A TRINFINITY MINI BOOK

The Good News in Romans

A walk through Paul's letter of grace

Andrew Dominguez

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About this book

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Introduction

If someone asked me where to go in the Bible to understand the gospel, I would send them to Romans. Paul lays out the problem of sin, the gift of God's righteousness, the new life of the Spirit, God's faithfulness to His promises, and how believers are to live.

This book is a short walk through that letter. It will not answer every question Romans raises, but I hope it gives you a map so that when you read it for yourself, you can see where Paul is going.

1 Paul and the church in Rome

Romans 1:1 (NASB) identifies Paul as the writer, and Romans 16:22 (NASB) tells us a man named Tertius wrote it down for him. The letter was likely written between AD 56 and 58 from Corinth, just before Paul carried an offering to the poor believers in Jerusalem. Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchrea, probably carried it to Rome (Romans 16:1, NASB).

Paul had wanted to visit Rome for a long time and hoped to go on to Spain (Romans 15:24, NASB). His plans were interrupted when he was arrested in Jerusalem, and he finally reached Rome as a prisoner.

Paul opens by calling himself a bond-servant of Christ Jesus. He explains that the gospel was promised beforehand through the prophets, and that Jesus was born a descendant of David according to the flesh and declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead (Romans 1:2-4, NASB). Jesus is both truly human and truly God.

2 Not ashamed of the gospel

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

Romans 1:16 (NASB)

Romans 1:16-17 (NASB) is the theme of the whole letter. The gospel is not just good advice. It is the power of God to save. In it the righteousness of God is revealed, and the righteous man shall live by faith.

Then Paul shows why we need it. From Romans 1:18 to 3:20 he explains that Gentiles who ignored God and Jews who had His law both fell short. His conclusion is plain: there is none righteous, not even one (Romans 3:10, NASB). Everyone stands guilty before God.

3 Righteousness provided

Beginning in Romans 3:21 (NASB), Paul turns to the answer. A righteousness from God has been revealed apart from the law, through faith in Jesus Christ, for all who believe. We are justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus (Romans 3:24, NASB).

Paul points to Abraham as proof that this was always God's way. Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness (Romans 4:3, NASB). He was declared righteous before he did anything to earn it.

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8 (NASB)

Romans 5:8 (NASB) may be the clearest picture of grace in the Bible. God did not wait for us to get our lives together. Christ died for us while we were still sinners. Because of that, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1, NASB).

4 New life in the Spirit

Romans 6 through 8 answers the question of how a forgiven person should live. If grace covers sin, should we keep sinning? Paul's answer is, May it never be! (Romans 6:2, NASB). In Christ, sin's power over us has been broken.

Romans 7 is honest about the struggle. Paul describes wanting to do good and still doing what he hates. Even believers wrestle with the flesh. But Romans 8 brings the victory. There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1, NASB), and anyone who belongs to Christ has His Spirit (Romans 8:9, NASB).

The chapter ends with one of the greatest promises in Scripture. Paul is convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor any other created

thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:38-39, NASB).

In chapters 9 through 11, Paul explains that God has not forgotten His promises to Israel. His righteousness is received by faith, by Jew and Gentile alike. Romans 10:9 (NASB) says that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

5 Righteousness practiced

Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

Romans 12:1 (NASB)

Romans 12 through 15 shows what the gospel looks like in everyday life. Because of God's mercy, I give my whole self to Him. That means a renewed mind (Romans 12:2, NASB), humility about my gifts, real love for others, and submission to rightful authority.

It also means leaving revenge to God. Romans 12:19-21 (NASB) says never to take our own revenge, but to leave room for the wrath of God, and to overcome evil with good. Paul also asks strong believers to be careful not to trip up weaker ones over matters of conscience (Romans 14, NASB).

Paul's prayer for the Romans is a good prayer for us: Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:13, NASB).

The Good News in Romans

If you want to understand the gospel, Romans is the place to go. This short walk through Paul's letter covers why everyone needs God's grace, how He provides righteousness through faith in Christ, new life in the Spirit, and what the gospel looks like in everyday life.

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

Romans 1:16 (NASB)

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