

NEW THRU 30 HISTORY

History: Romans

Author: Paul

When was the book of Romans written, where was it composed and who was it written to?: Paul wrote Romans around AD 57 from Corinth. The book is a letter written to the Roman church, which was comprised of both Jews and Gentiles.

Purpose of the book: Paul had three purposes in writing this letter. 1) He wanted to prepare the Romans for his arrival by clarifying the content of the gospel he preached. 2) He wanted to gather support for the mission to Spain that he was planning. 3) Paul wished to quell the divisions that were arising in the Roman church between Gentiles and Jews and he believed a clear presentation of the gospel would do just that. Paul's main argument is that although both Jews and Gentiles are helplessly lost in sin and deserve God's wrath, God has given both groups salvation through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

How does the book of Romans fit into the Jewish Culture of the New Testament?: One of the goals of Paul's argument in Romans is to show Jewish Christians how God has included Gentiles in his salvation and how this inclusion does not violate the teachings of the Old Testament. For this reason, Paul often uses direct scriptural quotations or allusions to Old Testament stories to prove his points.

Interesting notes about the book of Romans: Much of the reason Paul wrote Romans was to stop divisions that were growing between Jewish and Gentile Christians. Paul was not writing out his theology for fun. It had a very practical purpose. He believed that if he could demonstrate that both Gentiles and Jews were guilty of sin and thus condemned, and that their only hope was Jesus, there would be no reason for boasting between them or divisions.

Main Takeaways from the book of Romans:

- Every human being, whether they are hyper-religious or living like a complete pagan, has sinned and stands condemned before God, but God, because he is merciful and loving, has poured out the penalty for our sin on Jesus Christ and provided salvation to those who put their faith in him.
- Once we put our faith in Christ, we are free not only from the penalty of our sin but also the power of it on our lives. We no longer have to be slaves to it. Our responsibility is to now be transformed by the power and grace of God to become what God has saved us to be.
- Because all of us are saved only by the grace of God, there is no room for anyone to boast about being more spiritual because they don't do certain things that are morally neutral or for people to boast about being freer because they do them.
- Divisions recreate a chasm that God destroyed when Jesus died on the cross for all sinners.