

### 1. *Authorship:*

While at Corinth during his third missionary journey Paul wrote this letter to the Christians in Rome. He had never been to Rome, but had many friends there. He desired to go to Rome, and wrote the letter partly to introduce himself prior to his arrival there. The questions that Paul raises and answers probably reflect the kinds of objections to the gospel that he encountered during two decades of missionary travels.

### 2. *Situation:*

Scholars assign a date of about AD 56 to Romans. That means that the letter was written about twenty-six years after the founding of the church. On his third missionary journey Paul traveled from Ephesus to Greece (Corinth) where he remained for three months (Acts 20:2-3). While there Paul wrote Romans and Galatians.

### 3. *Synopsis:*

We are saved by faith, not by the Law of Moses or good works. The saved have died to the old life. They must live righteously. All who are saved, Jew or non-Jew, are part of God's people. Romans focuses on relationships between these two groups. Paul argues that neither group can feel superior to the other. Both alike require a righteousness that can be obtained only as a gift from God. This God-given righteousness must be lived out in the personal and community life of the Christian. For Paul Christianity was a lifestyle motivated by a belief system revealed by God. The gospel is more than a set of facts to be acknowledged; it is a life to be lived.

### 4. *Points of Interest*

--Romans is one of the most forceful, logical, and eloquent works ever penned. It probably influenced the history of the church that followed more than any other letter.

--While the Gospels present the facts of Christ's life, Romans spells out the significance of those facts.

--The uncharacteristically long introduction to this letter (1:1-16) probably is to be explained by the fact that Paul is writing to a church he had never visited.

--Unlike his other letters, Paul uses no title for himself in Romans other than "servant."

--Romans has plenty of Old Testament quotations.

--Archaeologists found a block of pavement stone in Corinth bearing the name of Erastus, commissioner of public works. This may be the same Corinthian Christian and city treasurer that Paul mentioned in Romans 16:23.

--The conclusion of Romans is unique in that Paul addresses a comparatively large group of individuals.

### 5. June Reading Guide

Week of May 29-Jun 4

Romans 1-4

Week of Jun 5-11

Romans 5-8

Week of Jun 12-18

Romans 9-12

Week of Jun 19-25

Romans 13-16