

Romans

A Reasoned Faith

Marilyn Kunz & Catherine Schell

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Romans 1

Why Are People in a Desperate Condition?

Paul warmly greets the recipients of this letter, and then he plunges directly into the meat of his writing, using strong words to diagnose the basic problem faced by all human beings: their separation from God. Paul knows the solution to this terrible situation and feels a tremendous obligation to declare it to them. His description of people apart from God contains hard-hitting insights into our contemporary world.

Read Romans 1:1-7

1. From this paragraph, what do you learn about the author?

What do you learn about those to whom Paul was writing?

2. In these verses, what does Paul say about the origin of the gospel, predictions made about it, and its content?

3. What does Paul tell us about Jesus Christ?

Read Romans 1:8-17

4. Why is Paul writing to the Christians at Rome?

What does Paul say regarding those who will receive his letter?

5. What statements demonstrate Paul's passion (verses 14-16)?

What passions characterize your life?

6. From what Paul says in verses 16 and 17, what does he believe about ***the gospel (this Good News about Christ, NLT)***?

When could it be that followers of Jesus are actually ashamed of the gospel? See 1 Corinthians 1:22-23.

7. Put the theme of Paul's letter (verses 16-17) in your own words.

8. How is faith connected with salvation and righteousness?

*Note: In verse 17, **righteousness of God** refers to God's provision in Christ for those who receive it.*

Read Romans 1:18-23

9. Exactly what causes God's wrath to be revealed?

10. How do verses 19-21 address the concern about people who haven't had access to the Bible or the message of Jesus?

11. How have you recognized God's ***eternal power and divine nature*** in the natural world?

12. According to this section, what has been the consequence of people's failure to glorify God and give thanks to him?

Where have you seen examples of this in other's lives and in your own?

Read Romans 1:24-32

13. How is God's wrath (verse 18) demonstrated in his actions (verses 24, 26, 28) and in his ***decree*** (verse 32)?

14. How is being able to have their own way a punishment for people?

15. In our culture, what is an example of *exchanging the truth of God for a lie and worshiping and serving created things rather than the Creator* (verse 25)?

16. What happened when **God gave them over** (verses 24, 26-31)?

17. To what moral condition has this led (verse 32)?

SUMMARY

1. At the core, why are people in the desperate condition Paul describes in this chapter (verses 21, 25, 28)?

What examples of this do you see in individuals and nations?

In yourself?

2. How does the reality presented in verses 18-32 heighten the intensity of what Paul says in verses 16 and 17?

PRAYER

Dear God, this chapter points out a problem that seems to be part of the human condition: We put other things in your place. We ignore the fact that you are God. We fail to give thanks to you, and the results are harmful to ourselves and to people around us. Help us to understand the message and power of this gospel that Paul was so passionate about, and how it brings salvation to everyone who believes. Amen.