

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 Jews 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

Romans: A Study on Reformation  
Lesson 2 “What is the Gospel?”

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

A. Reform is a compound word. Re means to do again and form means to make or create. Reform does not mean to add to. God wants to go deeper than just bring revival to our nation. He wants to reform it. **Explain the difference between reformation and revival.**

B. Today we are going to study the first part of *Romans 1* and answer the question, “What is the Gospel?”

1. Before you think that’s obvious and stop paying attention, I want to submit that over 90% of people in the Bible-Belt don’t know what the gospel is (this includes Christians).
2. Before we jump into the passages, I want to make a statement: The entirety of the Bible is not the gospel. Not everything in the Bible is the gospel. Is it all the word of God? Absolutely! It’s just not the gospel because the gospel is a very specific message within the Bible.

II. What is the Gospel?

**A. Romans 1:1-7 The Gospel is About Jesus**

1. **Verse 1** Paul was called to be an apostle (sent one). Apostle was a Roman term that described a person who went into a conquered territory to bring the culture of Rome (currency, education, language, etc) to the conquered nation and make it ready for Caesar when he came to visit.
  - a. Paul was one who laid cultural foundations everywhere he went when he started church. With this letter, he was wanting to change the culture of this church in Rome.
  - b. The current culture of the church in Rome was one of pride and division between the Jews and Gentiles. Both sides thought they were right and Paul is going to show in this letter that everyone needs Jesus.
2. **Verses 2-4** These passages reveal what the gospel is about. It’s about Jesus.
  - a. The Gospel is not about turn or burn. That’s not the gospel.
  - b. The Gospel is not about judgment. That’s in the Bible, but that’s not the Gospel.
  - c. The Gospel isn’t *Proverbs* or writings of wisdom in the scripture. We need wisdom because it will teach us how to live, but it isn’t the Gospel.

d. Gospel is the Greek Word **euangelion**. It means glad tidings and is communicating the idea of almost too good to be true news. When a new Caesar came to the throne, heralds would go out and declare the euangelion that we have a new king and things are going to be better now.

e. The gospel is about the Son, which the scriptures revealed.

3. **Verses 5-7** Paul says he received his call from Jesus and also says they were **all called** by Jesus. God has called everyone to Himself. **2 Peter 3:9**.

## B. Romans 1:8-15 Paul's Desire to Visit Rome

1. As we've talked about before, Paul wanted to visit Rome (this desire came from God and was part of his call). Unfortunately, he chose to go to Jerusalem instead and got sidetracked on the will of God for two years.

2. **Verse 11** Paul wanted to establish them in spiritual things. **Spiritual gift - pneumatikos**. The word used isn't charisma so Paul probably wasn't trying to establish them in the gifts of the spirit (healing, prophecy, etc). He was probably trying to establish/lay a foundation of spiritual truth. **Gifts don't establish us. They draw us. The word establishes us.**

3. Paul goes onto say he wanted to come sooner and was hindered (ministering in Asia Minor and Greece). His point was to let them know how bad he wanted to be there. He shared he was a debtor to the Greeks and barbarians because this is who he was called to (the Gentiles).

## C. Romans 1:16-17 The Just Live by Faith

1. **Verse 16** *I'm not ashamed of the gospel*. Why make this statement?

a. Presenting the message of the savior who went to the cross in a wealthy, sophisticated city like Rome that had quite a bit of prestige could be embarrassing.

b. Preaching the gospel in the midst of legalistic Christians could be hard because the true gospel is hard on the flesh. No rules added; the flesh likes rules.

c. The true gospel is an invitation to everyone including the legalists so this could have upset the Gentiles.

2. **Verse 17** *The Just shall live by faith*. The point is the ground is level at the foot of the cross. The gospel is for everyone whether you are religious or not. Faith is what we believe about God. We live by what we believe about God, not what we do for God.

3. Going back to **verse 16**, what is salvation? Its the Greek word soteria, which means safety, preservation deliverance. **It means saving from hell, but it also means you are safe with God (even when you mess up)**. It also means healing, peace and prosperity. **John 3:17 Amplified Classic** *For God did not send the*

*Son into the world in order to judge (to reject, to condemn, to pass sentence on) the world, but that the world might find salvation and be made safe and sound through Him. **This passage reveals the heart of God. We are safe with Him. All we need to do is believe.***

III. Conclusion - The gospel is about how we are safe with the true King! He wants to make us whole in every aspect of our lives - spirit, soul, and body!

A. Pray Closing Prayer

B. Call Up Prayer Team

Romans: A Study on Reformation  
Lesson 3 “Transforming the Image of God”

I. Introduction - We are continuing our series on the book of Romans today. Paul wrote this letter from Corinth to the church in Rome to bring reformation to this church in 57 A.D. We are studying verse by verse through the book with our focus being on “Reformation.”

A. Reform is a compound word. Re means to do again and form means to make or create. Reform does not mean to add to. God wants to go deeper than just bring revival to our nation. He wants to reform it. **Explain the difference between reformation and revival. This is about a new culture - way of doing life (return of Jesus at the center, parents more involved in kids lives, an understanding of identity, value for our fellow man, etc.**

B. Today we are going to talk about “Transforming the Image of God.” That’s a weird title. What do I mean by that? **2 Corinthians 3:16-18:**

1. This passage says that when we turn to Jesus, the veil (that which is preventing me from seeing) is taken away and then we are transformed into the same image we behold by the spirit of God. **This is the will of God for our lives. He wants us to be conformed into the image of Jesus.**
2. Unfortunately, too many people haven’t walked in their calling and have decided to transform God into their image and glory.
3. Look at **Exodus 32:1-6:**
  - a. Aaron made a calf and said, “This is your god which brought you up out of Egypt. This happened just a short time after the exodus from Egypt.
  - b. Why? Moses went up on the mountain to meet with God in **Exodus 20**. The whole nation of Israel was invited, but refused the invitation because of fear (saw thunders and lightning, etc).
  - c. My opinion as to why they chose to meet with God was because they had been under Pharaoh’s rule for 400 years and projected onto God that He would be like Pharaoh.
  - d. When we refuse the invitation to meet with God, we are left to our own devices. We all want to worship something (it’s hardwired in us). When we refuse the best, we tend to create our own stuff and say it’s god, but it’s really just us. This leaves us worshipping ourselves. ex: sports, reputation, job, status, a relationship, etc.
4. **Exodus 34:29-35** Moses went back up Mt. Sinai to get the 10 commandments. As he did, he was transformed. This didn’t come through striving, it came through meeting God.
  - a. Some of need to quit trying to change and need to just go meet with God. Change will come out of that.
  - b. The evidence he met with God was apparent to those around him.

II. Transforming the Image of God - The rest of *Romans 1*, Paul focuses on the Gentile need for righteousness. He teaches how the Gentiles transformed the image of God into a god like themselves.

A. **Romans 1:18-23** Right after Paul says the just shall live by faith in the gospel, he then talks about the wrath of God that falls on unrighteousness.

1. Some in the grace camp today say God doesn't bring wrath on unrighteousness. This is an idol. They made a god in their image. Instead of beholding God and letting Him clean up past hurts about abusive authority and getting an understanding of sowing and reaping, they stay at the camp and create an idol. **God is right to have right to have wrath because He put two trees in the garden and gave people the opportunity to choose.**
2. *Verses 18-20* reveal everyone knows about God, but they suppress this truth. It's been clearly revealed through creation. ex: Stage expansion example.
3. *Verse 21* - The process of falling away from God. We stop glorifying Him (making Him bigger than anything else, stop being thankful, our imagination goes crazy, and then our heart becomes dark.)
4. *Verses 22-23* All this leads to transforming the image of God. When we don't meet with God (*verses 16-17* talk about His radical goodness), then we make God into something like us.

B. **Romans 1:24-32 The Effects of Not Beholding God**

1. Paul goes onto list many different sins in these verses, but I want to focus on one because it's one we face today and it cuts to the core question of identity.
2. The issue I want to focus on is homosexuality. These folks exchanged the truth of God for a lie and began to worship the creation rather than the Creator.
  - a. First, this is New Testament and Paul is the apostle of grace and he's saying homosexuality is a sin. Does everyone see that? I've heard people say homosexuality was sin under the law, but its ok now under grace. It's not.
  - b. We have churches today marrying people of the same sex. They have transformed the image of God (Eve was on the inside of Adam. When God brought her back to Adam he was making him complete).
  - c. Our culture is teaching this is ok. Why is this such a big deal? It's warping people's identity. People are trying to fill a hole in their heart that only Jesus can fill with operations, pursuing someone of the same gender, etc and they'll never find joy. ex: LGBTQ people have significantly higher suicide rates than the rest of the population.
  - d. What's the answer? The Gospel. This means we preach the love of Jesus to those who are doing evil. The key to their transformation is getting Him on the inside of them. They don't have to clean themselves up



to get saved. They simply need to see their need for a savior and ask.  
When He gets on the inside, He'll change their externals.

III. Conclusion - The same principle I just shared for the homosexual will work for all of us. We must reformed in our thinking and understand that God is radically better than we think. Then we must behold (be-held) by His glory in the face of Jesus. This is how we are transformed by the glory of God into the image of Jesus.

A. Call Up Prayer Team

B. Pray Closing Prayer

Romans: A Study on Reformation  
Lesson 5 “Recognizing a Critical Spirit”

I. Introduction - We are continuing our series on the book of Romans today. Paul wrote this letter from Corinth to the church in Rome to bring reformation to this church in 57 A.D. We are studying verse by verse through the book with our focus being on “Reformation.”

A. Reform is a compound word. Re means to do again and form means to make or create. Reform does not mean to add to. God wants to go deeper that just bring revival to our nation. He wants to reform it. **Explain the difference between reformation and revival. This is about a new culture - way of doing life (return of Jesus to the center, parents more involved in kids lives, an understanding of identity, etc.**

B. The main problem Paul wanted to reform with the church in Rome was the relationship between the Jews and Gentiles. The Jews believed they were God’s chosen people and they should be in charge and the Gentiles should adopt their customs. The Gentiles believed God had moved on from the Jews because they rejected Jesus so they thought they should be in charge and the Jews should adapt Gentile customs.

C. Last week we looked at how he showed the Gentile need for a savior. They had suppressed truth and lived in ungodliness (sexual sin, murder, theft, etc.) I’m sure when the Jewish Christians read this, they were like, “Amen Paul! You tell ‘em.” This is something those of us who have grown up in church tend to do when we see the sin of the world. This reveals one problem and creates another:

1. Many times we are like the Jews Paul addressed in **Romans 2**. We are doing the same stuff in secret that the world is doing in public, or at least we want to. This is hypocrisy. This is a massive problem.
2. The second problem isn’t doesn’t make those in the world feel safe to come to church and draw close to Jesus. Our pride, runs others from the Lord.
3. Today we are going to look at all of those issues as we look at **Romans 2** and how to “Recognize a Critical Spirit.”

II. Recognizing a Critical Spirit

A. **Philippians 1:9** May your love abound in discernment. There is no such thing as a gift of discernment (its discerning of spirits) Many have confused discernment with ey have a critical spirit. Discernment comes from the love of God and the love of God lays down its life. If we aren’t willing to lay down our lives for the ones we are criticizing we probably have a critical spirit

B. Vignette (Why the Jews were critical?) - Worship Issue **Luke 7:36-52**

1. Simon (the religious Jews were critical) - We don't value that which we don't see we need
2. In this culture you don't not greet a guest with a kiss.. You also offered them water to wash their feet. TO NOT DO EITHER WAS AN EXTREME INSULT. IT'S NOT SOMETHING YOU FORGET
3. Most likely Simon invited Jesus over to shame him and to take him down a few notches in the people's eyes. The Pharisees didn't like Jesus because He presented God (Yahweh) as a God of radical love and grace (talked to women/had them in His ministry, loved the Samaritans/cross cultural, loved the poor) - He was a revolutionary.
4. The Pharisees liked the law because they believed keeping it was the key to cause God to send Messiah, set everything in order, and overthrow the Romans.
5. Why did the woman do this? Woman poured the alabaster box of oil on Jesus' feet (some estimates up to a year's wages - Extravagant worship.
  - a. First, it offended her that Simon didn't honor her Lord and tried to shame Him.
  - b. He had heard of Jesus's radical love and had hope God might accept her as she was (a prostitute.) As she approached Jesus and uncovered His feet (this could all be interpreted as a sexual gesture) she then poured out all she had (which she got from selling her body). She poured out that which was broken in her and became one with her. She then unveiled herself and dried her feet with His hair (marriage night ritual) and Jesus received her.
  - c. Gregory of Nazaneus - What Jesus has not assumed, He has not healed Picture of cross.
  - d. Bill Johnson quote - After the encounter, Jesus smelled like her, but she also smelled just like He did - divine exchange.
6. This really offended Simon, and he said within himself if Jesus was really a prophet, he would have known what manner of woman this was (critical spirit).
7. Jesus then tells Simon the parable (he who was forgiven little values it little) - This is a value proposition. Do we see how much we have forgiven even if we do better than most. This was the problem with the Jews in Rome.

### C. Romans 2:1-14

1. **Verses 1-4** Paul is basically saying, "It's great that you Jews recognize the sin of the world, but are you doing the same things. Ex: Condemn Kylie Jenner for pornography, but are you clicking on all her Instagram posts and enjoying it.
  - a. Judging others but doing the same is religious and unacceptable.
  - b. If you are believer you are saved if you sin, but God wants us to deal with our inner world and clean up our lives, not just the lives of others.
2. **Verse 4** The goodness of God leads to repentance (change of mind and heart)

as compared with **Proverbs 16:6**. Fear will cause me to change my behavior, but it doesn't lead to heart change.

### III. Conclusion

A. Closing Prayer - Pray for a spirit of reconciliation and people would be rooted in love.

B. Call Up Prayer Team

Romans: A Study on Reformation  
Lesson 6 “Dismantling the Spirit of Hypocrisy”

I. Introduction - We are continuing our series on the book of Romans today. Paul wrote this letter from Corinth to the church in Rome to bring reformation to this church in 57 A.D. We are studying verse by verse through the book with our focus being on “Reformation.”

A. Reform is a compound word. Re means to do again and form means to make or create. Reform does not mean to add to. God wants to go deeper that just bring revival to our nation. He wants to reform it. **Explain the difference between reformation and revival. This is about a new culture - way of doing life (return of Jesus to the center, parents more involved in kids lives, an understanding of identity, etc.**

B. The main problem Paul wanted to reform with the church in Rome was the relationship between the Jews and Gentiles. The Jews believed they were God’s chosen people and they should be in charge and the Gentiles should adopt their customs. The Gentiles believed God had moved on from the Jews because they rejected Jesus so they thought they should be in charge and the Jews should adapt Gentile customs.

C. Last week we looked at how Paul brought correction to the Jewish Christians for being judgmental on the gentiles. He wasn’t excusing gentile sin, but what he was doing is leveling the playing field to show we all have a need for a savior no matter our heritage, religious upbringing, or our good works.

1. To make this practical, many times we are like the Jews Paul addressed in **Romans 2**. We’re doing the same stuff in secret that the world is doing in public, or at least want to. ex: Kim Kardashian example. This is hypocrisy and is a massive problem.
2. This doesn’t make those in the world feel safe to come to church and draw close to Jesus. Our pride, runs others from the Lord.
3. Today we are going to look at all of this issues as we will study the further in **Romans 2** and talk about how to dismantle the spirit of hypocrisy.

II. The Spirit of Hypocrisy

A. **Luke 12:1** Jesus warned of the leaven of the the Pharisees - hypocrisy.

1. What is hypocrisy? **hupōkrisis**, acting under a feigned part. The idea of a stage player (actor). example of 1980’s ministers and adultery - were framing one another and having incidents recorded while they were also committing adultery.
2. **Matthew 23:23-28** Jesus’s response. Here’s the point I want you to catch. Jesus isn’t saying its wrong to do right actions. He’s wanting the actions to come from a right heart.

**3. Hypocrisy isn't having a standard and falling short. Hypocrisy is being fake or pretending to be something you have no intention of being.**

4. **Luke 12:2** We don't want to do this because there is nothing hidden that will not be revealed. It will all come out in the end.

B. The Process of Judging - We need to examine this because many Christians get into an extreme where they say anything can go because they don't want to be perceived as judgmental or a hypocrite.

1. **Matthew 7:1-5** Process of judging - we can judge fruit, not hearts (**Matthew 7:15-20**). ex: Marriage conflict - this made me feel, not this is why you do what you do.

2. **The point in Romans is the Jews didn't have a right to look down on the rest of the world because they were Jewish. This is what they were doing.**

### C. **Romans 2:1-16**

1. **Verses 1-3** Paul says the Jews are just as guilty as the gentiles they are condemning because they also live in sin (lie, steal, cheat, commit adultery, etc).

2. It's important to note that Paul is talking about Jews who have not been born again. Those who were born again and were practicing hypocrisy - their sin is thrown in the Sea of Forgetfulness.

3. **Verse 4** The goodness of God leads to repentance (not His wrath).

4. **Romans 2:5-13** Paul continues to level the playing field as he begins to show that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (**verse 11 no partiality**).

4. **Romans 2:14-16** Paul further condemns the religious spirit by describing how Gentiles have an intuitive knowledge of right and wrong. Paul effectively undoes what many of the Jews believed about having a special favor with God just because they were religious. Paul levels the playing field and shows we are all guilty before God and we all need a savior.

III. Conclusion - The reality is we still see this in our churches today. Kelsey Grammar movie - "Jesus Revolution." Jesus people movement with hippies wearing jeans, sandals, being perceived as unclean. Not accepted in the church. Some of the elders were worried about the hippies dirtying the carpet. The pastor, Chuck Smith said, "We'll just pull up the carpet then."

A. So how do we guard against this. **Philippians 1:9** our love should abound in discernment. The love of God lays down its life. If we aren't willing to lay down our lives we should probably keep our mouth shut about others.

B. Call up prayer team and pray closing prayer.

## Romans: A Study on Reformation

### Lesson 7 “The Purpose of the Law”

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B. The main problem Paul wanted to reform with the church in Rome was the relationship between the Jews and Gentiles. The Jews believed they were God’s chosen people and they should be in charge and the Gentiles should adopt their customs. The Gentiles believed God had moved on from the Jews because they rejected Jesus so they thought they should be in charge and the Jews should adapt Gentile customs.

C. Throughout the end of *Romans 1*, Paul shows the Gentile need for a savior and then in *Romans 2*, He shows the Jewish need for a savior. We’ve made the point the ground is level at the foot of the cross. We all have a need for grace no matter your heritage.

D. As we continue with *Romans 2* and get into *Romans 3*, Paul will continue talking about the Jewish need for a savior and he’ll also reveal the purpose of the law.

## II. The Purpose of the Law

A. **Romans 3:19-20** What is the purpose of the law? To make people guilty. The law is not our friend, it is our enemy. *1 Corinthians 15:56* says it strengthens sin.

1. **1 Timothy 1:8-11** The lawful use of the law isn’t for the righteous (saved), it is to reveal the sin of those who need a savior. Some of y’all don’t know about that.

2. **Colossians 2:13-14** I’ll never forget the first time I read that. It scared me. I thought if this is true and I don’t have boundaries, I’ll do anything. When a person thinks this it realize they don’t have a strong relationship with God. It reveals a breakdown of intimacy. ex: marriage

B. **Romans 2:17-24** - In these verses Paul reveals that just having the law (knowing right from wrong isn’t enough.

1. People have to actually do it every time if they are going to earn salvation, blessing, answered prayers from God.

2. **James 2:10** - if we offend in once point of the law we are guilty of everything. ex: My testimony of believing I had to get sin out to get prayers answered - this is a dead end road because there will always be one more sin to get rid of. The law is like a mirror, grace is like a razor.
3. **Verse 24** The Jews created a stumbling block for the Jews by living in sin.

### C. Romans 2:25-29 Circumcision of No Avail

1. The point of this passage is that we can't take one requirement of the law and elevate it above the rest and receive. When we do our righteousness has become unrighteousness. Ex: Trying to get a sin out to get God to answer prayer.
2. The way a righteous man keeps the righteous requirements of the law is by believing in Jesus. **Matthew 5:17** Jesus fulfilled the law and prophets.
3. Circumcision of the heart - under the Old Covenant everything was outward. In the New Covenant God cuts away the sinful part of our heart (old spirit) and gives us a new nature. **Colossians 2:11-13** *circumcision without hands*.

### D. Romans 3:1-8 The Defense of God's Judgment

1. The Jews advantage was they were given the word of God and shown how to live. This should have shown them they couldn't live it and they would need the savior the law always pointed to.
2. **Verse 3** Our unbelief doesn't make the faithfulness of God in sending Jesus of no effect. This doesn't mean everyone inherits heaven because the rest of these verses talk about judgment. **Universalism is a heresy.**
3. **Verses 5-8** This passage talks about the judgment of God and deals with a common misperception of the grace message.
  - a. The misperception is why live holy? Doesn't my sin, make God righteous. **NO! God is righteous whether you live holy or not. He requires holiness which is why He is judging the world.**
  - b. **Verses 7-8** Paul defends himself against people who said he taught grace so people could live in evil and good would come. I have had to deal with this. Ex: From last week - "You said we can't use grace to justify living in sin. I've said that for 6 years, but someone finally heard it. It really blessed the person and made them feel safe.
  - c. Marriage illustration about the law and grace.

III. Conclusion - The point of all this is to help us understand the law strengthens sin. It was sent to reveal sin and help us see our need for help. Trying to keep it is like struggling to get out of quicksand. This causes you to sink more quickly. The only way to get out is with the help of a savior. This is what Paul wants the religious Jews and gentiles to see. The ground is level at the foot of the cross because we all need Jesus.



A. Call Up Prayer Team

B. Pray Closing Prayer

Romans: A Study on Reformation  
Lesson 8 “Justification by Faith”

I. Introduction - We are continuing our series on the book of Romans today. Paul wrote this letter from Corinth to the church in Rome to bring reformation to this church in 57 A.D. We are studying verse by verse through the book with our focus being on “Reformation.”

A. Reform is a compound word. Re means to do again and form means to make or create. Reform does not mean to add to. God wants to go deeper than just bring revival to our nation. He wants to reform it. **Explain the difference between reformation and revival. This is about a new culture - way of doing life (return of Jesus to the center, parents more involved in kids lives, an understanding of identity, etc.**

B. The main problem Paul wanted to reform with the church in Rome was the relationship between the Jews and Gentiles. The Jews believed they were God’s chosen people and they should be in charge and the Gentiles should adopt their customs. The Gentiles believed God had moved on from the Jews because they rejected Jesus so they thought they should be in charge and the Jews should adapt Gentile customs.

C. From the end of **Romans 1** and into the middle of **Romans 3**, Paul showed both the gentiles and Jews needed a savior. The ground is level at the foot of the cross for all.

1. As Paul showed the Jewish need for a savior he began to talk about the law and circumcision were only good if a person kept all of the law. It wasn’t just enough to know it, but we have to do it all 100% to be right with God. The purpose of his teaching was to get the religious person to quit trusting their works to receive.
2. Today we are going to continue looking at that topic as we study justification by faith. We are also going to answer the question of why does **James** teach we are justified by our works?

II. Justification by Faith

A. **Romans 3:9-20 - All Have Sinned**

1. **Verse 9** Paul makes the point all have sinned (Jew and Gentile - religious and non-religious. All need a savior. He then quotes from several Old Testament passages to demonstrate how we could never save ourselves.
2. **Verses 10-12** quote **Psalms 14-1-3, 53-13**, and **Ecclesiastes 7:20**.
3. **Verse 13** quotes **Psalm 5:9**. It is also very similar to **Matthew 23:27** *whitewashed tombs full of dead men’s bones*.
4. **Verse 14** quotes **Psalm 10:7**.
5. **Verse 17** quotes **Isaiah 59:7-8**.
6. **Verse 18** quotes **Psalm 36:1**.

7. **Verses 19-20** explain the purpose of the law. It was given to condemn, not make righteous. It was also given to point us to a savior.

## B. Romans 3:21-31 - Righteousness by Faith

1. **Verse 22-23** The righteousness of God the law and prophets pointed to was Jesus. The entire Old Testament always pointed to Jesus.
2. **Verse 23** Once again we see all have sinned and fallen short of God's glory.
3. **Verses 24-26** These verses say Jesus was our atoning sacrifice (at Calvary) and He justifies (makes innocent) those who believe.
4. **Verses 27-28** Our boasting is excluded because Jesus justifies apart from the works of the law.

C. What about **James 2:24** then? Do our works matter, at least some of them, some of the time, maybe occasionally? Or is God schizophrenic? Or is the Bible just full of contradictions and wrong?

1. The key to understanding this statement is context. Why did James write **James**. He wrote in the year 46 A.D. to the church that had been dispersed abroad because of persecution (about 10 years after the stoning of Steven).
2. The early church lived through a season of revival (Pentecost - 3,000 saved, Peter and John healing the paralyzed man - 5,000 saved, people getting healed off of Peter's shadow and all of Jerusalem filled with doctrine of Christ. They saw these events and many believed the kingdom of God was about to be set up in fullness eminently.
3. When persecution hit and they were dispersed (**Acts 8**) many became discouraged. This is why James talked to them about the testing of their faith in **James 1**. Unfortunately many began to go through the motions of Christianity and stopped being doers and were hearers only deceiving themselves. This manifested in **James 2** as mistreatment of people:
  - a. **James 2:2-6** Treating rich people better than poor people when they came to church in order to obtain favor.
  - b. **James 2:14-16** Not providing people with food and clothing when they had it to give.
4. **James 2:17-24**
  - a. Faith without works is dead.
  - b. Abraham was originally justified by God in **Genesis 15:6** before Isaac was born or offered as a sacrifice. So how was Abraham justified in **Genesis 22**? He was justified (found faithful/innocent) by people. He took men with him to sacrifice Isaac and when they **saw Abraham's faith** and willingness to obey it impacted them.
  - c. When **James** says we are justified by works he's talking about before people. Our good works don't gain us influence with God, but they do

gain us influence with people. ex: If you came to my house and asked me for money to feed your family and I didn't give it to you, would that send me to hell? No. But I would lose influence with you.

E. **Romans 3:29-31** The chapter is concluded by God justifies the religious and irreligious by faith.

III. Conclusion - The purpose today was to help you discover how innocent you are apart from the works of the law.

A. When we believe in Jesus we are innocent before God no matter what we do.

B. As believers in Jesus, we should live right to demonstrate our innocence before the world and to attract them to faith in Christ.

C. Call Up Prayer Team and Pray Closing Prayer

Romans: A Study on Reformation  
Lesson 9 “Relationship Not Rules”

I. Introduction - We are continuing our series on the book of Romans today. Paul wrote this letter from Corinth to the church in Rome to bring reformation to this church in 57 A.D. We are studying verse by verse through the book with our focus being on “Reformation.”

A. Reform is a compound word. Re means to do again and form means to make or create. Reform does not mean to add to. God wants to go deeper than just bring revival to our nation. He wants to reform it. **Explain the difference between reformation and revival. This is about a new culture - way of doing life (return of Jesus to the center, parents more involved in kids lives, an understanding of identity, etc.**

B. The main problem Paul wanted to reform with the church in Rome was the relationship between the Jews and Gentiles. The Jews believed they were God’s chosen people and they should be in charge and the Gentiles should adopt their customs. The Gentiles believed God had moved on from the Jews because they rejected Jesus so they thought they should be in charge and the Jews should adapt Gentile customs.

C. Today before we baptize several folks we are going to look at the first half of **Romans 4** and talk about “Relationship Not Rules.” God saved us to bring us into a relationship, not a list of rules to follow. He also didn’t save us just so we could go to heaven, but so He could set up the kingdom of heaven in us and see it pour out on the world around us.

II. Relationship Not Rules

A. **Romans 4:1-4 Example of Abraham**

1. At the end of **Romans 3**, Paul makes the case we are justified (declared innocent) by faith apart from the works of the law. This was right after listing about a dozen Old Testament passages that showed all of humanity (both Jew and Gentile were sinners). The goal was to get everyone to look to Jesus.
2. Throughout these verses Paul is continuing to break the legalistic mindset that the Jews and many religious Christians have.
3. **Verses 1-3** Paul shows Abraham was not justified by works because he was counted as righteous before he was ever circumcised.

a. **Genesis 15:6**

b. A modern equivalent today is baptism. We believe in baptism because Jesus commanded it, but it was not a requirement for salvation. Ex: Thief on the cross.

c. Many Christians argue over baptism (whether to dunk or sprinkle, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit or in Jesus name) and miss

the point. The point isn't the technicality, it's the fact that the old man is dead and washed away and the new man is raised to life in righteousness.

4. Anyone who works to earn from God is in debt and debt isn't a small amount it's into the hundreds of trillions.
  - a. The point is everything comes by grace.
  - b. **Genesis 15:8-18** God made covenant with Abraham and fulfilled all of the covenant while Abraham was asleep. The point He wanted to drive home is it wasn't about what Abraham had to do to earn, it was simply about believing God would do what He said He would do.

### **B. Romans 4:5-8 God's Not Imputing Sin Today**

1. Paul begins to use accounting terms in these passages. He says the person who believes gets credit for righteousness (it's store credit our older brother left us).
2. He goes on to say God is not imputing our sins against us. This means He's not charging the believer with sin. Quotation of **Psalms 32:1-2**. David looked forward to our day because we have a better covenant.
3. Buying a computer with credit card at Best Buy example.

### **C. Romans 4:9-12 Actions Follow Faith**

1. These verses say Abraham was righteous before he performed the sign of covenant. This is true for those being baptized today. They are righteous based on what they believe and not what they do.
2. Paul goes on to say, Abraham is the Father of faith to the Jews (those of circumcision), but also to the Gentiles (those not of circumcision). The point of all this is to show us that following the rules, technicalities, etc. don't earn us a place in God's kingdom. It's not about what we do to earn. It's about what we believe. If we believe right, we will behave right.

III. Conclusion - God has always been about relationship, not rules. If we come into an abiding relationship we'll live holier on accident than we ever did just trying to keep lists of rules.

### **A. Romans 6:3-9**

#### **B. Baptisms**

1. Have you accepted Jesus as your Lord and savior?
2. By this act of baptism do acknowledge to this congregation that you pledge to serve Jesus as He gives you the strength.
3. I now baptize you in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

#### **C. Closing Prayer and Call Up Prayer Team**

Romans: A Study on Reformation  
Lesson 10 “The Power of Imagination”

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B. The main problem Paul wanted to reform with the church in Rome was the relationship between the Jews and Gentiles. The Jews believed they were God’s chosen people and they should be in charge and the Gentiles should adopt their customs. The Gentiles believed God had moved on from the Jews because they rejected Jesus so they thought they should be in charge and the Jews should adapt Gentile customs.

C. We have most recently looked at how both the Jews and Gentiles were sinners in need of a savior and that saving faith comes only by grace and not works. Today we are going to finish **Romans 4** and talk about the Power of Imagination.

1. The rest of **Romans 4** talks about how Abraham received the promise that He would be the Father of many nations when He was 75 years old and childless. Sarah was 65 years old and childless.
2. Interestingly enough, this promise wasn’t fulfilled until Abraham was 100 and Sarah was 90. He is the God of the Impossible. He doesn’t need our help, He needs our faith. This is why imagination is so important.
3. Imagination is where we conceive the promises. Break down the word: Imagination. Every one of us have a nation of images inside of us. We will reproduce the images we see. This means our faith has to change us on the inside before it changes us on the outside.

II. The Power of Imagination

A. **Ephesians 1:17-18**

1. Understanding - **diánoia**, f; deep thought, properly, the faculty (mind or its disposition), by implication, its exercise:—imagination, mind, understanding.
2. Sometimes we talk about vain imaginations or childish imaginations, but the reality is there is a positive side to an imagination. You can’t create anything outwardly that you can’t first see inwardly. ex: Sanctuary, dog example

## B. Romans 4:13-25

1. *Verses 13-16* Keeping the law won't cause God to bring forth the promises. It's all by grace through faith.
2. *Verse 17* - Quotes **Genesis 17:5** (changed Abram's name from exalted father to father of many nations.)
  - a. A change of identification means a change in purpose. Abram already was an exalted father of Ismael. God had to change the name to father of many nations to change Abraham's picture on the inside.
  - b. **Genesis 15:3-5** God took Abraham outside in the middle east. What's God doing? He's changing the image on the inside of Abraham. Look at **Hebrews 11:12**.
  - c. Church remodel pictures example
  - d. When God changed Abram's name to Abraham, He called those things that be not as so they were. So did Abraham because he had to walk around town and introduce himself as the father of many nations. How crazy must that have been at 99?
3. *Verse 18* Abraham believed in hope when there was no natural hope and received the promise of **Genesis 15:5**.
4. *Verses 19-21* These verses tell us how Abraham believed in the face of the impossible. Abraham didn't focus on the circumstances (his and Sarah's bodies). He glorified (worshipped God).
  - a. Worship takes from the realm of impossible to the possible. Why? We have to look past the realm of flesh and into the spirit. **Colossians 2:6-7**  
**We abound in faith when we enter true worship.**
  - b. He didn't waiver (withdraw from/disqualify himself) from the promise through unbelief. We know our mind is renewed when the impossible looks possible.
5. *Verse 22* Abraham was fully convinced God was able to perform that which He promised and was counted righteous because of this.
6. *Verses 23-25* All of these things were written for our sake. In the context of Paul's day, both the Jews and Gentiles had to use their faith to see themselves saved by faith apart from works because both had different images on the inside of them of what God was like. ex: Jews - the law, Gentiles (Zeus with lightning bolts). **The point today is we get credit for what we believe about Jesus and that He watches over His promises to perform them.**

## III. Conclusion

A. Closing Prayer

B. Call Up Prayer Team