

Romans: A Study on Reformation
Lesson 7 “The Purpose of the Law”

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. 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