

Mary, Mother of Jesus Church
Faith Formation Lent 2021
St. Paul's Letter to the Church at Rome
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Week 1: Handout

St. Paul's letter to the church at Rome is perhaps the most important of all his letters, but it is the most difficult to comprehend.

Before beginning study, we must answer 3 questions:

Who was Paul?

Why would he write a letter to a church to which he had never been?

Why to evangelical Protestants hold this book up to liturgical Christians to show us the error of our ways?

- Question 1: "Israelite of the tribe of Benjamin"
"apostle to the Gentiles"
"spreader of the Gospel from Jerusalem to Illyricum"
- Question 2: Romans 1: 8-15; 15: 14-33
- Question 3: The spotlight is on sin and justification

Background on the letter

- The early Christian church at Rome
- Paul's intent in writing the letter
- The great conflict in the church at Rome

The Theology of Romans: 4 points

- 1) God's righteousness as the basis for salvation
 - The Covenants
 - With Abraham: universal fatherhood and his descendants as God's elect
 - With David and his kingship: offspring enthroned forever, his heirs are sons of God by adoption, established rule over both Jews and Gentiles
- 2) God's plan for Israel and the reconciliation of the world
 - The spotlight is on sin
 - Salvation needed by all
 - Two premises:
 - Justification = the action of God toward humanity who believe in Jesus Christ
 - Divine adoption = premier blessing bestowed on believers
- 3) The restoration of Israel
 - Relation between the Gospel and the Chosen People
- 4) The requirements of Christian life
 - Humility
 - Generosity
 - Conquer evil with what is good