

The Heart of the Gospel

IN PART ONE, WE LEARNED THAT ROMANS has as its profound theme the Gospel of God concerning our Lord Jesus Christ. So to know Romans is to understand the central doctrines of authentic Christianity. In the opening chapters of Romans, Paul explains that every one of us is under the condemnation of God and deserves His wrath. Paul first presents this serious picture before he explains that the power and the purpose of God revealed in the Gospel is the only way to deal with this deep problem of our sin.

Then Paul emphasizes that our justification before God is not based on anything we do but rather flows from the grace of God. So we are declared righteous before a holy God (justified) by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

Paul gives the Old Testament examples of Abraham and King David, who were justified by faith apart from anything they did. In this way, Paul is emphasizing that salvation is a gift of God and is received by us through faith.

*“For by grace you have been saved through faith.
And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,
not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”*

Ephesians 2:8–9

THEOLOGY OF CHAPTERS 1–4

Everyone is **guilty of sin**: the answer is **justification by faith**, whereby the sinner is declared not guilty.

Everyone is **under the power of sin**: the answer is **redemption**, whereby the believer in Christ is freed from the power of sin.

Everyone is **under the wrath of God**: the answer is **propitiation**, whereby the justice of God is satisfied by Christ's death on the cross for us.

All of the benefits of this salvation are received by the individual through **faith alone**, in **Jesus Christ alone**, and based on the **grace of God alone**.

OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS 1–4

I. INTRODUCTION TO ROMANS

- *Greetings from Paul (1:1–7)*
- *Paul and the Romans (1:8–15)*
- *The Theme of Romans (1:16–17)*

II. THE HEART OF THE GOSPEL

CONDEMNATION: The Universal Reign of Sin (1:18–3:20)

- *The condemnation of the ungodly (1:18–32)*
- *The condemnation of the moralist (2:1–16)*
- *The condemnation of the Jew (2:17–3:8)*
- *The condemnation of the whole world (3:9–20)*

JUSTIFICATION: By Faith Alone (3:21–4:25)

- *The EXPLANATION of justification by faith alone (3:21–31)*
- *The ILLUSTRATION of justification by faith alone (4:1–25)*