

## NT Survey #4 Romans

Paul:

What do we know about Paul? His education & position? His character, personality? - Table Talk

- **Physical Appearance:** quoted approx AD 160 “A man of little stature, thin haired upon the head, crooked in the legs, of good state of body, with eyebrows joining and nose somewhat hooked, full of grace; for sometimes he appeared like a man and sometimes he had the face of an angel”
  - 2 Cor. 10:10 “*For some say, “His letters are weighty and forceful, but in person he is unimpressive and his speaking amounts to nothing.”*”
- **Was a Jew and very proud of it.**
  - Acts 21:39 Paul answered, “*I am a Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no ordinary city.*”
  - Acts 22:3 “*I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city. I studied under Gamaliel and was thoroughly trained in the law of our ancestors. I was just as zealous for God as any of you are today.*”
- **Pharisee** Acts 23:6 “*Then Paul, knowing that some of them were Sadducees and the others Pharisees, called out in the Sanhedrin, “My brothers, I am a Pharisee, descended from Pharisees. I stand on trial because of the hope of the resurrection of the dead.”*”

**Pharisee:** The first historical mention of the Pharisees and their beliefs comes in the four gospels and the Book of Acts, in which both their meticulous adherence to their interpretation of the Torah as well as their eschatological views.

The Pharisees were at various times a political party, a social movement, and a school of thought in Judaism during the time of Second Temple Judaism. After the destruction of

the Second Temple in AD 70, Pharisaic beliefs became the foundational, liturgical and ritualistic basis for Rabbinic Judaism.

Josephus (AD 37 - 100, thought to be a Pharisee himself) claimed that Pharisees received the full-support and goodwill of the common people, apparently in contrast to the more elite Sadducees, who were the upper class.

- **A man of Deep Convictions**
  - as a Jew, he whole heartedly went after defending God in what he thought was right i.e. the destruction of Christianity. Acts 26:9 ***"I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth***
  - As a Christian, he showed no less enthusiasm.
- **A man of Action**
- **A man of deep feelings and compassion**

### **Setting:**

Written around AD - 57

Paul, as far as we know, has never been to Rome.

### **What does this tell us?**

- Paul gives his credentials as to why people should accept this letter.

### **Rom. 1:5,6**

***Through him we received grace and apostleship to call all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith for his name's sake. 6 And you also are among those Gentiles who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.***

- Paul expresses His heart for the Church, even though he hasn't been there.

### **Rom. 1:8-15**

*8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world. 9 God, whom I serve in my spirit in preaching the gospel of his Son, is my witness how constantly I remember you 10 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.*

*11 I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong— 12 that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith. 13 I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, 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.*

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

Jewish Christians expelled from Rome by Claudius AD 49

Edict lifted in AD 54 upon his death.

### **What does this tell us?**

Peter and John Mark arrive in Rome AD 50 (illegal)

- **great to have them there,**
- **what challenges might they face?**

## Look at a breakdown of the Book:

### *We're all in Trouble*

- 1 - The Gentiles are sinners [vs. 26–32]
- 2 - The Jews are sinners [vs. 1–6]
- 3 - All men have sinned [vs. 9–20]
- 4 - Abraham's justification by faith [vs. 1–4, 13–22]
- 5 - Salvation: God's free gift [vs. 1–4, 12–18]
- 6 - Dead to sin; alive to God [vs. 1–4, 15–18]
- 7 - Freed from the law [vs. 1–4]
- 8 - More than conquerors [vs. 31–39]

### *Redemption is in God's hands*

- 9 - The Potter and the clay [vs. 14–29]
- 10 - Calling on the name of the Lord [vs. 8–17]
- 11 - Pruning the branches [vs. 11–25]

### *Life as a Disciple*

- 12 - A living sacrifice [vs. 1–2, 9–21]
- 13 - Submission to civil government [vs. 1–7]
- 14 - The law of liberty [vs. 1–13]
- 15 - Bear with the weak [vs. 25–33]
- 16 - Commendations and warnings [vs. 17–20]

## Issues Facing the Church:

Difference of Perceptions between Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians.

1. Many Jews still looked at Gentiles as “second class” Christians. They were first “in”

2. Jewish Misconceptions concerning salvation.
  - a. used to being saved because of their race - “chosen race”.
  - b. more focused on election as a nation rather than the actions of the individual.
  - c. Issue is not what group you belong to but rather what the individual is doing.
3. There were *many* varieties of Gentile disciples. *remember, Rome is an empire built on conquest and brought people from all over the world.*
  - a. They had no other category that would line them up with others.
  - b. some from polytheistic cultures
  - c. some from amoral cultures.
  - d. some from atheistic cultures.
  - e. some were slave - some were free
  - f. some were very rich, some very poor.

**Paul starts by leveling the playing field: The people in the Church in Rome are all in the same boat. *as are we.***

### **Rom. 2:6-16**

*God “will repay each person according to what they have done.” 7 To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. 8 But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. 9 There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; 10 but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. 11 For God does not show favoritism.*

*12 All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law. 13 For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God’s sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous. 14 (Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law,*

*do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law. 15 They show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts sometimes accusing them and at other times even defending them.) 16 This will take place on the day when God judges people's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares.*

- What you DO matters.
- Will you obey God or not?
  - even those who don't know God, will have to answer.

### **Paul expands on this by contrasting Faith Vs. Works**

*Where many today get hooked up.*

*Can't use 21st Century definitions of 1st century words. Must find what Paul meant at the time he wrote this and then apply.*

**Works:** Always referring to something done. An act or deed.

- sometimes referred to physical act. **Matt 5:16 16** *In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.*
- Sometimes a mental act - like believing. **Jn 6:28,29** *Then they asked him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?" 29 Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."*
- Could be a miraculous deed or something even done by God himself.
- For Paul, he uses the word interchangeably as
  - deeds done or
  - works or as a substitute for "**Works of the Law**"
- When Paul is arguing his case for justification on the basis of the work of Christ he will place "works" over against "faith" or

“grace”. In these cases, the “deeds” or “works” are not being looked at as isolated actions by a person but as a part of a system (Judaism) under which someone is justified by their flawless performance of what the Law demands.

### **Rom 3:20**

*Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin.*

### **Rom 4:2-4**

*4 What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, discovered in this matter? 2 If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about—but not before God. 3 What does Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”*

*4 Now to the one who works, wages are not credited as a gift but as an obligation.*

### **Eph 2:8,9**

*8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

**Core of the tension often felt when looking at Paul's teachings about Faith and Works and James' teachings about Faith & Works.**

**Paul:** A man is *NOT* justified by works

**James:** A man *IS* justified by works

There are at least 4 things that cause this tension:

1. They are actually dealing with different problems.
2. They use the word “works” differently
3. They use the word “faith” differently at times
  - a. Paul using it as the trust of an obedient heart
  - b. James - a mental assent or acceptance
4. They give different functions to “works”

**Paul**, in Romans (and later in Ephesians & other letters) is trying to teach disciples that they are wrong if they believe they can be justified on the basis of a “doing” record.

**James**, in James is trying to teach disciples they are wrong if they believe they can be justified with a “non-doing” record.

Note in Romans, Paul has already established that we will be judged by what we do i.e. our actions, deeds or works. He is not contradicting himself or changing the subject.

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