

Outline of Romans

Setting:

Paul is preparing to come to Rome and to proclaim the Gospel there.

The Church:

The church in Rome was a mixed community: Jews and Gentiles. It was mainly however a Gentile community. There is the possibility that Paul is dealing with a church in which the Gentiles are looking down on the Jews because they had been expelled a few years earlier (49 CE) from the city, and had only recently been allowed to return (54 CE).

The Purpose:

Paul is offering an overview of the entire history of God's covenant faithfulness not only to the Jews but to all of creation, thus binding together Jew and Gentile under God's love. His desire is to have a united church in order to propel the Gospel to Spain and beyond as he proclaims that God is going to bring justice and new creation to the world in a way that Rome could never do.

Outline: (From N.T. Wright – Romans in the New Interpreters Bible)

1. The Faithfulness of God (1:1-4:25)

- a. God's Gospel and God's Righteousness (1:1-17)
 - i. God's Gospel and Paul's Ministry (1:1-7)
 - ii. Paul's Desire to come to Rome (1:8-15)
 - iii. The Gospel unveils God's Righteousness (1:16-17)
- b. The Challenge to God's Righteousness: idolatry and wickedness ((1:18-3:20)
 - i. Idolatry and dehumanizing behavior resulting in God's wrath (1:18-32)
 - ii. God's impartial judgment means all are guilty (2:1-16)
 - iii. The direct challenge to the Jew (2:17-29)
 - iv. Israel's faithfulness and God's faithfulness (3:1-8)
 - v. Torah means Jews are as guilty as Gentiles (3:9-20)
- c. God's Faithfulness to the Covenant (3:21-4:25)
 - i. God's righteousness displayed through the faithfulness of Jesus ((3:21-26)
 - ii. One God, One Faith, One People (3:27-31)
 - iii. The Covenant Family of Abraham (4:1-25)
 1. Believing the Promise (4:1-8)
 2. Not by circumcision or Torah (4:9-15)
 3. The Whole Family according to the Promise (4:16-17)
 4. The God who gives life to the dead (4:18-22)
 5. The meaning of Christian faith (4:23-25)

2. God's People in Christ as the True Humanity (5:1-8:39)

- a. From Faith to Hope (5:1-11)
 - i. Peace, patience and hope (5:1-5)
 - ii. The death of the Messiah and the love of God (5:6-11)
- b. From Adam to the Messiah (5:12-21)
- c. Baptism and Freedom (6:1-23)
 - i. Dying and Rising with the messiah (6:1-11)

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- ii. The end of sin's reign (6:12-14)
 - iii. Slavery and Freedom (6:15-23)
 - d. The Life the Law Could not Give (7:1-8:11)
 - i. Coming out from under the law (7:1-6)
 - ii. The arrival of the law: sin seizes its chance (7:7-12)
 - iii. Living under the law: sin works death (7:13-20)
 - iv. Reflecting on the Law (7:21-25)
 - v. God gives life through the Son and the Spirit (8:1-11)
 - e. The Inheritance Guaranteed (8:12-30)
 - i. Led by the Spirit (8:12-17)
 - ii. The Renewal of all things (8:18-30)
 - f. Nothing will separate us from God's Love (8:31-39)
- 3. God's Promises and God's Faithfulness (9:1-11:36)**
 - a. Paul's Grief over Israel refusing to believe even though they are the promise bearer (9:1-5)
 - b. The story of Israel from Abraham to Exile, shows God's justice and mercy (9:6-29)
 - c. God's Covenant faithfulness revealed in the Messiah (9:30-10:21)
 - i. Faith, works and a stumbling stone (9:30-33)
 - ii. God's righteousness and the worldwide mission (10:1-21)
 - d. The salvation of "all Israel" in fulfillment of God's unbreakable promise (11:1-36)
 - i. God has not rejected Israel (11:1-10)
 - ii. All "Israel" will be saved (11:11-32)
 - iii. Praise to the all-wise God (11:34-36)
- 4. God's Call to Worship, Holiness and Unity (12:1-16:27)**
 - a. The Worship of Body and Mind (12:1-2)
 - b. Unity, Love and Community Living (12:3-13)
 - c. The Church Facing the Outside World (12:14-13:7)
 - i. Christian Living among hostile outsiders (12:14-21)
 - ii. God's Call to Obedience to the Authorities (13:1-7)
 - d. Love, Fulfilling the Law (13:8-10)
 - e. Living by the Rising Son (13:11-14)
 - f. God's Call to Unity of Life and Worship Across Barriers of Custom and Ethnic Identity (14:1-15:13)
 - i. Judging and Being Judged (14:1-12)
 - ii. Conscience and the Kingdom of God (14:13-23)
 - iii. Mutual Welcome based on the Messiah (15:1-13)
 - g. Paul's Apostolic Travel Plans (15:14-33)
 - h. Commendation and Greeting (16:1-16)
 - i. Watch Out for Divisions (16:17-20)
 - j. Greetings to Paul's Colleagues (16:21-24)
 - k. Concluding Doxology (16:25-27)