

Romans: A Study on Reformation  
Lesson 1 “Introduction to Romans”

I. Introduction - We are beginning a new series on the book of Romans today. We are going to study verse by verse through the book with our focus being on “Reformation.” Paul wrote letter to the church in Rome to bring reformation to this important church in 57 A.D.

A. Romans played a key role in the Reformation in 1517 as Martin Luther read **Romans 1:17** and learned the just live by faith. This verse revolution his life from a works based righteousness that the Catholic church taught, to a righteousness that came by grace through faith.

1. This understanding of righteousness motivated him to post 95 theses to the door of the church with the hopes of bringing change within the Catholic church. The Catholic church taught a works based righteousness that led to the selling of indulgences, the belief the Pope controlled who went to purgatory and many other erroneous beliefs.

2. The Reformation was not a revival. What’s the difference? Revivals give new life to things that are dead or dying, reformations change structures. Re-form.

a. We need reformation in America because our existing spiritual structure is broken. This is we keep electing ungodly politicians from both parties, have ungodly business practices, ungodly schools, and corruption throughout the land. **Politics is downstream of culture.**

b. My testimony from November of 2021 - I was very frustrated with all that was going on in our nation and I began to cry out for revival and then reformation. Then God showed me **Romans 12:1-2**. When a caterpillar goes through metamorphosis it reforms as a butterfly. It’s beautiful, but the process is ugly and very messy. It excretes enzymes and breaks its body down turning itself into a goo that looks unrecognizable. When I saw that, I almost begin to cry to think this may be what has to happen in our nation to get everyone to wake up. Contrast with 9/11.

B. We are studying through **Romans** to learn lessons about how God re-formed the church in Rome in 57 A.D. so we can learn to apply these principles in our lives to be a part of a reformation in the United States.

II. Introduction to Romans

A. Paul wrote this book in 57 A.D. prior to his trip to Jerusalem with the purpose of dealing with some major issues the church in Rome was having. These issues all tied back to the banishment of the Jews from Rome in the year 49 A.D.

1. When the church and Rome began it was mostly comprised of Jews who converted to Christianity (very few Gentiles initially). The culture of the church was very much in line with Judaism (keep the law of Moses, focus on circumcision, keep the feast days, etc).
2. In 49 A.D. the Roman Emperor Claudius banished all the Jews from Rome because of their religious and political disturbances. **Acts 18:1-2**. The Jews were banished until 54 A.D. when Nero became Emperor and said they could return.
3. When the Jewish Christians were banished, the only Christians left were Gentiles (the heathen). They were now in charge in the church in Rome and the culture of the church was completely different. The modern example of this would be if all the leaders from a very religious traditional church with stained glass windows, teaches from the KJV, sings hymns, has wooden pews, and everyone wears suits and dresses were banished and it was turned over Gen Z. They'd come back and the sanctuary would be redesigned with strobe lights, hazers, Starbucks in the lobby, everyone dressed in shorts and t-shirts, and teaching from the NLT or Passion Translation. How do you get these two generations to get along and work together? This is what Paul is dealing with.
4. It gets worse though because each side had an aura of superiority. The Jews thought they were better than because they were God's original chosen people and the Gentiles thought they were better because they were the replacement of the Jews since they rejected Jesus.

B. The way Paul deals with all of this is to take them to the plan of God from the beginning. Overview:

1. He will show both the Jew and Gentiles are sinners that need a savior - **Romans 1-4**.
2. He will then teach them about Identity (which is the number one thing we need to see reformed in our nation today) - **Romans 5**. He talks to them about the two most important people that ever lived - The first Adam and the second Adam. You are in one or the other, but you can't be in both simultaneously.
3. In **Romans 6**, Paul teaches us more about our identity in Christ. He says we are now dead to sin and alive to God. The key to walking godliness is thinking properly about ourselves. **Taking them back to identity**.
4. In **Romans 7-8** Paul talks about how to overcome our flesh. He talks about how we want to do good, but we don't do good, and the solution is the finished work of the cross and the power of God's spirit. **Taking them to identity**.
5. After laying a foundation about how we all are on even ground at the foot of the cross, Paul then begins to explain God's relationship with the Jews and the Gentiles. The Jews were God's chosen people chosen to reach the world, but because they rejected Jesus, he then went to the Gentiles to provoke them to jealousy - **Romans 11:11**. Paul then writes and explains some of the Jews will be saved because they put their faith in Jesus **Romans 11:12-15**.

6. After his attempt to unify everyone around a common need and God's common goal for man, *Romans 12-15* focus on mind renewal and practical ways Christians should live (discover life purpose, submitting to government, how to get along with one another. Doing the practical things of life in a godly manner help expand God's kingdom expand.
7. Paul closes the letter with several personal greetings and a reminder to believe Jesus who is able to establish us in the midst of any situation.

### III. Conclusion

A. God wants to reform Christians in America, the church in America, and ultimately America itself today. This would include three main things I see:

1. How we see God. He is good and holy - these aren't mutually exclusive terms. Ted Turner example - he was taught that God killed his sister so he could't believe in or serve a God like that. People need to be taught the truth. At the same time we also need to be taught God is holy (set apart) and we cannot use His goodness as an excuse to walk less than our identity in Christ. Ex: Homosexuality.
2. How we see ourselves. We need to see ourselves as sons and daughters of the king that were recreated in the image of the 2nd Adam. When God sees us He sees Jesus and we need to live that is true. ex: Taking authority over sickness.
3. Our value of God. ex: growing up going to church 3 times a week and now families miss regularly to take their kids to play travel ball. Marc statement: "We need to teach our kids to value what is valuable. **We need to reform our priorities.**

B. Call Up Prayer Team

C. Pray Closing Prayer