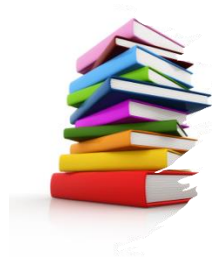


## Romans 1-6 CFM Ep 214



In this outline are a few links to some of my favorite books that have really helped me understand the context and content of the scriptures. [Click here to see all of my favorite books on Amazon](#). As an Amazon Affiliate, I do earn a small commission from qualifying purchases (at no extra cost to you).

### The Epistles of Paul

The Epistles are letters written by Church leaders to Saints in various parts of the world. The Apostle Paul wrote most of the epistles in the New Testament—starting with Romans and ending with Hebrews. His epistles are organized by length, except for Hebrews (see Bible Dictionary, “[Pauline Epistles](#)”). Although Romans is the first epistle in the New Testament, it was actually written near the end of Paul’s missionary journeys.

### When was Romans written?

We do not know, but some scholars put Romans at about 58 AD.<sup>1</sup> New Testament scholar Marcus Borg places Romans among the genuine Pauline epistles, and he sees them as having been written in the 50’s, just twenty years or so after the death of Jesus. Included below is the timeline from Marcus Borg’s book [Evolution of the Word](#):

#### Timeline

30s AD

Execution of Jesus (30 AD)

Jesus’ followers continue his mission in the Jewish homeland, especially in Galilee and the regions round about.

The conversion of Paul (ca. 33–35 AD)

Christ-communities already in Syria, in the Jewish Diaspora beyond the homeland.

40s AD

The emperor Caligula orders the erection of a statue of himself in the Jerusalem Temple, sparking massive nonviolent Jewish resistance.

Paul in Asia Minor (Turkey)

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<sup>1</sup> Paul probably wrote Romans around 55–58 (Craig Keener favors 58), shortly after Claudius’s death. A decade after Claudius’s death and perhaps six years (give or take two) after Paul wrote this letter, Christians of all ethnic backgrounds would suffer together in Rome (Tacitus, *Annals* 15.44). See: Keener, [The IVP Background Commentary: New Testament](#), IVP Academic, 2014, p. 424.

Christ-communities reach Rome (how, we do not know).

Controversy about whether Gentile converts need to become Jewish (circumcision for males).

Jews expelled from Rome (49 AD)

Paul enters Europe (Greece)

50s AD

Paul is in Greece and Asia Minor near the end of the decade. He goes to Jerusalem where he is arrested, imprisoned, and finally sent to Rome in chains. This occurs as early as the mid-50s, and a collection of Jesus' teachings is put into writing for the first time (Q).

Seven genuine letters of Paul are written: 1 Thessalonians, Galatians, 1 Corinthians, Philemon, Philippians, 2 Corinthians, and Romans.

60s AD

Paul is a prisoner in Rome.

The emperor Nero blames Christians for a massive fire in Rome and kills many, including Paul and Peter (64 AD).

An armed revolt against Roman rule in the Jewish homeland begins (66 AD).

70s AD

In 70, Roman legions re-conquer Jerusalem and destroy the temple.

The first gospel: Mark

The end of sacrifice begins to transform Judaism. Probably a majority of the followers of Jesus live in the Diaspora even though many are Jewish.

80s and onward

The center of Judaism in the homeland moves to Galilee. Judaism and followers of Jesus begin to separate into two different religions. Hostility between non-Christian Jews and Christian Jews grows. Second- and third-generation Christians struggle with issues of adaptation to Roman culture.

James, Colossians, Matthew, Hebrews are written.

90s AD

Earliest reference to Jesus in a non-Christian source (Josephus). The final part of the Jewish Bible is canonized, creating the three sections of Law, Prophets, and Writings.

John, Ephesians, Revelation are written.

100s AD

Jude, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John are written.

110s AD

Earliest references to Jesus and Christianity in Roman sources: Tacitus, Suetonius, and Pliny. Unsuccessful Jewish revolt in Egypt because of tension between Jews and Gentiles.

Luke, Acts, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Peter, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus are written.

120s AD

2 Peter

130s AD

A Jewish revolt against Roman rule in the Jewish homeland is brutally suppressed by the Romans. The surviving Jews are exiled from Jerusalem (132–135). During this time Christianity predominantly exists in the Gentile world of the Roman Empire, extending beyond its Jewish homeland. A significant portion of these Christians traces their origin back to the Jewish community.<sup>2</sup>

### **The Epistle to the Romans**

The Epistle to the Romans, also known as the Letter to the Romans, is a letter written by the apostle Paul to the Christians in Rome. The letter outlines Paul's theological understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ and its implications for both Jews and Gentiles. In particular, the letter emphasizes the righteousness of God and how it is revealed through faith in Jesus Christ, rather than through adherence to the Jewish law. Paul argues that all humanity is sinful and in need of salvation, and that this salvation is available to all who believe in Jesus Christ. The letter also addresses issues of Christian living and encourages believers to live in a way that honors God and demonstrates their faith. Overall, the Epistle to the Romans presents a profound and comprehensive explanation of the Christian faith and its implications for all of humanity.

### **Authorship**

All New Testament scholars accept this as a genuine letter of Paul. Churches naturally preserved letters of Paul; it would have been unnatural for anyone to have forged letters in his name during his lifetime or until long after his genuine letters had become widely known and circulated as authoritative. On the basis of letters clearly written by Paul to address specific situations of his day (e.g., 1 Corinthians) and other letters that share a common style with them, even the most critical New Testament scholars rarely dispute the Pauline authorship of particular letters (including Romans, Galatians, 1–2 Corinthians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians and Philemon).<sup>3</sup>

### **Keys to Understanding Paul's Epistles**

Bryce talked about a couple of ways we can get more out of the epistles. The first key is to know what the circumstances were (the best that we can) that brought about Paul's advice in the epistle. The next key is to see Paul's writings in the context of the whole gospel message in its entirety.

Elder Maxwell taught:

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<sup>2</sup> Marcus Borg, [\*Evolution of the Word: The New Testament in the Order the Books were Written\*](#), HarperOne, 2013.

<sup>3</sup> Keener, p. 422.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is a collection of principles woven together in the fabric of immutable law; this is the romance and the high adventure of orthodoxy: these principles, bound together, not only give us salvation, but they also give us balance, depth, and happiness in our lives. The doctrines of Jesus Christ are so powerful that any one of these doctrines, having been broken away from the rest, goes wild and mad...Any doctrine, unless it is woven into the fabric of orthodoxy, goes wild. The doctrines of the kingdom need each other just as the people of the kingdom need each other.<sup>4</sup>

Joseph Smith offered this key for understanding the scriptures:

I have a key by which I understand the scriptures. I enquire, what was the question which drew out the answer, or caused Jesus to utter the parable? (Joseph Smith, *HC*, 5:261; *Teachings*, 276).

### **Rome, the heart of the empire**

Perhaps a million people were interlocked in Rome, city of the emperor, the aristocracy, and the masses. ***Augustus could claim that he found a city of brick and changed it to marble.*** This boast had merit, for he left behind an astounding list of temples and public buildings that he built and repaired. Political and geographical center of the empire, Rome had long attracted Paul as a culminating missionary opportunity. He wrote to the Saints that he had desired "these many years to come unto you" (Rom. 15:23). The Italian Juvenal lived in Rome a few years after Paul and sketched the people of the city with slashing satire. The rich are carried by in sedan chairs, while the poor elbow each other through cluttered streets. Rome is wicked but on the move with projects and ideas—an international city and a melting pot. In Juvenal's overdone complaints, one can scarcely find a Roman in Rome. Greeks were everywhere, and one famous jibe referred to Antioch's river: "For long the Syrian Orontes has flown into the Tiber." And the Jews? They are also unwelcome realities in Roman satire.

Many sources report the extensive Jewish colony in Rome in the first century. Grateful to Julius Caesar for favor, the Jews were conspicuous at his funeral: "A throng of foreigners went about lamenting, each after the fashion of his country, above all the Jews." There was an attempted expulsion of the Jews under Tiberius, and another under Claudius, just before Paul came to Corinth, for he met the missionary couple Priscilla and Aquila, "lately come from Italy . . . because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome" (Acts 18:2). The imperial historian Suetonius seems to refer to Christ in a garbled way in mentioning this decree of Claudius: "Since the Jews constantly made disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus, he expelled them from Rome." This intimately fits the Acts picture of angry Jewish demonstrations against Christians. But another good Roman source suggests that Claudius's edict was modified somewhat because of the Jews' great numbers: "As for the Jews, who had again increased so greatly that by reason of their multitude it would have been hard without raising a tumult to bar them from the city, he did not drive them out, but ordered them, while continuing their traditional mode of life, not to hold meetings." The decree was temporary, but its various reports give invaluable glimpses of the impact of the gospel in Rome and of the strength of the Jewish community there. Paul had reason to fear the effect of the Judaizers as he wrote Romans.

### **The Jewish Community in Rome**

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<sup>4</sup> Neal A. Maxwell, "Spiritual Ecology," *New Era*, Feb. 1975.

Rome may have had a million inhabitants; supported by its empire, it imported at least two hundred thousand tons of grain annually. Estimates of the Jewish community in this period range between roughly twenty thousand and fifty thousand, thus (by the usual educated guesses) perhaps five percent of the population. Rome's Jewish community was predominantly poor, although some groups of Jewish people there were wealthier than others and better educated. Different groups lived in different parts of the city (mostly in ethnically segregated communities) and had their own leaders. It is thought that many of the predominantly Jewish house churches existed in the Jewish ghetto across the Tiber, many Jewish residents working on the docks there. Rome included a community of Jewish Roman citizens, mostly descended from Judeans enslaved by Pompey and then freed by other Jews in Rome (Philo, *Embassy to Gaius* 155). More than half of the Jewish residents of Rome had Latin names.

The primary language of the Jewish community in Rome, however, was not Latin but Greek, the language in which Paul writes (seventy-six percent of their burial inscriptions are in Greek, twenty-three percent in Latin and one percent in Hebrew or Aramaic). Many Roman conversions to Judaism created resentment among other aristocratic Romans and led to tension between the Jewish and Gentile elements in the city. Relevant to this letter, ancient literature suggests that many Romans looked down on Jewish people especially for circumcision (cf. Rom 2:25-29; 4:9-12), Sabbath-keeping (cf. 14:5-6) and food customs (cf. 14:2-23).<sup>5</sup>

## Romans 1

Romans 1 introduces the main themes of the epistle, including the righteousness of God, the problem of human sinfulness, and the need for salvation.<sup>6</sup> Paul begins by describing the universal human problem of sinfulness, emphasizing the idolatry and immorality of Gentiles who have rejected the knowledge of God. Through this description, Paul lays the groundwork for his later arguments about the need for justification by faith and the universality of human sinfulness.

### I. Introduction (Romans 1.1-17)

- Greeting (1.1-7)
- Thanksgiving and prayer (1.8-15)
- Theme statement: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (1.16-17).

### II. The problem of human sinfulness (Romans 1.18-32).

- The revelation of God's wrath against human sinfulness (1.18-32).
  - Ἀποκαλύπτεται γὰρ ὀργή θεοῦ ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ ἐπὶ πᾶσαν ἀσέβειαν καὶ ἀδικίαν ἀνθρώπων τῶν τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἐν ἀδικίᾳ κατεχόντων "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness" (Rom. 1.18).

<sup>5</sup> Keener, *Background*, p. 422.

<sup>6</sup> Paul does not use the word for sin in this chapter, rather he uses words like "ungodliness" (ἀσέβεια - asebeia) (Rom. 1.18) and "unrighteousness" (ἀδικία - adikia). "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness (ἀσέβειαν) and unrighteousness (ἀδικίαν) of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness" (Rom 1.18).

- “For it is expedient that an atonement should be made; for according to the great plan of the Eternal God there must be an atonement made, or else all mankind must unavoidably perish; yea, all are hardened; yea, all are fallen and are lost, and must perish except it be through the atonement which it is expedient should be made” (Alma 34.9).
- The suppression of the truth about God (1.18-23).
  - “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools” (Rom. 1.20-22).<sup>7</sup>
- The idolatry and immorality of Gentiles (1.24-32).
  - New International Version of the Bible gives us this translation of Rom. 1.23-27: “And exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and bird and animals and reptiles. Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator- who is forever praised. Amen. Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversions” (Romans 1:23-27).<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The Jerusalem Bible renders it thus: “They knew God and yet refused to honor him as God or to thank him; instead, they made nonsense out of logic and their empty minds were darkened. The more they called themselves philosophers, the more stupid they grew” (Romans 1:21-22). Stoic philosophers argued that the nature of God was evident in creation; most Gentile intellectuals affirmed divine design in nature. Cicero at that time could even assert that no race of humanity was so uncivilized as to deny the existence of the gods, and along with others he argued that the human mind points to what God is like. Jewish people scattered throughout the Greco-Roman world used this sort of argument to persuade pagans to recognize the true God. Even later rabbis tell delightful stories about how Abraham reasoned back to the first cause and showed his fellow Gentiles that there was really only one true God. According to Jewish tradition, God had given seven laws to Noah, for which all humanity was responsible (including the prohibition of idolatry). But unlike Israel, who had to keep all 613 commandments in the law (according to later rabbinic count), most Gentiles disobeyed even the laws of Noah. In a social world built around benefaction and honor, ingratitude (1:21) was one of the worst offenses, and grateful expressions of honor the one obligation expected of recipients of gifts. Keener, p. 427-428.

<sup>8</sup> Greek men were often bisexual; not only was homosexual behavior approved (some writers, like speakers in Plato’s *Symposium*, preferred it to heterosexual behavior), but elements of the culture socialized boys in this direction. Probably due to a deficiency in the number of women (which many attribute to female infanticide), marriages were often made between thirty-year-old men and women who were eighteen or even younger; husbands usually did not respect them. Men had access to only three forms of sexual release until such late marriages: slaves, prostitutes and other males. Men often preferred boys on the edge of puberty or adolescents. Lesbianism, though less widely reported, is also attested.

Although many upper-class Romans were affected by Greek ideals, some other Romans, including a number of Roman philosophers, disliked homosexual practice. Greco-Roman moralists sometimes opposed gender reversal as “against nature,” which would resemble the Jewish argument from God’s original purposes in creation (Gen 2:18).

- The Church of Jesus Christ teaches that marriage is between a man and a woman. In 1995, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints published "[The Family: A Proclamation to the World](#)," which declares the following truths about marriage: We, the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, solemnly proclaim that marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and that the family is central to the Creator's plan for the eternal destiny of His children. . . .The family is ordained of God. Marriage between man and woman is essential to His eternal plan. Children are entitled to birth within the bonds of matrimony, and to be reared by a father and a mother who honor marital vows with complete fidelity.<sup>9</sup>

Bryce's list of how these Romans were on the road to perdition:

1. They loved not truth (Rom. 1.18).
2. They changed God (Rom. 1.23).
3. With their lusts they worshipped the creature instead of God (Rom. 1.24).
4. God gave them up to vile affections (Rom. 1.26).<sup>10</sup>
5. They lose their minds, going to a state of a reprobate mindset (Rom. 1.28).
6. They have pleasure when others sin (Rom. 1.32).

C.S. Lewis had this to say regarding this situation:

When a man is getting better, he understands more and more clearly the evil that is still left in him. When a man is getting worse, he understands his own badness less and less. A moderately bad man knows he is not very good: a thoroughly bad man thinks he is all right. This is common sense, really. You understand sleep when you are awake, not while you are sleeping. You can see mistakes in arithmetic when your mind is working properly: while you are making them you cannot see them. You can understand the nature of drunkenness when you are sober, not when

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This argument appealed to the procreative function of intercourse in nature and the way that male and female organs fit together. Jewish people, whose Scriptures already condemned homosexual acts wherever they were mentioned (including Lev 18:22; 20:13), also borrowed the argument that homosexual acts were "against nature" (cf., e.g., Philo, *Life of Abraham* 135-37; *Special Laws* 3.37-39; Josephus, *Against Apion* 2.273-75; Pseudo-Phocylides 190-92). Although Jewish texts speak of Jewish adulterers and thieves, they nearly always treat homosexual behavior as a Gentile practice. (Socialization affected sexual development.)

Paul did not choose this example of sin to be controversial with his readers; his Jewish and Roman Christian readers alike would have agreed with him that both idolatry and homosexual behavior are sinful. But this example is a setup for his critique of sins less often denounced (Rom 1:28-32). Keener, p. 428.

<sup>9</sup> Since the publication of that statement, there have been many challenges to the institution of marriage.

Prominent among these challenges has been the recognition by several national governments and some states and provinces that same-sex marriage—formal unions between two individuals of the same gender—are the equivalent of traditional marriage. Yet God's purposes for establishing marriage have not changed. One purpose of this document is to reaffirm the Church's declaration that marriage is the lawful union of a man and a woman. See the [2006 interview with Elder Oaks](#), where he tackles the questions that many in the world are asking the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints today regarding those advocating same sex marriage.

<sup>10</sup> "Vile affections" in Rom. 1.26 comes from the Greek: πάθη ἀτιμίας. This phrase can be translated as dishonorable love or dishonorable affection, passion or emotion. Honor is a big deal in Greek culture, and Paul is describing this activity as dishonorable.

you are drunk. Good people know about both good and evil: bad people do not know about either.<sup>11</sup>

## Romans 2

Romans 2 continues Paul's argument about the universality of human sinfulness and the need for salvation. Paul challenges the Jews' sense of superiority and reliance on the law, emphasizing that they too are guilty of sin and deserving of judgment. He argues that true obedience to the law requires inward transformation and a heart that seeks after God. Paul's emphasis on God's impartial judgment serves to underscore the seriousness of human sinfulness and the need for salvation by faith in Jesus Christ.

### I. God's impartial judgment (2.1-16).

- Condemnation of hypocritical judgment (2.1-5).
- The impartiality of God's judgment (2.6-11).<sup>12</sup>
- Judgment based on obedience to the law (2.12-16).

### II. The failure of the law and the need for inward transformation (2:17-29)

- The Jews' reliance on the law (2.17-20).
- The Jews' hypocrisy and failure to keep the law (2.21-24).
- Circumcision as a sign of true obedience (2.25-29).

## Romans 3

Romans 3 emphasizes the universality of sin and the need for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Paul argues that both Jews and Gentiles are under the power of sin and in need of justification through faith in Christ. He emphasizes that the law cannot save, but rather serves as a means of revealing the

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<sup>11</sup> C. S. Lewis, [\*Mere Christianity\*](#), Book III, Ch. 4, Para. 10, p. 87.

<sup>12</sup> God judges all people fairly and without favoritism. In this chapter, Paul emphasizes that both Jews and Gentiles will be judged according to their actions and their adherence to God's law. He argues that God shows no partiality in his judgment, but will reward those who do what is right and punish those who do evil, regardless of their ethnic background or social status. This emphasis on God's impartiality is important because it highlights the universality of human sinfulness and the need for salvation. Paul emphasizes that no one is exempt from God's judgment, and no one can earn salvation through their own efforts alone. Instead, Paul argues that the only way to be justified before God is through faith in Jesus Christ. Although he does not use the Greek noun "pistis" (faith) in Romans 2, Paul does emphasize the importance of inward transformation and obedience to God's law as evidence of genuine faith. For example, in Romans 2.12-1, he argues that Gentiles who do not have the law are still capable of doing what is right and will be judged according to their actions. He writes, "For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified" (Romans 2.13). This emphasis on obedience to the law as evidence of righteousness serves to highlight the importance of living out one's faith in practical everyday ways. By emphasizing God's impartial judgment, Paul underscores the seriousness of sin and the need for salvation, while also highlighting the universality of God's offer of salvation to all people, regardless of their background or status.



knowledge of sin. Paul also highlights the righteousness of God that is revealed through faith in Christ and emphasizes the importance of upholding the law through faith, or unwavering trust in Jesus Christ.

#### I. The universality of sin (Romans 3.1-20)

- The advantage of being Jewish (Romans 3.1-8)
- The universality of sin (Romans 3.9-18)
- The law as a means of knowledge, not righteousness (Romans 3.19-20)

#### II. The righteousness of God through faith (Romans 3.21-31)

- The righteousness of God revealed apart from the law (Romans 3.21-22)
- The universality of sin and the universality of salvation (Romans 3.23-24)
- The justification of sinners through faith in Jesus Christ (Romans 3.25-26)
- The law upheld through faith (Romans 3.27-31)

### Romans 4

Romans 4 emphasizes the importance of justification by faith (πίστις) rather than works. Paul uses Abraham as an example of someone who was justified by faith prior to the giving of the law and circumcision. He argues that the promise made to Abraham and his descendants was fulfilled through faith, and that this faith is the means by which believers are justified. Paul emphasizes that faith is not a work, but rather a recognition of the grace of God and the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice for salvation. In the way that this idea was used anciently, faith represented a reciprocal relational trust, in this case, a deep trust in Jesus, which, when the believer exhibited it, was reciprocated.<sup>13</sup>

#### I. Abraham as an example of justification by faith (Romans 4.1-12).

- Abraham justified by faith, not works (Romans 4.1-5).
- David's affirmation of justification by faith (Romans 4.6-8).
- Abraham's justification prior to circumcision (Romans 4.9-12).

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<sup>13</sup> An example of this would be Nephi's faith as portrayed in Helaman 10. In the text we read: Blessed art thou, Nephi, for those things which thou hast done; for I have beheld how thou hast with unweariness declared the word, which I have given unto thee, unto this people. And thou hast not feared them, and hast not sought thine own life, but hast sought my will, and to keep my commandments. And now, because thou hast done this with such unweariness, behold, I will bless thee forever; and I will make thee mighty in word and in deed, in faith and in works; yea, **even that all things shall be done unto thee according to thy word**, for thou shalt not ask that which is contrary to my will. Behold, thou art Nephi, and I am God. Behold, I declare it unto thee in the presence of mine angels, that ye shall have power over this people, and shall smite the earth with a famine, and with pestilence, and destruction, according to the wickedness of this people. Behold, I give unto you a power, that whatsoever ye shall seal on earth shall be sealed in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven; and thus shall ye have power among this people" (Helaman 10.4-7). Nephi's trust was reciprocated, with the Lord showing more trust in Nephi. And so it goes with all of the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve. As we show our trust in him, the Lord reciprocates. We can never pay him back (Mosiah 2.22), but we trust and keep moving forward.

- Paul confronts a deeply ingrained religious tradition within the Jewish members of the church, who manifest some degree of the self-righteousness of their predecessors. Specifically, they exhibit self-righteousness in three respects: 1) they are circumcised and demand that Gentile members also undergo circumcision, 2) they maintain that righteousness is attained through adherence to the Law of Moses and expect Gentile members of the Church of Jesus Christ to conform to their religious tradition, and 3) they claim to be chosen by lineage, invoking their descent from Abraham. In response to these claims, Paul adeptly employs Abraham as an exemplar to disprove these erroneous beliefs. By Jewish standards, Abraham represents one who would be considered among the most righteous ever to have lived. Yet, Paul shows that Abraham himself could not claim righteousness by virtue of circumcision, adherence to the Law of Moses, or genealogical descent. Notably, when Abraham found favor with God, he was uncircumcised, lived long before the Law of Moses, and was the son of a wicked and idolatrous father. Hence, by Paul's reasoning, Gentile members of the Church of Jesus Christ should not be compelled to conform to Jewish standards. They could attain righteousness as Abraham did, even without circumcision (Rom. 4.11), the Law of Moses, or direct descent from Abraham. For they were "of the faith of Abraham" (Rom.4.16), and that faith (πίστις),<sup>14</sup> not lineage or adherence to tradition, was the basis of righteousness before God.

## II. The promise fulfilled through faith (Romans 4.13-25).

- The promise to Abraham and his descendants fulfilled through faith (Romans 4.13-17).
- Abraham's faith and the fulfillment of the promise (Romans 4.18-22).
- The significance of Abraham's faith for believers (Romans 4.23-25).

### Romans 5

Romans 5 emphasizes the benefits of justification by faith and the contrast between the effects of Adam's disobedience and Christ's obedience. Paul argues that through faith in Christ, believers are able to experience peace with God, hope, endurance, and the love of God demonstrated through Christ's sacrifice. He contrasts the consequences of Adam's sin with the benefits of Christ's obedience, emphasizing the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness that are made available through faith in Christ.

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<sup>14</sup> In Classical Greek, the word πίστις (pistis) typically referred to a sense of trust or confidence in something or someone, based on evidence or experience. It could be translated as "trust," "faith," "confidence," or "reliance." In Greek literature, πίστις often referred to loyalty or faithfulness, such as the faithfulness between friends or the loyalty of a subject to a ruler. In legal contexts, πίστις could refer to the reliability of a witness or the trustworthiness of evidence. The concept of πίστις also had religious connotations in Classical Greek, particularly in the context of cults and mystery religions. It could refer to a person's loyalty or devotion to a particular deity or religious community. In this sense, πίστις could be seen as a form of religious commitment or devotion. Overall, the Classical Greek understanding of πίστις emphasized trust, loyalty, confidence, and reliability, and the concept could be applied in a variety of contexts, both religious and secular. See: Brent Schmidt, [Relational Faith](#), BYU Studies, 2023.

### I. The benefits of justification by faith (Romans 5.1-11).

- Peace with God through justification by faith (Romans 5.1-2).
- Hope and endurance through suffering (Romans 5.3-5).
- The love of God demonstrated through Christ's sacrifice (Romans 5.6-11).

### II. Adam and Christ as representatives of humanity (Romans 5.12-21).

- Sin and death through the Fall of Adam (Romans 5.12-14).
- The gift of grace and righteousness through Christ's obedience (Romans 5.15-19).
  - Ἄλλ οὐχ ὡς τὸ παράπτωμα οὕτως καὶ τὸ χάρισμα· εἰ γὰρ τῷ τοῦ ἐνὸς παραπτώματι οἱ πολλοὶ ἀπέθανον πολλῶ μᾶλλον ἢ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἡ δωρεὰ ἐν χάριτι τῆ τοῦ ἐνὸς ἀνθρώπου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς τοὺς πολλοὺς ἐπερίσσευσεν “But not as **the fall**, even in this manner is the charis/grace of the Lord, for if through the one **fall** many died, how much more is the charis/grace of God and the gift by the charis/grace of one man, Jesus Christ which has been given to many with abundance!” (Romans 5.15, my translation).
- The law and its relation to sin and grace (Romans 5.20-21).

## Romans 6

Romans 6 discusses the transformative power of union with Christ in the life of the believer. Paul addresses the question of whether grace gives license to sin and demonstrates that, in fact, baptism into Christ's death leads to newness of life and freedom from the dominion of sin in our lives. He emphasizes that believers are no longer slaves to sin but have been set free to obey righteousness. The chapter contrasts the outcomes of living as a slave to sin or as a slave to righteousness and emphasizes the reality of the eternal consequences of each choice. The message of the chapter is that union with the Savior Jesus Christ brings newness of life, freedom from sin's power over our lives, and the hope of eternal life, which truly is a gift from God made available through the Atoning blood of Jesus Christ.

### I. Introduction (Romans 6.1-4)

- The question of continuing in sin: “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?” (Rom. 6.1-3).
- The answer: baptism into Christ's death (Rom. 6.4-5).
  - The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, “Baptism is a sign to God, to angels, and to heaven that we do the will of God, and there is no other way beneath the heavens whereby God hath ordained for man to come to Him to be saved, and enter into the Kingdom of God, except faith in Jesus Christ, repentance, and baptism for the remission of sins, and any other course is in vain.”<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> [Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith](#), p. 198.

## II. The implications of union with Jesus Christ (Romans 6.5-14)

- “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 6.11).
  - "Sometimes the spiritual struggle to slay sin, that the new convert may be free therefrom, is as savage a warfare as death by crucifixion. But when sin is destroyed in our lives, it is no longer our master. We are 'dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' (Rom. 6.3-11.)"<sup>16</sup>

## III. The contrast between slavery to sin and righteousness (Romans 6.15-23)

- The danger of returning to sin
- The reality of slavery to sin or righteousness
- The outcome of each slavery: death or eternal life

## IV. Conclusion (Romans 6.24-25)

- Sin's wages and God's gift
- Gratitude for God's gift of eternal life in Christ.

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<sup>16</sup> Elder Bruce R. McConkie, [\*The Promised Messiah: The First Coming of Christ\*](#), Deseret Book, 1978, p. 389.