

Study 1

THE POWER OF GOD

Romans 1

Epistles all commence with the sender identifying himself and sending a greeting. It is in the opening verse of this epistle that Paul states his two great themes.

1. What two great themes are identified by Paul in the opening verse of this epistle? (Rom. 1:1, see vs. 3 also)

2. How does Romans 1:5-6 show that the Gospel was not to be restricted to Jews only?

In the opening four verses, the apostle references each member of the Trinity playing a role in the outworking of the Gospel. The Gospel is *God the Father's* message. The Gospel is about *Jesus Christ*. The Gospel is declared by the power of *the Holy Spirit*.

3. What does Romans 1:8 tell us about the witness of the church in Rome?

4. Why did Paul want to visit the church at Rome and what might this tell us about the role of 'ministers'? (Rom. 1:11, 15)

5. In what way is the Gospel "the power of God"? (Rom. 1:16)

Paul cites Habakkuk 2:4 in Romans 1:17 and shows that the Old Testament prophesied about the coming of the Gospel. “Righteousness” is a key word in this epistle. It means “innocence” and “right standing before God”. It is related to another word: *justified* (Rom. 3:28). While we each stand before God as guilty and despicable sinners deserving the wrath of God, Christ has offered His life as our Substitute and has atoned for our sins. In the language of a court-room, we have now been declared “innocent” (not because we are, but because Christ, the truly innocent One, has borne our eternal penalty).

6. Paul tells the Roman believers that *all* people intuitively acknowledge that there is a God (Rom. 1:19). But in order to justify their rebellion toward God, they have to do something. According to Romans 1:18, what is it that they unrighteously do?
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7. Even people with no religious background are born with an intuitive knowledge that there is a God. In addition to this, according to Romans 1:20, how *else* can they know that there is a God?
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Today we tend to associate our *minds* with our *thinking* and our *hearts* with our *feeling*. But the Bible seems to identify our *thoughts* as coming from our *hearts*.

8. According Romans 1:21, what does a refusal to honour or thank God do to a person’s thinking (and heart)?
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What does God’s judgment look like? When does God judge people? You would be forgiven for thinking that God’s judgment looks like *punishment* and not *self-gratification*. You would also be forgiven for thinking that God punishes people when they embrace a lifestyle of gross sin. But Romans 1:24-25 challenges these assumptions.

9. Consider what happens when God “gives people up” to fulfil the passions of their debased minds as described in Romans 1:26-32. Why does verse 32 sound a stern warning to us today?
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It would be wrong of us to become judgmental of others whom we felt the closing section of Romans 1 describes. We should instead be moved with compassion for these people to accept the Gospel instead. This is clearly the heart of the apostle who authored this epistle.

10. Describe in your own words what stood out to you the most in Romans 1 -

11. What is your prayer for your life based on what you've gained from Romans 1?

12. Who can you share with this week, what you have now just learned?

13. In which part of this study did you sense God was speaking to *you*?

14. Write out your prayerful response to God -

Amen.