived (see Note 1); (b) from the description of her as 'sister' and 'deaconess of the Church'; and (c) from the service which she rendered? What did Paul ask for her from the Christians at Rome, and upon what grounds?

2            Look down the list of names: what references are there to (a) diligent service; (b) suffering for Christ; and (c) Christian character? *Cf.* 2Cor 5.9-10.

3            (a) How may 'perverters of the Gospel' be recognized? *Cf.* 1Tim 6.3; Mt. 7.15-20. (b) How may we be safeguarded from them? *Cf.* 2Jn. 10; 2Tim. 2.14-16; 1Thes. 5.22. (c) What sorts of encouragements are there available in the conflict? How does the present age differ from, all that went before, and what is the one, all-important end to be achieved? *Cf.* 1.5. What is the method to be adopted?

*Note.* Vv. 25-26. The 'mystery' spoken of is fully-expounded in the Epistle to the Ephesians. *Cf. eg.*, Eph 3.3-6.