

1. AUTHOR

Q. What do you know about *Romans*?

A. *Romans* was written by the apostle Paul, in 57 or 58¹ AD during his third missionary journey from in or near Cenchreae (16:1), the sea port of Corinth, during Acts 18. It was written to a mainly, but not exclusively, Gentile church (Acts 18:6; **Romans 1:13**), most of whom he did not meet until 60-61 AD (Acts 28).



2. ONE KEY THEME – ‘**RIGHTEOUSNESS**’

In *Romans*, Paul writes about **righteousness** or **justification** explicitly over 60 times. When reading *Romans*, we need to appreciate that being **justified** is the same as being **made, or counted, righteous**. Also, **justice** is basically the same idea. The same or related Greek words are used for all these concepts. If we are **righteous**, we are **justified**; we are **right with God**, who alone is inherently **righteous**, but **justifies** those who have faith in Jesus (Romans 3:26). The vital doctrine of **justification** through faith, i.e. trusting God alone, and specifically Christ, was rediscovered at the Protestant Reformation having been side-lined previously.

E.g. Martin Luther on *Romans*: *Therefore that **righteousness** which is ours by faith is an alien righteousness; indeed, it is the **righteousness** of another, instilled from outside. This is the **righteousness** of Christ by which he **justifies** through faith.*²

3. SHAPE & TEXTUAL STRUCTURE OF ROMANS?

The simplest ‘shape’ of *Romans* is two-fold, like that of *Ephesians*. The theory of **righteousness** is developed extensively, then applied practically – just as we should do when reading the Bible.

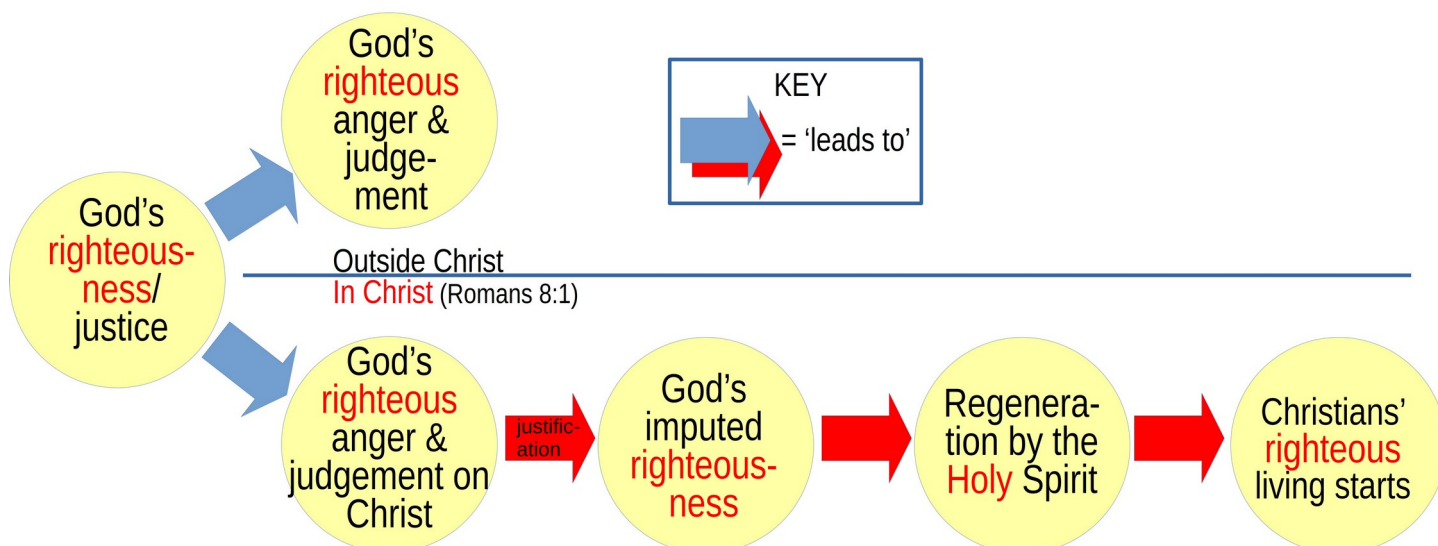
‘SHAPE’ OF ROMANS	
Chapters 1-11	Chapters 12-16
Theology	Practice

In fact, every chapter or section of *Romans* has something to do with **righteousness**: over/

¹ W. Hendriksen, combined NTC on *Romans*, BoT, 1980, p15.

² M. Luther, Weimar edition of commentary on 3:22, 1515-16. ‘*Est ergo iustitia nostra per fidem iustitia aliena: est enim iustitia alterius extra nos infusa, scilicet Christi. Qua iustificat nos per fidem.*’

CHAPTERS	THEMATIC TEXTUAL STRUCTURE OF ROMANS
1	Gentiles are un righteous ; their consciences tell them so.
2	Jews too are un righteous ; they keep breaking God's law.
3	• Romans 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ... ESV/NIV In fact, everyone is un righteous ; only God is righteous; that is his glory.
4	But, Abraham became righteous through trusting God. 4v3
5	We can only become righteous , through the Lord Jesus Christ.
6	When we become Christians, we also become slaves to righteousness . 6v17-18
7	We cannot behave righteously without God's Holy Spirit. 7v6
8	With the Holy Spirit, we are enabled to live righteously . 8v4
9 - 11	The Jews tried to substitute their own righteousness for God's (and failed). 10v3
12 - 16	How to live righteously in practice. 12v1-2



*How God's **Righteousness**/Justice is Behind Christians' **Righteousness**³*

4. KEY VERSES

*Romans 1:16-18 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. ¹⁷ For in it the **righteousness** of [i.e from]⁴ God is revealed from faith for faith [lit. 'out of faith into faith']⁵, as it is written, "The **righteous** shall live by faith." ¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and un**righteousness** of men, who by their un**righteousness** suppress the truth.*
ESV

³ Beware that theological diagrams are *dangerous*. So, for example, Christ's active righteousness, which is also imputed to Christians, is not really shown here. Also, the so-called 'ordo salutis' (order of salvation) is not really represented.

⁴ Hendriksen (op. Cit.) 'should be rendered from God'. i.e. imputed righteousness pp62-63.

⁵ Hendriksen (op. cit.) suggests translating 'ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν' as *by faith from start to finish* similar to the NIV, i.e. by faith alone.

5. KEY GROUPS OF PEOPLE

1. God (1:1)
2. All humanity (1:18)
3. Jews (non-Greeks, circumcised)

4. Gentiles (Greeks, uncircumcised)
5. Weak/Strong Christians (14:1-15:13)
6. Individual **righteous** Christians (16).

6. GREAT EVENTS

1. Paul set apart as apostle to the Gentiles (1:1)
2. Paul's initial failure to visit Rome (1:13), hence the letter
3. God's revelation of himself through creation and judgement (1:18-32)
4. Abraham's conversion (4:2-3)
5. Israel's partial 'breaking off' (9-11)
6. Gentiles' partial 'grafting in' (11)
7. Paul plans to go to Spain via Rome (15:24) – his 4th missionary journey.

7. THEMES

1. a. God's **righteousness**/justice
1. b. Christ's 'imputed' **righteousness**
1. c. The Holy Spirit's⁶ 'imparted' **righteousness**
2. God's law (2:13; 13:8)
3. **Justification** through faith (3-4)
4. Grace and faith (3:24-26; 4)
5. **Righteous** living (6, 12-16)
6. The Holy Spirit, adoption to sonship (8)
7. God's sovereignty, election (9-11)
8. The obedience of faith (1:5; 16:26)

8. ROMANS IN PRACTICE

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Romans 3:19-29 Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. ²⁰ For by works of the law no human being will be **justified** in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

²¹ But now the **righteousness** of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— ²² the **righteousness** of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are **justified** by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a propitiation^{fn 7} by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's **righteousness**, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. ²⁶ It was to show his **righteousness** at the present time, so that he might be **just** and the **justifier** of the one who has faith in Jesus.

²⁷ Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸ For we hold that one is **justified** by faith apart from works of the law. ²⁹ Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, ³⁰ since God is one—who will **justify** the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. ESV

Q1. What **themes** from section '7. Themes' feature in the passage above? Underline them.

⁶ NB How Trinitarian Romans is.

⁷ The removal of wrath by the offering of a gift; see *kipper* (Heb.) and *hilaskomai* (Gk.) word groups in OT and NT resp. *New Bible Dictionary*, IVP, 3rd ed.

Romans 12:1-2 I appeal to you therefore, brothers [and sisters], by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. ESV

Q2. How does Paul go about making the connection between the theological part of his letter (chapters 1-11) and the practical part (12-16)? See Romans 12:1-2 above.

Q3. Refer to Romans 16. How do the following people display 'imparted' **righteousness** either by their good examples or by Paul's hopes and expectations associated with them?

- 16:1-2 Phoebe
- 16:3-5 Prisca (Priscilla) & Aquila
- 16:6 Mary
- 16:7 Andronicus and Junia(s)
- 16:12 Tryphaena and Tryphosa
- 16:13 Rufus & his mum
- 16:22 Tertius
- 16:23 Gaius and Erastus

Q4. What do you notice about the names in the list above?

a)

b)

9. HOMEWORK

Read Romans; be humbled, inspired and motivated to live **righteously**.

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