

A person is holding a large, ornate frame. The frame has a light blue outer border and a gold inner border with red and blue decorative elements. Inside the frame, the text "Right With GOD" is written in a serif font. The word "Right" is on the first line, "With" is on the second line, and "GOD" is on the third line. The text is enclosed in quotation marks. Below the text, the reference "Romans 1-7" is written in a smaller font. The person holding the frame is wearing a grey t-shirt with red horizontal stripes.

“ ———
Right
With
GOD ”

Romans 1-7

Study Guide

First term 2017

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#1 The Gospel of God

Romans 1:1-17

1. A friend asks you to explain what you mean by “the gospel”. What do you say?

INVESTIGATE

Read 1:1-7

2. What do we find out about Paul in these verses? What do we learn about the recipients?
3. According to v1-4, who or what is the gospel about? What are we told about this person?
4. V2 says that the gospel was promised beforehand in the Holy Scriptures (i.e. the Old Testament). Can you think of examples? What does this tell us about the Bible?
5. If Paul has been set apart for the gospel (v1), what does he expect the gospel to do in people’s lives according to v5? What do you think he means by “the obedience of faith”?

Read 1:8-17

6. In these verses, what do we discover about Paul’s relationship with the Roman Christians?
7. Given that Paul is writing to Christians (v7), why is he so eager to preach the gospel to them (v14-15)? What does he expect the gospel to do for them (also see 16:25)?
8. Why do you think Paul says that he is not ashamed of the gospel (v16)?

9. What does the gospel do (v16)? Who does it do it for? How does it do it?
10. Read verse 17 again. a) What is “the righteousness of God”? b) What does it mean for it to be “revealed” in the gospel? c) Why is it “by faith from first to last”? d) How does the Old Testament quotation help us understand it?

IMPLICATIONS

11. Paul refers to the gospel as “God’s gospel”. What are the implications of that description? How does Paul’s gospel differ from other versions of the gospel on offer today?
12. What do you lose if you leave out a) Jesus or b) Christ or c) Lord from the gospel?
13. How would you tell if you’ve really believed God’s gospel? How could you tell if you didn’t?
14. When you think of God’s power, what comes to mind? Where is God’s power truly seen according to v16?
15. What might make us ashamed of the gospel? How can we overcome these?

#2 The Anger of God

Romans 1:18-32

1. What do you think are the three biggest problems in the world today?
2. If you got into a discussion about the state of humanity and someone said, "I think people are basically good, except for a small minority of people" ... would you agree or disagree? Why?

INVESTIGATE

Read 1:18-32

3. How does this passage follow on from what we learnt last week, especially 1:16-17? (Note: in the Greek, v18 begins with the word 'for')
4. What is being revealed from heaven (v18)? Why is God angry (v18 – see also v21, v23 & v25)? Why is God right to be angry?
5. What has God revealed about himself to everyone (v20)? How has this "truth" about God been revealed (vv19, 20)? What have we done with that truth?
6. What terrible "exchanges" have taken place as a result of the suppression of the "truth" (v21-31)?
7. What is the consequence of this suppression of the "truth" and this "exchange"? How does God respond (vv24, 26, 28)?

8. What do we deserve as a result of our attitudes and actions (v32, see also Gen. 2:17)?
9. Are people aware of their crimes against God and the consequences (vv19-21, 32)?
10. Why does Paul include such a long list of sins in verses 29-31? What does he include? What do they reveal about our world?
11. What is Paul's main point about humanity in this section?
12. Going back to 1:16, what do we need to be saved from? Why do we need a gospel?

IMPLICATIONS

13. In light of this passage, how should we respond to the following statements:
 - a. "The main problem with sin is that it messes up our lives!"
 - b. "Surely God can't blame people who have never come into contact with the gospel?"
 - c. "In response to this passage, we should stop sinning and live better lives!"

#3 No Escape

Romans 2:1-16

1. What do people generally think about a so-called judgment day?

INVESTIGATE

Read 2:1-5

2. How do you think this section follows on from 1:18-32?
3. Who is Paul addressing in this section (vv1, 3)?
4. What is Paul's verdict on those who think themselves better than others?
5. How does condemning bad behaviour in others condemn me too (v1-3)?
6. What do religious people bank on according to v4?
7. Why doesn't God act in judgment right now? What is the point of his kindness and patience (v4)?
8. What does Paul say in v5 about those who know the truth, but think that there is nothing wrong with their lives? What will the consequence be?

Read 2:6-16

9. How is God going to judge the world? (v6-8)
10. How does Paul show that God is fair and impartial in judgment? (vv2, 6, 9-11)
11. What is needed for us to be right with God according to v13? Why is this a problem?
12. How does God's law relate to God's judgment? What does Paul say to Jews? What does he say to non-Jews?

IMPLICATIONS

13. How does self-righteousness and judgmentalism tend to show up in our lives?
14. Why do people think that they don't deserve to face God's judgement? What might you say to them in response from Romans 2?

#4 Not Good Enough

Romans 2:17-3:20

1. Try to summarise where we've got to so far in Romans...

INVESTIGATE

Read 2:17-29

2. Who does Paul specifically address in this section? What great potential danger comes with being part of the people of Israel?
3. How does Paul destroy any attitude of superiority? How does he apply v12-13?
4. Why do you think Paul brings up the issue of circumcision? What point do you think he's making in v25-27?
5. From v28-29, who are the true "Jews"?

Read 3:1-20

6. In v1-8 Paul seems to be refuting the objections of an imaginary opponent. How does Paul answer these objections?
 - a. What is the advantage of being Jewish (v1-2)?
 - b. But what about God's faithfulness to his promises (v3-4)?
 - c. If our unrighteousness makes God look good, because he has come to our rescue, why is God still angry with us? And why does he still blame us? Isn't that unjust (v5-8)?

7. As he concludes, Paul uses the Old Testament to show that what he's been saying isn't new. What is his conclusion about the state of humanity in v9-20? How does each quotation back this up?
8. What does v19-20 tell us about where God's law fits in to all of this?

IMPLICATIONS

9. The Jews relied on certain religious privileges. What privileges do people rely on today to set them right with God?
10. What would you say to people who think they're okay with God because...
 - a. "I've always tried to do good. I've never murdered anyone!"
 - b. "I'm a Jew, I'm one of God's people!"
 - c. "I've been baptised. I come from a Christian home. I go to church!"
11. Why can't God simply forgive and forget? (See Proverbs 17:15)
12. What should our response be, at this stage in Romans? How can we encourage one another to respond in a right way? What do we all need in light of 1:18-3:20 (see 1:16-17)?

#5 But Now...

Romans 3:21-26

1. What is the bad news that Paul has been unpacking in 1:18-3:20? Try to summarise each stage of the argument.

INVESTIGATE

Read 3:21-26

2. Against the hopeless situation of 1:18-3:20, what is the good news of the gospel (v21-22)?
3. Why does it need to be “from God” (v 21)? In what way is this not new (v 21) – try to think of examples?
4. What is humanity’s problem (v22b-23) and what is God’s solution (v24)?
5. What do you the following words or concepts mean?
 - a. “righteousness” (v21, 22)
 - b. “redemption” (v24)
 - c. “sacrifice of atonement” / “propitiation” (v25)
 - d. “justify” (v24, 26)
6. So how does the gospel transaction work (v23-25)?
7. What does God require from us in order to benefit from what Jesus has done?

8. What about God's reputation? Surely if God lets us off the hook, his justice is a sham and his gospel a scandal? How can God do all this and still be just (v25b-26)?
9. On what grounds were Old Testament believers justified? Explain.

IMPLICATIONS

10. Can we ever think that God's grace is cheap? Explain.
11. What reason do we normally give for God having sent Jesus to die for us? How is Paul's reason different? Why does it matter so much for the universe that God is fair and just?
12. What would be an appropriate way to respond to what you've discovered in this passage?

#6 By Faith Alone

Romans 3:27-4:25

1. How does someone become a Christian?

INVESTIGATE

Read 3:27-4:12 (also read Genesis 12:1-4 & 15:1-6)

2. In what ways do religious people tend to be boastful? Why does the gospel remove any reason for boasting?
3. Paul chooses Abraham as his example to show why boasting is out of the question. Why do you think he chose Abraham?
4. How does he show that Abraham wasn't made righteous (i.e. justified) by *good works* (v1-5)?
5. Who else does Paul quote to prove that good works don't make us righteous (v6-8)? How does he make the point?
6. How does Paul show that Abraham was also not justified by *circumcision* (v9-12)?
7. What does this mean for us, who are not circumcised Jews (v11b-12)?

Read 4:12-25

8. How does Paul show that Abraham was not justified by *the law* (v13-17)?
9. What is this God like who justifies sinners (v17)?
10. What were the circumstances surrounding Abraham's faith? (v18-21) What was the result (v22)?
11. Abraham lived way before Jesus – on what basis can God forgive Abraham's sins? When were his sins paid for? (Hint: see 3:25-26)
12. How is our faith similar to Abraham's and how is it different? (v23-25)

IMPLICATIONS

13. The opposite of boastfulness is humility. In what practical ways should our humility as Christians be evident?
14. In what ways does trying to be righteous on our own wear us down and destroy us? By contrast, how does Psalm 32 describe those who have been justified by God?

#7 Peace & Joy

Romans 5:1-11

1. What is the best thing about being a Christian? What's are some of the things we struggle with?

INVESTIGATE

Read 5:1-11

2. "Therefore" (v1) tells us we're at a punch line. What is the conclusion of what Paul has been saying from 3:21-4:25?
3. What would most people think 'peace with God' is? What does Paul mean by the phrase?
4. What other consequences are there of being justified (v1b-2)?
5. What do you think Paul means by "the hope of the glory of God" (v2)? What does this hope produce in us (v2-3)?
6. How is it possible for a Christian to rejoice in their sufferings (v3-4)?
7. How can we be sure our hope will not disappoint us (v5-8)?
8. When did Christ die for us, according to Paul? What difference does remembering this make to our relationship with God?

9. Try to paraphrase Paul's argument in v9-10. What is he saying?

10. How does Paul describe the Christian's new relationship with God (v11)

IMPLICATIONS

11. How can I know that God really loves me?

12. Can you think of times when you were able to "rejoice in your sufferings"?

13. How might you cultivate Christ-centred joy in your life?

#8 Adam 2.0

Romans 5:12-21

1. What are some of the different perspectives people have about death?

INVESTIGATE

Read 5:12-21

2. Which two individuals are being compared in this section?
3. What did the first Adam do? What were the consequences? (v12)
4. What is the relationship of God's law to our sin (v13-14)?
5. Adam is describes in v14 as "a pattern of the one to come" – what does Paul mean?
6. What did the "second Adam" do? What were the consequences? (v15)
7. How are Adam and Jesus compared to each other in v16-19? Try to list the differences.
8. What is the "one act" of righteousness that Paul speaks about in v18?
9. What does Paul mean by "made sinners" and "made righteous" in v19?

10. What does Paul mean in v20-21? Try to put his argument into your own words.
11. How does Paul show in this passage that the grace of Jesus is stronger than the sin of Adam?

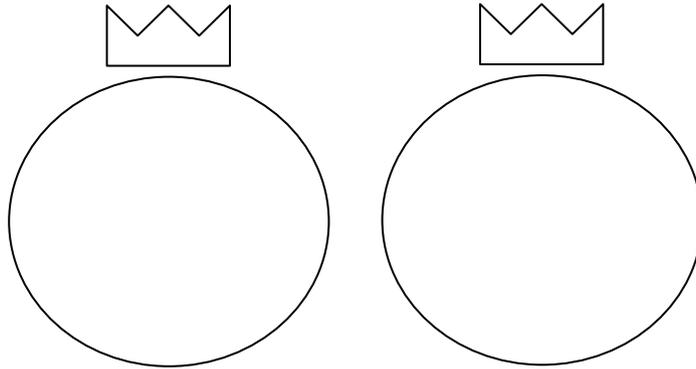
IMPLICATIONS

12. How is it different to say, “I sometimes commit sins” from saying, “I am a sinner”? Why is the latter so much deeper and more serious?
13. How might this passage help us in the on-going fight against sin?
14. According to Romans 5, everyone is in one of two camps – either in the Adam camp or the Jesus camp. How can we make sure we’re in the Jesus camp?

#9 How People Change

Romans 6:1-14

1. Think back to the last study. Who were the two representatives of humanity (see 5:14-17)?
Write the characteristics of each in the circle.



INVESTIGATE

Read 6:1-14

2. What is the question that Paul asks in v1 and how does he answer it in v2? Why do you think he asks it (see 5:20)?
3. Why do you think he's so emphatic in the way he answers?
4. What do you think he means by "baptised into Christ" in v3?
5. What's the purpose of being baptised into Christ's death (v4b)?
6. What has taken place, in the past, in the lives of those who have been baptised into Christ? And what will happen in the future? (v3-5)

7. Paul calls our life before coming to Christ our “old self”. What does he say about this “old self” versus the new self (v6-7)?
8. How is this possible (v7)? What does that mean?
9. What is the amazing reality of being united to Christ in v8-10?
10. How are Christians supposed to live if all this is true (v11)?
11. What does Paul urge us not to do (v12-13)? Instead, what are we to do (v13)?

IMPLICATIONS

12. What does it mean to be “freed from sin” (v7)?
13. What might v11-13 look like in practical terms?
14. What are you going to do about it? Write down one area in your life where you will no longer let sin be your master and pray for God’s help.

#10 Everyone a Slave

Romans 6:15-7:6

1. Have a look back at last week's passage (6:1-14). Try to recap Paul's argument as to why Christians shouldn't go on sinning.

INVESTIGATE

Read 6:15-23

2. Paul said in 6:14 that the Christian is no longer "under law", but "under grace" ... what does he mean?
3. Why do you think this might lead to someone thinking that they could go on sinning v15? How do we try to justify sinful behaviour?
4. Do human beings have free will? What is Paul saying in v16-18?
5. What are the two slaveries on offer (v16)? If we persist in sinning wilfully, what does that say about us?
6. So what are we to do (v19)?

7. In v20-23 two ways of life are described with two sets of “benefits” and two ultimate consequences. Fill in the table below:

	Relation to sin	Relation to righteousness	Benefit	Ultimate consequence
Before...	(v20)	(v20)	(v21)	(v21,23)
But now...	(v22)	(v22 ... see v18)	(v22b)	(v22,23)

Notes: v21a could be “what benefit did you reap at the time? The things you are now ashamed of.”
v22b could be “the benefit you reap is holiness.”

Read 7:1-6

8. Paul started this section by saying that we are no longer under law (6:15). How does he now explain this (7:1-3)?
9. So what? (v4-6)

IMPLICATIONS

10. What implications does this passage have for how we think about sin and righteousness?
11. How might we better support one another in the fight against sin?