

THE LETTER TO THE ROMANS

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Welcome

1. Christianity in Rome: Rom 1:1-17
2. The letter as a whole: Rom 1-16
3. Need of grace: Rom 1-4
4. Gift of grace: Rom 5-8
5. Jews and Gentiles: Rom 9-11
6. Grace in practice: Rom 12:1-15:6
7. Conclusion: Rom 15:7-33; 16
8. ROMANS FOR TODAY'S CHURCH

Sequence

- Your ideas
- Realism regarding the human condition
- Summary Remarks
- Four "stories"
- Faith communities
- Spirituality
- Where to from here?

Your ideas

Realism regarding the human condition

- Reality of evil, sin and death (2-3)
- Sin affects everyone (7)
- Death affects everyone (5)
- Pride, superiority, judgement (2, 3, 14)
- Intimations of God (1)

- Need of grace (2-3)
- Need of faith (4)
- Need of God's disclosure (3)
- Need of the Holy Spirit (5, 8)

Summary remarks

- The "coherent" and the "contingent"
- Gift and grace
- The reasonability of faith
- Trusting people with "big" ideas
- Reconciliation between the churches
- A peaceful relationship with Judaism

Four "stories"

- The story of God
- The story of Jesus
- The story of the Spirit
- The story of the church

Faith communities

- Tensions within communities
- Tensions between communities
- Identifying the core, non "church-dividing" affirmations
- Living with differences of emphasis and interest
- Affirming that we are all on the same page when it comes to God's project in Jesus

Spirituality

- Faithfulness of God disclosed through Jesus' faithfulness
- Faith of the believer: modelled on Abraham and Jesus
- Right relationship ("Justification by faith")
- Through the Spirit, poured into our hearts

- Centrality of love as gift and practice
- God's mercy
- Freedom from the power (and fear) of death
- Received and lived in the body of Christ, the community of faith

- Discipleship today: the path of transformation
- Discipleship today: the role of prayer
- Discipleship today: handing on the faith

- Refugees, racism, nationalism
- What kind of society do we wish?
- Ethical issues: birth, death, relationships

Where to from here?

- Romans is the great summary
- A door, too, to the other letters
- A foundation stone for the New Testament
- Books by Tom Wright are always good