

To The Church: Introducing Romans

Romans 1.7a

"To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints:" Romans 1.7a

It is probably safe to say that there is no consensus in our society concerning God. Ideas concerning God are probably as numerous today as in any time in history.

We, as Christians, profess that we believe in a living, personal God, and because we believe that this God is a person and is personally involved in history, we also believe that he has revealed himself to us. God has given us a personal revelation of himself in the book we call the Bible. Our challenge, when we open the book of Romans or any other portion of Scripture, is to view it as God's message to us today. Romans is a powerful message indeed! As we introduce this book today, let's make a few observations about the book itself which will help us to appreciate and apply its message to our lives.

A Powerful Effect

The first observation, which should be made, is that Romans has had a powerful effect throughout history.

"Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourself with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful natures." Romans 13.3-14

"For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: 'The righteous will live by faith.'" Romans 1.17

A Powerful Message

The reason why I can be so confident of the effect that Romans can have upon our lives is because the book of Romans has a powerful message from God.

"I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. For in the Gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: 'the righteous will live by faith.'" Romans 1.16-17

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. Romans 12.1-2

By God's grace and for God's glory.

A Powerful Purpose

The book of Romans was written to pave the way for Paul's visit to Rome by giving a straightforward presentation of the gospel, but the goal was not the conversion of the readers, they were already Christians. The goal was to show the implications of the gospel for Christians who mixed ethnic bigotry, fleshly works, and stubborn pride with the pure word of the grace of redemption in Christ alone. Paul desired to wean his readers away from self sufficiency with its source in human achievement and pride, whether religious or secular. The goal was to bring the readers to the point of being acceptable sacrifices to God (Rom. 12.1-2).

By God's grace and for God's glory.

A Powerful Impact

The book of Romans can have a powerful impact on your life. If this is true, then we must clearly understand its message. Whether we do, will depend on how we approach our task.