

# Session 1: Gospel.

## How can we become confident in our faith?

Welcome to Session 1 of our teaching series on Romans. In this session you will find worship song suggestions, a sermon outline and a written prayer.

KEY VERSE:

**‘For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes ...’**

ROMANS 1.16 (ESV)

### BIBLE READINGS:

Romans 1.1-7, 14-17

### MAIN QUESTIONS:

What is the original context of Romans, how did this letter impact the early church and why is it relevant for us today?  
How can we continue to be confident in the gospel in our times?

### MAIN THEMES:

The gospel; Paul's identity and confidence; the righteousness of God.

### Context:

Romans is one of Paul's best-known letters. It is a deeply theological, yet also deeply practical, letter. Although written for house churches in ancient Rome, the letter and its themes are profoundly relevant for us today. Paul wrote this letter with the aim of one day visiting the church in Rome. Although he ended up in Rome in chains (see Acts 28.16–20) and eventually died at the hands of the authorities there, his letter changed the church and continues to have this impact on lives today.

### Summary:

The apostle Paul writes to the church in Rome. He identifies himself as a slave of Jesus Christ, and writes to a church made up of Gentiles and Jews, slaves and free people. Although the church is facing difficulties and persecution, Paul is confident in the message of the gospel and urges the Romans to remain confident as well.

### WORSHIP SONG SUGGESTIONS:

- Good, Good Father
- How Great Thou Art
- How Great Is Our God
- Our God
- Here I Am To Worship
- O Praise The Name (Anastasis)
- In Christ Alone
- Yes And Amen







- **The gospel is proved by the resurrection (verse 4).**

These promises all come to their fulfilment in Jesus Christ, who was revealed to be the Son of God through his resurrection from the dead. Romans is not, ultimately, about some big and complicated ideas, but about a person – Jesus Christ. In him all of the promises of Scripture and longings of the human heart find their fulfilment. And this good news about Jesus is powerful to bring salvation to all people (verse 16).

**CONCLUSION**

**How do we live in the light of this?**

Below are some suggested points of application. Feel free to select a couple of points which are most appropriate to your setting.

- You may want to encourage people to set aside some time to read through Romans this week. It will take about an hour in one sitting. There is real value in reading the letter as a whole, rather than just in isolated chunks, to help you appreciate the sweep of Paul's argument. Tell people not to worry too much about understanding it all – this series will help with that!
- Consider some of the things that cause tension in your church community. The differences among you will be different to those in Rome, no doubt. Take some time to consider the diverse people that make up your church community, and some of the differences between you in how you practise your faith. Perhaps through this series you might want to find some practical ways to build deeper unity in your diversity.
- Paul sees himself as a slave of Christ (verse 1), under obligation to share the gospel (verse 14), of which he is not ashamed (verse 16). Would you describe yourself in the same way? Which bits of that description do you find most challenging? Don't worry if you find these descriptions hard to relate to, we will explore them more as the series goes on.



**READING SUGGESTIONS:**

- *Romans: A Letter That Makes Sense of Life* by Andrew Ollerton
- *The Message of Romans* by John Stott
- *Paul: A Biography* by NT Wright



**WRITTEN PRAYER**

Lord Jesus, thank you for Paul's wonderful letter and all we have heard today. Please be with us throughout this series as we explore the book of Romans. Open our eyes to the depth and beauty of the gospel so that we may have a richer grasp of all that you have done in the past and all that you continue to do in us today. Lord, help us not to be ashamed, confused or quiet about the gospel. Teach us through Romans so that we may be more confident in you and share our love for you more openly and widely. Amen.