Romans: Exegesis and Theology
Jonathan Linebaugh
October 7-11, 2013

Outline

A study of Paul’s Letter to the Romans focused on its literary and canonical argument, engaging the history of interpretation, and considering its theological and pastoral implications. As we engage the text we will encounter a number of major issues in theology and ministry: the person and work of Christ, the meaning and content of God’s righteousness and grace, the definition of and distinction between law and gospel, the world as created and fallen, the relationship between faith, freedom, and obedience, and a Christological reading of the Old Testament.

Objectives

By the end of this course, students will have grown in their ability to:

(1) understand the context, language, and argument of Romans;
(2) see how Romans functions as an “open door to all of scripture” (Calvin) and an “introduction to the Old Testament” (Luther);
(3) tease out doctrinal implications from careful exegesis;
(4) draw on the history of interpretation when doing exegesis and theology;
(5) see pastoral implications of Romans and better understand how to distinguish law and gospel in practice and preaching.

Instructor
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Feel free to contact me at any point. Email is the best way to do so.

Requirements

(1) Read through Roman several times prior to the first day of class. It is best to use at least 2 or 3 English translations (try some of the following: ESV, NRSV, NIV, TNIV, KJV, and NASB), noting where they differ (as these places may well involve important interpretative decisions). If possible (that is, if you know biblical Greek), read through the text in Greek (as much as possible).

(2) Read through one of the following commentaries on Romans prior to the first day of class:


  - Note: this is a difficult commentary to work with if you do not know Greek

(3) Read prior to class:

  - Note: You are only required to read the preface

(4) Read through portions of several other resources during our week together. These will be assigned and distributed each morning and afternoon. They will then be discussed in small groups or by the class as a whole.

(5) Reading notes

Active reading involves thoughtful engagement with the text, manifested by careful note-taking. Each student must record notes for the assigned readings and turn in these notes via email or hard copy.

  Note: you should have a section of notes (preferably one page each) per chapter of Romans based on your reading of Romans and your commentary of choice.

Notes are meant to help you remember what you read and participate more fully in class discussion. As such, they can probably be taken best in bullet-point format. They do not need to be written in complete sentences or according to proper style and grammar conventions. They are your notes, so write such that you will be helped.

Appropriate things to include in notes are: questions about difficult or new terms, arguments, or implications; summary statements; references to key texts or figures; criticisms or counterarguments; implications and possibly related theological issues; etc.

  Suggestion: always begin notes for a chapter with a thesis statement (either a quote or your own attempt to formulate the main point of the chapter).
Notes are due at the end of the week of class. They should be submitted via email to the instructor.

(6) Write a 2500-3000 word paper on a passage in Romans or a particular theme addressed therein. You need to get approval of your text or topic from the instructor, who will try to help you shape your paper into a manageable task. A paper topic should be selected and approved by the end of our week together.

The due date for this final paper will be finalized during our week together.

Schedule

There will be three components to our time together each day:

(1) Individual work
(2) Group discussion
(3) Lecture

Monday
Morning: Introduction and Overview: Who is Paul and What is Romans?
   Read and discuss excerpts from Karl Donfried, The Romans Debate

Afternoon: Defining and Distinguishing Law and Gospel
   Discuss Luther’ preface and read excerpts from Luther’s Galatians

Tuesday
Morning: The Righteousness of God (Rom 1:18-3.20)
   Read and discuss Wisdom 13-15

Afternoon: The Righteousness of God (Rom 1.16-17, 3.21-31)
   Read and discuss Westerholm, Perspectives Old and New (“ordinary and extraordinary righteousness”)

Wednesday
Morning: An Introduction to the Old Testament (Rom 4)
   Read and discuss early Jewish accounts of Abraham

Afternoon: An Introduction to the Old Testament (Rom 9-11)
Read and discuss Francis Watson, *Paul, Judaism and the Gentiles* and Philo/Origen

**Thursday**
**Morning:** The Grace of God (Rom 5-6)
  Read and discuss John Barclay, “Grace Within and Beyond Reason” or “The Christ-Gift”

**Afternoon:** Word, Faith, Love: Theological Ethics (Rom 12-15)
  Read and discuss Oswald Bayer, *Martin Luther’s Theology* (“Faith and Good Works”)

**Friday**
**Morning:** Death and Life (Rom 7-8)