

ENDORSEMENTS

"Paul's Big Letter is a gospel treasure chest for families. J. A. White breaks the book of Romans up into easy-to-understand chunks and uses kid-friendly language to communicate the key truths of the gospel found in the book of Romans. Grab a copy and take your family on a journey through Paul's most powerful letter, expecting the power of the gospel to affect your children."

Marty Machowski, Family Pastor and author of *Wonderfull: Ancient Psalms Ever New*, *The Ology*, *The Gospel Story Bible* and curriculum, *Long Story Short*, and other gospel resources for churches and families

"It is arguable that the Book of Romans contains the clearest, most complete, and most organized presentation of the Christian gospel anywhere to be found in the Bible. How important it is for Christians, young and old, to come to a fuller understanding of the glorious truths Paul presents here. Aaron White has written a short, clear, and easily-understandable overview of this Book that masterfully walks parents and children through Romans, highlighting what is most important to grasp and apply along the way. What a wonderful tool this is for discipling our children as well as for use in church, home-school, and Christian school curricula. I gladly commend this book and pray many will benefit from it."

Bruce A. Ware Professor of Christian Theology, Southern Seminary, Louisville, KY

“Romans is such a beautifully deep theological book of Scripture that it can be difficult to teach to our children. *Paul’s Big Letter* does a fantastic job of breaking Romans down into points that can be easily digested. It contains a Biblically sound Gospel presentation, as well as real-life applications. It is well written, with questions and thoughtful consideration at the end of each chapter that makes for a delightful teaching tool!”

Lauren Hereford, Host, Tulips & Honey

Paul's
BIG
Letter

A Kid-Friendly Journey
Through Romans

J. Aaron White



H&E Kids, Peterborough, Ontario, Canada

*This book is dedicated to those who long for little ones to see
and savor the glory of the gospel of God (Rom. 1:1).*

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INTRODUCTION

If you are reading this section of the book, you are likely a parent, grandparent, pastor, Sunday school teacher, or someone who simply cares a great deal about the spiritual formation of children. Whatever the case, I am thankful that you are burdened to see little ones grow into the “measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. 4:13). I want you to know from the outset that this resource was written by a sinner saved by grace who is blessed to be the husband of one amazing wife, the father of five wonderful children, and the pastor of a beloved church. Like you, I am concerned about the spiritual health of my children and want them to see and savor Christ in all of Scripture. As a preacher who spends a great deal of time in Paul’s epistles, I found myself looking for resources for children ages 8–12 that would help them engage with these letters that make up the majority of the New Testament. After fruitless searches, I decided to create my own. I am guessing you have some questions, so let me see if I can beat you to the punch: *Why should children ages 8–12 study Paul’s*

letters? Aside from the sheer volume of content that comes to us from the apostle Paul, the doctrinal content of his epistles is meat and potatoes that our little ones need in their spiritual diet! Story Bibles, character studies, and picture books for children are a great blessing from the Lord for the nourishment of our children. However, they also need to engage with the mind-blowing truths that Paul sets forth.

Is it only for children ages 8-12? No, of course not. However, the content was created with this general age group in mind. If your little one is able to follow along and gain spiritual benefit from the study even though they are younger, great! Likewise, if older children find it helpful, that is cause for rejoicing as well. Ages 8-12 is merely a recommendation!

How do I use this study? There is one chapter for each chapter of Paul's epistle with each concluding with the *Big Idea* (what is the chapter about in one sentence), *Talk About It* (questions to probe the heart), and a *Key Verse* (one verse from the chapter to memorize). You may find that your little learners benefit from

reading one chapter and spending a few days thinking through the questions, referring back to Paul's letter, and memorizing the *Key Verse*. Perhaps you find that tackling one chapter a day is helpful for your children. Also, this resource can be used for children's curriculum. However you choose to implement it, the main goal is for the kids to grasp what Paul is saying.

As I was developing the content for this study, I had my eleven-year-old daughter read it and make notes as to words she couldn't understand and concepts that were blurry. She made recommendations for changes that kids would appreciate. In short, this resource has been kid-approved, thus making it kid-friendly!



1

GOOD NEWS FOR BAD PEOPLE

Have you ever had a secret that you really, really, really wanted to tell someone? I'm not talking about a little secret like you're getting ice cream after lunch. I mean a big, awesome, life-altering, mind-boggling secret that is so huge you could barely stand it? That's exactly how the apostle Paul felt when he wrote to the Christians in Rome. Do you know where Rome is? That's right, it's in Italy (the country that looks like a boot). Paul wrote his letter around the year A.D. 57 while he was on his

third big missionary journey and this is what he said: **“...I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome. 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” (Rom. 1:15-16).**

Paul's *secret* was better than after-lunch ice cream, it was the good news of the gospel! So, what is the gospel and why is it good news? Great questions! Let me explain it by asking another question: Do you like to go outside on a clear night and look up at the stars? Do you think they would twinkle as brightly if the night sky were bright green or yellow? Of course not! The pitch black sky makes the stars more beautiful. This is the idea behind Paul's words in Romans chapter one: **“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth” (Rom. 1:18).** Paul tells us the painful, awful truth about ourselves—we are *all* rebellious sinners who deserve God's wrath in hell! No matter where we live or who we are, the Bible says we're all bad people. You don't believe me? Listen to how Paul describes us: **“They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, including greed which is the worship of money. They are filled with envy, murder, drunkenness, and orgies, and they worship idols and live in enmity against God.” (Rom. 1:29-31)**

teousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness,. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless" (Rom. 1:29-31). Although we do nice things like make our beds (sometimes) and say nice things (sometimes), our hearts are in rebellion against the loving God who made us. This is the black sky that we talked about. So, what about the stars?

Paul's good news is really, really, really good news when we understand how bad we really are. It's like hearing the doctor say that you have a bad disease; the news makes you sad. Then, the doctor smiles and tells you that he has the perfect cure; this news makes you happy! This is the good news that Paul wants to explain: **"For in it [the gospel] the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, 'The righteous shall live by faith'"** (Rom. 1:17). Although he won't give us all the details until chapter three (don't peak ahead!), Paul is telling us something amazing. Paul is telling us that God has done something that can make unrighteous (bad, sinful) people righteous (clean, forgiven). Not only that, he tells us that this

salvation is all by *faith*! That means we don't have to earn our way to heaven; God reveals how this happens in the gospel, the good (awesome, amazing, God-glorifying, joy-giving) news.



Big Idea: We are sinful to the core but the good news of the gospel tells us how, by faith, we can be made righteous in the sight of a holy God.

Talk About It: Why would Paul say that we are all bad people if we do some nice things from time to time? How does hearing the bad news make the good news even better? What is the difference between having faith in something versus working to get something?

Key Verse: *“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” (Rom. 1:16).*