

A LOOK AT THE BOOK ROMANS

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AUTHOR

That Paul the apostle wrote the epistle to the Romans is not disputed.
Almost all modern critics admit that Paul wrote it.

His background is significant.

He says he was "set apart" to a life of ministering the Gospel (1:1).

The Gospel presents salvation by trusting Christ, apart from works of the law.

His own life was a contrast between the attempt at salvation by works and salvation by faith.

- He lived as a strict Pharisee (Acts 26:5)
- He became the main persecutor of the church (26:9-11)
- As a Jew he was zealous for the law (22:3; 23:4-5; Phil. 3:4-6)
He knew well the character of that religion which he must now characterize as one of sin and death (2 Cor. 3:7; Rom. 8:2; 3:20)
- He had a life-changing experience with God. His doctrine was corrected and the object of his zeal changed (Acts 9:3-6; 26:12-18)
- He became zealous for the Gospel. He knew both ways, but chose the way of faith (Rom. 1:16-17)

Paul writes of the condition of Israel with understanding and compassion. He has been there and wants them to find what he has found.

Paul writes as the apostle to the Gentiles (1:13; 11:13, 15; 15-16), to the church at Rome who were mainly Gentiles also.

He has long desired to go to Rome and now writes to minister to them and to assure them of this desire.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Romans was written on Paul's third missionary journey during his long stay at Ephesus.

He decided to go to Rome to visit and preach there (1:8-15; 15:18-24).

He was about to go to Jerusalem and from there on to Rome.

On the trip to Jerusalem, Paul was warned by prophets of impending persecution and arrest (Acts 20:17-21:14).

He was driven on by the Spirit to Jerusalem (20:22-24; 21:13-14).

In Jerusalem He was arrested and eventually sent to Rome for trial.

The government picked up his travel expenses.

He ministered there for about 2 years (28:16-31).

Then he was released to continue his work.

PURPOSE

Paul wanted to travel to Rome.

In order to prepare the way he wrote a letter to be carried ahead so that all would know him.

His purpose seems to have been two-fold:

1. To inform them of his planned visit
2. To give them a summary of the Gospel he proclaimed

THEME

Romans 1:16-17 -- The Gospel: The power of God for salvation

