

# **New Community Bible Study & Teaching (PP)**

## **“All Roads Lead To Rome”**

Romans 1:18-32

### **Session 2**

## **New Community Bible Study & Teaching**

### **- What is New Community?**

**A gathering of God’s New Community of Jesus Followers here at Baycities Lomita!**

**- To study and understand the great insights of the Christian life contained in God’s Word!**

**- Study the NT books that give the New Community understanding to follow Jesus more closely.**

**- Grow in our understanding of our faith in Jesus**

**- Be motivated to love and serve Him & others more because of our time together!**

## What are our goals this summer?

### 1. Teach through the book of Romans

- Verse by verse!

### 2. Understand The Big Doctrines Of The Faith

- Paul the writer has for us to understand!
- Paul, the most brilliant mind to write Bible
- The Jewish Pharisee who became a Christian
- Reached the Gentile world w/ Gospel!
- Planted Churches then...
  - Wrote NT letters to encourage, teach, untangle and grow the faith of those He had reached!

### 3. Hear This Book Taught By A Host of Bible Teachers- in Pairs and Some Solo!

- Ben Meyers, Nathan Holmes, George Deur
- Jose Jurado, Kevin Valencia, Phil Gerard and others
- Each session will be 90 min including Q&A
- So bring your questions!
- **Paul's biggest work... we'll be studying each Sunday night- Except Mother's day and L3 weekend... Through the summer!**

## **4. To Fill In The Blanks Of Your Spiritual Life Learning Journey To Help You Love & Follow Jesus More Closely!**

- **“Romans” is filled w/ doctrines or insights into how our faith works.**
- **What we are to believe & why we believe it!**
- **We’ll point each one out as we study through them- and highlight & explain them as Paul unlocks them in the text!**
- **Then we’ll show you how to apply these truths in your active life as a Jesus follower!!!**

## **Pray and get started... Pray**

### **1. Introduction to the Book of Romans (PP)**

- **“This Epistle is really the chief part of the New Testament... it a life changing epistle or letter!!!**
- **In 386 AD...a man sat weeping in Milano...** contemplating the wickedness of his life... first passage he read was Romans 13:13-14... the man Augustine, who became a believer that day... great theologian and early church leader!

- **1000 yrs. later- Martin Luther-** a monk teaching in Wittenberg Germany...the Book of Romans to students...read... He sees for the first time Paul theme of justification by faith... as he encounters the righteousness of God... he thought it a means to batter unrighteous people... but seen in context... He saw that God's righteousness is the means by grace and mercy in which God allows us entrance into His kingdom! His whole life focus changed right there! The reformation followed!
  
- **“It is the most remarkable production of the most remarkable man.** It is his heart. It contains his theology, theoretical and practical, for which he lived and died.
  
- **It gives the clearest and fullest detailing of the doctrines of sin and grace**
- As well as lays out the reality of the dominion of sin and death brought on by the first Adam, and the necessity and accomplishment of universal redemption by the second Adam, Jesus!

## 2. Who Did He Write The Book/Epistle To?

When Paul wrote this epistle to **the church in Rome**, that congregation must have already been in existence for a number of years, for Paul writes that he had desired to visit them “these many years” (15:23).

- **To him this church was strong enough** to help him carry out further missionary activities.
- **They are not called recent converts**; they are not treated as having been improperly instructed, but seem to have been an organized and well-grounded congregation (15:14, “filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another”).
- **The epistle deals with no major error** in the church; nor does it have to deal with organizational principles. It was a church that was universally famous (1:8), and not merely because it was in Rome.

### Make Up Of The Church In Rome:

The Roman church was a group that had a large Jewish element, but was also filled with Gentile converts from paganism, both free as well as slaves.

**How the church in Rome was started is unclear.**

**The Roman Catholic view** is that Peter founded it;

**Another view is that Roman Christians from Pentecost** in Jerusalem made their way there.

**But it may simply be that several Christian families or groups from Pauline churches in the East** settled in Rome and grew together. According to the end of the book, there were several congregations meeting in the city.

**The emperor Nero** went on a persecution rampage of Christians in **64 AD...**

Tacitus- Roman Historian, says that the Christians in Rome were “an immense multitude.” Huge church! Mega!

**Length of Book-** 16 chapters...

### **3. The Place & Date of Writing Of Romans:**

- Based on the material from Acts and the Corinthian epistles, the Book of Romans clearly indicates **that it was written from Corinth on Paul’s third missionary journey.**

- **3<sup>rd</sup>. Journey- 54AD-58AD- Paul & Silas:** Galatia, Turkey, Ephesus, Macedonia, **Corinth**, Antioch, Asos, Southwestern Turkey, Cyprus, Tyre (Lebanon) and back to Jerusalem.
- **Paul had never visited Rome;** (before writing this book) but after fulfilling his mission of mercy to Jerusalem, he hoped to go to Rome en route to Spain (Rom. 15:23-25).
- **Written in 58AD-** The best date of the book's writing by Paul.
- **This was Paul's 6<sup>th</sup> book or letter of the Bible...** He wrote 13 books/Letters of the NT!

#### **4. The Theme of the Book of Romans (PP)**

- The theme of the book centers on the Gospel of Jesus (Rom. 1:16,17). **Paul is deeply concerned that his readers understand:**
  - **How a sinner may be received as righteous by a righteous God;**
  - **And how a justified sinner should live daily to the glory of God.**

**We've titled our study series after the Book of Romans...**

**(PP)**

**“God’s Plan To Move Us From  
Lost Ones  
To Saved Ones To Sent Ones”**

**5. Structure Of The Book: (PP)**

**Our Outline of the Book...(PP)**

1. Introduction & Theme Of Romans (1:1-17),
- 2. The Doctrine of Justification (1:18—5:11),**
3. The Doctrine Of Sanctification (5:12—8:39),
4. God’s Plan & Purpose For Israel (9:1—11:36),
5. Living The New Life As A Jesus Follower (12:1-15:13);
6. Conclusions & Greetings To Friends (15:14—16:27).

## 6. How We'll Study The Text:

1. Read It Together!
2. Look at it verse by verse for context and clarity.
3. Answer any questions the text brings up
4. Find Cross references for clarity & insight!
  - a. 2 Peter 3:15-16
5. Discover & explore the major teachings of each chapter
6. Understand them, and then apply them to our lives.
7. Progress & Confirm Our Outline of the Book or Letter!

**Session 2- Study: (PP)**  
**“How A Culture Crumbles”**

**Let’s Read Romans 1:18-32... I’ll need some help!**

**Overview of 18-32**

**Introduction**

**Northridge Earthquake... 7.1**

- The shaking found every weakness in the structure of LA
- Building collapsed
- Garages pancaked
- The Northridge Med center- had devastation throughout

**Paul, as he moves forward...having unveiled the righteousness of God to us in 1:1-17 ...**

**And the purpose for writing this book...**

- That is... Paul believed- the Gospel Of Jesus:
- Is the power of God...
- Not to beat people up...
- But to save them from their unrighteous lives
- Sinful lives!
- **Literally- God shared His righteousness with those...**
  - Who believe in His Son!
  - So they could become righteous before a holy God!
  - What a loving and powerful thing to do!!!
- **Read: Rom. 1:16-17- Read it!!!**

**So... as we venture off into Verses 18-32... disclaimer:**

- **An earthquake goes off... it shakes everything!**
- Only the brave will stick with us here tonight!
- **We are diving into very contrary info** to what our modern culture has settled on!

**I'll explain how the culture has made understanding Romans 1:18-32 much harder than 30 years ago!**

- So... we're pressing on... buckle up...
- Agree with me we want to get to the truth of the passage
- And we'll be good to go! Pray!

18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness,

- Right after understanding God's provision of Righteousness...
- We get the other side of the salvation problem...
- Our God is loving... and He is a **God of wrath!**
- We love the God who forgives, and restores...

**“But salvation at its core... is escaping the wrath of a holy God, who cannot exist with sinful men for eternity!”**

**The fear of eternal condemnation** is the *first motivation* Paul offers for coming to Jesus!

God **opposes all who are ungodly**, who fail to worship the One True God...

- **Unrighteousness** first attacks God's majesty and then God's law, His guidance to men!
- Ungodliness leads to **unrighteousness...**
- **A wrong relationship with God leads to a wrong relationship with people!!**
- And... unrighteousness is such a big part of man's fallen nature that it **naturally suppresses the truth** because it cannot handle or submit to it!!!
- **We are all horribly guilty of sin before a holy God with no way back on our own!!**

19 since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. 20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

- One thing we are seeing here is... judgment, wrath and justice are as much divine attributes as love, mercy, and grace.

- And now... the rationale that all are guilty and all have had more than enough evidence to sight in on the reality that there is a God!
  
- Since creation... **God's two major existence proofs** have been evident to anyone who looked:
  - His Eternal power...reflected in His amazing creation that is open for all to touch, taste, see, feel and appreciate! His power sustains that creation as well!
  
  - His Divine nature... God's provision of rain, food and materials for life that He provides free of charge to everyone who reaches out for them!
  
  - Everyone **can get this and understand it...** and source it! Only God, the God of the heavens could be this provider!
  
  - No special insight needed... everyone can get this!!!! And find God!!
  
  - Men are judged and sent to hell not because they do not live up to the light evidenced in the universe but because ultimately that rejection leads them to reject Jesus Christ!
  
  - God has and is working overtime to make sure the evidence is clear... what happens is...**men reject the evidence!**

- But... everyone is without excuse! Everyone, anyone... had an equal shot here! God will see to it!!

21 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.

- Here is where the **crumbling of a culture** begins!
- Ah hah! Everyone sees the evidence whether they acknowledge it or not! It's self-evident!!!!
- **Here begins the fatal flaw of mankind...**
  - Although they knew God...
    - **They neither glorified him as God...**
      - The root sin of pride... I don't want a God!
      - I want to be my own God!!!
      - We glorify Him by praising His perfection!
      - Men B/C of pride- reject that effort!
    - **Nor gave thanks to Him as God**
      - They refuse to thank God for His provisions!
      - Even thought everything for life comes from God!!!
    - And their **thinking became futile** or headed in the wrong direction since the God direction had been excluded!!!

- **And their foolish hearts were darkened...** the dimmer switch principle... God just ruined down His revelation and wisdom...
- **The heart that rejects God** does not get enlightened it gets *darker*... it trends in the wrong directions looking for answers where no good ones exist!!! That person becomes further enslaved in sin!!!
- **He also forsakes the foundation and motivation** for moral righteousness! **Spiritual darkness** and *moral depravity* are inseparable!

22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.

- **The descent into a crumbling life & culture is underway!!!**
  - We are looking at the character of fallen mankind...
  - Mankind as sinners, rejecting God- after all God has done to make Himself known to everyone!
  - Now **claiming to be wise... they play the role of a fool!**
  - Their lives **now bear the witness** of how foolish they have become!
- **Now mankind set-up their own version of a religion...**

- Rather than follow and worship and glorify and thank the God who made them, sustains them, and supplies them
- **Mankind decided to get into the god business!**
- Here it is...

Vs. 23... exchange the immortal God for constructed images...looking like people animals, etc.

**In their spiritual blindness, intellectual darkness and moral depravity- men are inclined to eject the holy creator for the unholy creature.**

- **Their religion... humanism...**
  - **Worship the creature-** rather than the creator!
  - We may reject God in our fallen state...
  - But we are insatiably religious... as people!!!
  - Look at all the religions on the earth today!!!
- **How many honor and worship the God of Heaven?**
  - Few!
  - People reject God even when He reveals Himself
  - But they want an idol they can control, change!

24 Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. 25 They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

- **So God gave the over...** He pulled his restraining of sin back from their lives! God left men alone!
- Left alone, man is a slave to sin! He can't help it!!
- **And, he gave people over...he let the inner lusts of each man now be free to control the individual!**
- You want your freedom... you don't want God...
  - Here's the alternative... your *inner lusts* now are free to rule your life... **the desires of their hearts** now rule!

**So...Where and what did those desires lead to?**

- Great personal accomplishments?
- Moral clarity and pure living?
- No!

**The rejection of God and the worship of the creature rather than the creator leads to...**

- **Perversion, unbridled sexual sin and degrading activities!**
- The down ward spiral is picking up speed!!!

*It's what happens when you exchange the truth about God for a lie... you reap what you sow! God is not mocked!*

- Look where we are... when we seek to glorify our own ways and to satisfy our bodies through shameful indulgences in sexual and other sins:
  - Our bodies along with our souls are instead dishonored!
  - Elevation of oneself over God produces just the opposite effect in us! We don't ascend- **We descend!**
- **You see it all the time...** alcohol controls those who overindulge on it!
- **Keep going and you destroy your body and mind!**
- Now you drink just to feel normal!!! **Addiction cycle!**
- **Sexual sin... degrading sin...** the more illicit you become thinking it will satisfy,
  - The more it **destroys your life and testimony** and self-worth!
  - You're tempted to **keep pushing the limits!**

**Because humanism rejects God it has no basis for man's dignity.**

- **And in the name of humanism-Humanity is dehumanized!**
- **If man has no dignity, then anything goes!**
  - Human sex trafficking becomes tolerable!
  - Every form of sexual perversion is up for grabs!
  - No limits because we're just doing what feels good!!
  - Committed relationships... no need!
  - Marriage... no need to have just one partner!
  - Just please you... that's the deal!

**But that's not the end of it... rejecting God has huge consequences!!**

26 Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. 27 In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error.

- We see *sexual impurity* now a normal occurrence...
- Next... rejecting God moves the goalposts even further in the wrong direction...
- Now **God gives rejecting people over to *shameful lusts*...**

**What are they?**

- Verse 26...**women exchanges normal sexual relations for unnatural ones...** women now had sexual desire for other women!
- Vs. 27... **and men the same way... men abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lusts for one another.** And received in themselves the due penalty for their error.

**“When man forsakes the author of nature  
He inevitably forsakes the *order of nature!*”**

**You must be committed to the truth here to be good with what I am about to say...**

- But homosexuality is *deviant behavior*...it is sin!
- Both the new and the old Testaments condemn it in the strongest terms!
- Under the old covenant it was punishable by death!
- Although homosexuals can be forgiven if the party repents... Paul makes it clear that an unrepentant homosexual along with idolaters, adulterers, thieves, drunkards and swindlers- **will not enter heaven!**
  - o 1Cor.6:9-11; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:3-5; Jude 7
- **Everyone is born in sin... but no one is born a homosexual, any more than one is born a thief or a murderer!**
- This behavior is a *choice*...

**There are no biblical grounds to justify  
Homosexual behavior!**

- In fact homosexuality is so self-destructive, God tells us that... **men would receive in themselves the due penalty for their error.**
- **Unnatural vice bring its own perverted reward.**
- AIDS is a frightening reminder of that fatal promise!

**The descent continues even deeper... rejecting *God has huge consequences...***

**Gender... You first need to know who you are- Child of God!!**

- Not what you are but who you are?
- Gain your identity in Jesus
- All other identities will be defined on light of His identity

### **How to respond to homosexuality**

#### **- Sociological Problem**

- What kind of culture we're living in
  - **Theonomous Culture- all think the same**
    - Natural law- not the present idea
  - **Heteronomous Culture- the few determine behavior**
    - The leadership determines the culture
    - Islam, Saudi, define how we live & think
    - The few dictate it for the masses
  - **Autonomous Culture- everybody is independent**
    - Each person dictates our own moral standards
    - Our current cultural ideas

## - Theological Problem

- Race is a sacred gift...
- Sexuality is a sacred gift too...
- Marriage Btwn Man/Woman is the most sacred rel. on earth-  
Jesus!
  - Agape, Phileo, Storge, Eros
  - Marriage pulls all three together!
  - The bible gives the sacredness of marriage...
  - We are bound to obey that purpose and command.
  
- Biblical notion cannot be violated without departures
- Not acceptable... consummate rel. with man and woman-  
sacred
  
- **Who you are** (child of God) ... It dictates **what** you are- Gen.  
1:27

## - Relational Problem

- Consequences are bound to the choice! Sin is not avoidable!!
- Love even those whom we disagree- never hate!
- Be light, salt, and love to people
- But we tell God's truth- we accept but don't approve!

**Here are some more...**

28 Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done. 29 They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, 30 slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; 31 they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy. 32 Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

- The descent into lostness is not over for those who reject God and worship the creature rather than the creator:
- **God gives people over to depraved minds...** worthless thinking results! Self-destructive, vile, godless, brutal and evil attitudes actions become regular behavior!!!
- The list is frightening! Read it!!! **Verse 31... they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy.**
- **But the key verse here- is verse 32...** it's one thing to participate in things deserving death...

- **It is another level to cheer on others to gain their participation as well!!**
- **To advocate for evil!** We see it throughout our post-modern culture!
- **That is now the deepest lever of corruption.**
- Rome had become such a society in the years before and after Paul's writing.
- The Roman empire was defeated and had waning power after 480AD.
- A major factor in their downfall was the rampant sexual deviancy that cut the heart right out of their powerful and advanced civilization!
- **The crumbling of a culture... is outlined for us by Paul in Romans 1:18-32.**
- It is not hard to see similar signs in our own culture today!
- But it is easy to see... that the whole world is guilty of sin!

- Walking away from God, rejecting His eternal power and divine nature... not only causes lives to crumble
- But cultures as well!

Next Time- Part 3- Romans 2:1-16... George Deur

**“The Best Worst News Ever”**

**Close and Pray**