

Romans Lesson 12

Reading: Romans 15:14 – 16:27

Memory Verse: Romans 16:25

Definitions:

Mystery – hidden truth that God has revealed

After reading the lesson, answer the questions using the following link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfebesMxFVetqtCEf0-7JnbMCtx5N38xjfbS_GREM0UWq4QHQ/viewform?usp=sf_link

Busy Schedules

I wake up at 6:00 AM and get to school by 7:40. After school I have cheerleading from 3:00 to 5:00, then coach cheerleading in a lower grade from 5:00 until 6:30. I get home around 7:00 and have an hour to eat dinner and do homework. From 8:00 to 9:30 I have dance class. After dance, I complete my homework. I try to get to bed by 11:30.

- Mallory

School starts at 7:30, so I have to get up at 6:30. I get home around 3:35 and do homework until 5:00 when I have piano practice. We eat dinner at 6:00, and then I watch TV for an hour until I have to do the dishes at 8:00. I generally just hang out from there until I go to bed at 11:00.

- Vanessa

I am a freshman, and a typical day is not that bad. I get up at 6:00 and get to school by 7:00. My first class is not until 7:40, so I talk with my friends for half an hour. I get home at 2:45 and relax for half an hour, then do my homework. I usually have one to three hours of homework a day. When I get it done, I hang with my friends, practice my trumpet, play video games or watch TV.

- Aaron

I have to get up at 5:00 to leave for the bus at 6:30. School starts at 7:30 and gets out at 2:30. I sleep from 3:00 until 4:30, then do homework until 6:00. I have band practice from 6:00 until 9:30.

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- Mandy

Real schedules from real teens just like you. Sound familiar? It is easy to think that you are unique – the only one in the world with your talents, your problems or your busy schedule. It is easy to forget that Paul was a real person too. He had problems. He had friends that meant a lot to him. He really cared about people. He was also very excited about his message and wanted to get it across to the Romans, and to us.

Many Christians do not understand Romans. They still think their salvation is based on works because they do not understand justification. They think they can lose their salvation because they do not understand the promises in Romans chapter 8. They get confused about why the world is such a mess because they do not understand that all creation “groans” because of sin.

They do not understand why they struggle between doing what is right and what is wrong. And they do not understand that God has given us gifts to use for Him and that we should reflect our relationship with Christ in the way we live.

Paul crammed a lot of good stuff into Romans.

Paul explains his letter

The last part of Paul's letter is an in-depth look into Paul's heart and mind.

He told the church at Rome that they were *full of goodness* (15:14). He did not write the letter because they were doing something wrong, but because they were knowledgeable, and he knew they would understand his message. Because of their knowledge, we benefit.

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Paul explained that he wrote boldly and with confidence because, as a servant of Jesus Christ, God gave him the responsibility of preaching to the Gentiles (15:15). But he also understood that he was not preaching his own message, but rather the message of Christ (15:16).

Paul was a missionary in the truest sense of the word. He went to places where people did not know about Christ, *so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation (15:20)*. Remember in the first lesson, we learned that Paul had never visited Rome. Yet, Bible scholars believe the church was started by people to whom he ministered in other places. Verse 20 supports that belief. If Paul's desire was to minister where no one else had preached, then it figures that he was the one who had taught the Romans.

Paul's journey

Now Paul has a plan. He wants to deliver a gift *for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem (15:26)*. Think about this: at one time Paul persecuted the believers at Jerusalem. Now, he wants to take them a gift.

He begs the Romans to pray for him. He understands he is going on a dangerous trip (and as events proved, he was right).

He also plans on visiting the church at Rome, and he does eventually get there. But he arrived bound in chains after spending two years in a Caesarian jail – imprisoned for preaching the same truths that he wrote about in his letter. But the message of Romans was so much a part of Paul's life, he completely understood the peace of God – and experience that peace even though he was imprisoned.

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Paul gets personal

In *through the Bible, Matthew through Romans*, Bible teacher Vernon McGee described the 16th chapter of Romans like this: “Paul has left the mountain peaks of doctrine to come down to the pavements of Rome.”

Thirty-five people are mentioned in this chapter. Some of these people were in the church in Rome, others were people who were with Paul. They all loved the Lord. We do not have time to talk about all these people, but let’s scan the Roman Church Directory.

Phoebe -

She must have been a special lady! Paul interested her to deliver his letter to the Romans. Obviously, she proved her trustworthiness, because the Romans got their mail (16:1-2).

Epenetus -

He was Paul’s first convert in the province of Asia. His name means “praised.”

Urbanus -

Guess what Urbanus’ name means? Right. It means “someone from the city.” Paul describes Urbanus as a good helper.

Tryphena and Tryphosa -

Their names mean “delicate” and “dainty.” Can’t you picture these sweet, elderly, grandmotherly-type ladies working in the church? Can’t you just see them flitting around, keeping the pews dusted, sending cards to the sick and cooing over the babies in the nursery?

Rufus -

“Rufus” means “red.” Bible scholars believe his father was Simon of Cyrene, who carried the cross of Christ.

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Paul then gives greetings from some of the people who were with him, including Tertius, his secretary, and Gaius, his host.

Fast Fact

In Paul's benediction (16:25-26), he reminds the Romans that they can be established in "my gospel." He is preaching the word of Jesus Christ. He has revealed the mystery that was not revealed in the Old Testament – that the Jews and Gentiles are both saved by God's grace and are members of one body, the church (Ephesians 3). Paul's letter to the Romans was written not only to those early church members, but also to us. We, too, need to be established in the truths Paul wrote about in Romans.