

## **Dr. Dave Mathewson, New Testament Literature, Session 15, Romans, Introduction to 1 Corinthians Resources from NotebookLM**

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

### **1. Abstract of Mathewson, NT Literature, Session 15, Romans, Introduction to 1 Corinthians, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL**

**Dr. Mathewson's lecture primarily analyzes Paul's letter to the Romans, exploring its themes of universal sinfulness and the righteousness offered through faith in Jesus Christ.** The lecture highlights the structure of Romans, moving from a diagnosis of humanity's fallen state to the prognosis of God's solution, while also considering the relationship between faith and works. **Mathewson emphasizes that God's justice is upheld through Christ's sacrifice, allowing God to justify sinners without compromising His own righteousness.** Furthermore, the discussion touches on Paul's concept of the "already but not yet" and the tension between the "old self" and "new self". **The lecture transitions to an introduction of 1 Corinthians, providing historical context on the city of Corinth and suggesting that Paul wrote more letters to the Corinthians than are currently in the Bible.**

**2. 21 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Mathewson, NT Literature, Session 15 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → Major Prophets → Daniel).**



**Mathewson\_NTLit\_Session15.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document: Mathewson, NT Literature, Session 15, Romans, Introduction to 1 Corinthians

Okay, here's a briefing document summarizing the main themes and important ideas from the provided lecture transcript:

#### Briefing Document: Romans and Introduction to 1 Corinthians

**Source:** Excerpts from "Mathewson\_NTLit\_EN\_Lecture15.pdf" (Dr. Dave Mathewson, New Testament Literature, Lecture 15)

#### Main Themes:

- **Romans:** A combination of the "old perspective" (individual salvation and standing before God) and the "new perspective" (Jew-Gentile relations within God's people) in understanding the main theme of Romans.
- **Justification:** The concept of justification (being declared righteous) in Romans, with a focus on its legal background and implications for both God and humanity.
- **Already But Not Yet:** Paul's use of the "already but not yet" framework, highlighting the tension between what Christians have already received in Christ and what they are still striving to attain.
- **Two Spheres of Influence (Old Self/New Self):** Paul's understanding of humanity existing within two spheres – "in Adam" (dominated by sin and death) and "in Christ" (characterized by righteousness and the Holy Spirit).
- **Indicative and Imperative:** The relationship between the "indicative" (statements of what is true of believers in Christ) and the "imperative" (commands to live in accordance with that truth).
- **1 Corinthians (Introduction):** An introduction to the historical context of 1 Corinthians, including the city of Corinth, its cultural influences, and the evidence of multiple letters exchanged between Paul and the Corinthian church.

#### Key Ideas and Facts:

##### Romans:

- **Diagnosis and Prognosis:** Paul's argument in Romans begins with a "diagnosis" (chapters 1-3), accusing both Gentiles and Jews of being under sin due to disobedience. This leads to the "prognosis" (starting in 3:21), that God has provided a solution: righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ.

- **Righteousness Apart from the Law:** The righteousness offered by God is "apart from the law" (Romans 3:21), meaning it's not achieved through obedience to the Mosaic law and is available to both Jews and Gentiles. "But now, apart from the law...the righteousness of God has been revealed...The righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe, for there is no distinction since all have sinned and fall short of God's glory."
- **Redemption and Propitiation/Sacrifice of Atonement:** Jesus' death provides redemption (freedom from slavery to sin) and serves as a sacrifice of atonement or propitiation (averting God's wrath and satisfying his demands). Jesus' death deals with this problem of sin in the first three chapters."
- **God's Justice and Justification:** God's act of justifying sinners does not compromise his own justice and righteousness. "God can justify those who are in bondage to sin...yet God still remains just." God does not lower his standards; rather, Christ meets those standards.
- **Justification as a Legal Term:** The term "justification" has a legal background, meaning to declare someone innocent or to vindicate them. Believers are "declared righteous or justified, meaning that they are declared innocent or they are vindicated. The sole basis of that vindication is the work of Christ on the cross."
- **Good Works and Evidence of Faith:** Good works are not the means of justification, but they are evidence of genuine faith. "Good works clearly demonstrate the reality of one's faith in Jesus Christ. If one has truly exercised faith in Christ...then inevitably that person will walk in newness of life."

#### The "Already But Not Yet" Tension:

- This tension is a key feature of Paul's theology. It acknowledges that believers have already experienced certain realities in Christ (e.g., death to sin, new life), but these realities have not yet been fully consummated. "The already side of the tension in Paul refers to what is already true of us by virtue of belonging to Jesus Christ...The not-yet side of the tension is what we have still yet to become."
- **Example from Romans 6:** Paul states believers have "died to sin" (the "already"), but then commands them not to let sin reign in their bodies (the "not yet"). "How can we who died to sin go on living in it?...Therefore, do not let sin reign...in your mortal bodies."

## Two Spheres of Influence (Old Self/New Self):

- **Old Self (in Adam):** This refers to humanity under the influence of Adam, dominated by sin and death. "The old person is who I was in the sphere of and under the influence of Adam dominated and characterized by sin and death."
- **New Self (in Christ):** This refers to being transferred to a new sphere of influence where Christ is the head, characterized by righteousness, life, and the Holy Spirit. "It refers now to being transferred to a new realm a new sphere of influence and power where Christ is the head."
- **In Christ:** The phrase "in Christ" signifies being within this sphere of Christ's control and influence.

## Indicative and Imperative:

- **Indicative:** Statements about who believers *are* in Christ (e.g., "We have died to sin").
- **Imperative:** Commands about how believers *should* live (e.g., "Do not let sin reign").
- The imperative reflects the "not yet" – the need to strive for the full realization of what is already true in Christ.

## 1 Corinthians (Introduction):

- **Historical Context:** Paul spent 18 months establishing the church in Corinth (Acts 18) and later wrote letters to address problems that arose.
- **Significance of Corinth:** Corinth was the capital of Achaia, a prosperous and culturally significant city, known for its wealth and, reportedly, its immorality. "Corinth was the capital city of Achaia...and therefore was a very significant city...Corinth also was probably represented both the best and the worst...of Greco-Roman culture."
- **Multiple Letters:** Paul likely wrote more than two letters to the Corinthians. 1 Corinthians 5:9 refers to a previous letter, and 2 Corinthians references a "severe letter" that is now lost. "1st and 2nd Corinthians are simply part of a much broader correspondence between Paul and the Corinthians." This complicates understanding the precise issues being addressed.

## 4. Study Guide: Mathewson, NT Literature, Session 15, Romans, Introduction to 1 Corinthians

### Romans and 1 Corinthians: A Study Guide

#### I. Quiz

Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. According to Mathewson, what are the two perspectives on the main theme or message of Romans?
2. What is Paul's "diagnosis" in the first three chapters of Romans, and who does it target?
3. What is God's "prognosis" for the problem diagnosed by Paul?
4. How does Paul address the potential objection that justification by faith might lead to antinomianism (disregard for the law)?
5. According to Romans 3:21-26, how is the righteousness of God revealed, and what role does faith play?
6. What two metaphors does Paul use to explain how Jesus's death addresses the problem of sin?
7. How does Paul argue that God remains just and righteous even when justifying sinners?
8. How does the concept of "already, but not yet" apply to Paul's understanding of the Christian life?
9. Explain Paul's concept of the "old person" versus the "new person."
10. What does it mean for a Christian to be "in Christ?"

#### II. Quiz Answer Key

1. The old perspective views Romans as addressing how individuals are saved or stand before God, while the new perspective sees the letter focusing on Jew-Gentile relations and belonging to God's people. Mathewson suggests that a combination of both perspectives is likely true.

2. Paul accuses all of humanity, both Gentiles and Jews, of standing condemned under sin. This is because both disobey the law, particularly the Jews, who disobey the law of Moses.
3. God has acted to address the problem of sin by offering a righteousness that is available through faith in Jesus Christ. This righteousness allows individuals to be justified and have a right standing before God.
4. Paul argues that true faith in Christ inevitably results in a transformed life and good works. He states that it is unthinkable that one would experience righteousness by faith and not live a new life, therefore, good works demonstrate the reality of one's faith.
5. The righteousness of God is revealed apart from the law of Moses, through faith in Jesus Christ, available to all who believe, regardless of their background. It emphasizes that all have sinned and fall short of God's glory.
6. Paul uses the metaphors of redemption, freeing from slavery to sin through Jesus's death, and sacrifice of atonement/propitiation, where Jesus's death removes sin and averts God's wrath. He also possibly draws a parallel to the mercy seat on the Ark of the Covenant, fulfilled in Christ.
7. God doesn't lower the standards of holiness or justice but meets them fully through Jesus Christ's sacrifice. By dealing with the problem of sin through Christ, God can justify sinners without compromising his righteous character.
8. The "already, but not yet" tension describes the Christian's experience of already having died to sin and been raised with Christ (the "already"), while still needing to actively put sin to death and walk in newness of life (the "not yet"). This reflects the ongoing struggle and process of sanctification.
9. The "old person" refers to humanity's existence under Adam's influence, characterized by sin and death. The "new person" refers to being transferred into a new sphere of influence under Christ, characterized by righteousness, life, and the Holy Spirit.
10. To be "in Christ" means to be within the realm or sphere of influence and control of Christ, where Christ is the head. It signifies belonging to a new realm characterized by a righteous life and the power of the Holy Spirit, having been transferred from the realm of Adam and sin.

### III. Essay Questions

1. Discuss the significance of Romans 3:21-26 as the "heart of the Gospel" according to Mathewson. How does this passage address both human sinfulness and God's righteousness?
2. Explain how Paul uses the metaphors of redemption and propitiation/sacrifice of atonement in Romans to describe the work of Jesus Christ.
3. Analyze the tension between the "already" and the "not yet" in Paul's theology, using examples from Romans and 1 Corinthians. How does this tension impact the Christian life?
4. Compare and contrast Paul's understanding of the "old person" and the "new person." How do these concepts relate to the themes of sin, grace, and transformation in his letters?
5. Describe the social and cultural context of Corinth in the first century and how it influenced the issues Paul addressed in his letters to the Corinthian church.

## IV. Glossary of Key Terms

- **Justification:** To declare someone righteous; to vindicate or declare innocent, especially in a legal or courtroom context. In Paul's theology, it refers to God declaring believers righteous through faith in Jesus Christ.
- **Righteousness:** Moral uprightness or conformity to God's standard of holiness. In Romans, it often refers to a right standing before God, attained not through law-keeping but through faith in Christ.
- **Redemption:** The act of buying back or freeing someone from captivity or bondage. In Romans, it refers to Jesus's death freeing believers from slavery to sin.
- **Propitiation:** An act that appeases or turns away wrath, especially divine wrath. In the context of Jesus's death, it refers to Christ's sacrifice satisfying God's wrath against sin.
- **Sacrifice of Atonement:** An act of offering something to remove or cleanse sin. In the context of Jesus's death, it refers to Christ's sacrifice removing sin and restoring a broken relationship with God.
- **Antinomianism:** The belief that Christians are freed from all moral obligations or laws. Paul argues against this in Romans, asserting that true faith leads to a transformed life of obedience.
- **Old Person/Old Self:** The state of being under the influence of Adam, characterized by sin and death. It represents humanity's fallen condition prior to being "in Christ."
- **Indicative:** Statements and assertions that express what is true by virtue of the fact that we are in Christ.
- **Imperative:** Ethical commands and injunctions that reflect what we have not yet become in Christ.
- **Already, but not yet:** A theological concept describing the tension between what has already been accomplished through Christ and what is yet to be fully realized. It reflects the present reality of salvation alongside the anticipation of future consummation.



## 5. FAQs on Mathewson, NT Literature, Session 15, Romans, Introduction to 1 Corinthians, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

### Frequently Asked Questions about Romans and 1 Corinthians

#### 1. What are the "old" and "new" perspectives on the main theme of Romans, and which does the lecture suggest is most accurate?

The "old perspective" on Romans emphasizes individual salvation and how people can stand before a holy God, like the issues Martin Luther raised. The "new perspective" focuses on the relationship between Jews and Gentiles and what is required to belong to God's people, thus a horizontal focus. The lecture suggests that a combination of both perspectives is probably most accurate, arguing that Romans addresses both the individual's standing before God and the inclusion of Gentiles without requiring adherence to the Mosaic law.

#### 2. How does Paul structure his argument in Romans, particularly in the first few chapters?

Paul's argument in Romans can be seen as beginning with a "diagnosis." In the first three chapters, Paul accuses all of humanity—Gentiles and Jews—of being condemned under sin because of their disobedience to the law (especially the Jews disobeying the law of Moses). This diagnosis then leads to the "prognosis," where Paul offers God's solution to this problem: a righteousness available through faith in Jesus Christ.

#### 3. How does Paul address the concern that justification by faith might lead to antinomianism (the belief that moral law is irrelevant)?

Paul anticipates the objection that if salvation is by grace through faith, then obedience is inconsequential. In Romans 6, he argues that such thinking is flawed. He states that those who have faith in Christ have died to sin and been raised to newness of life with Christ, sharing in his death and resurrection. Therefore, a true experience of righteousness by faith inevitably leads to a transformed life marked by good works, which demonstrate the reality of one's faith.

**4. What is the significance of Romans 3:21-26, and how does Paul describe the righteousness of God in this passage?**

Romans 3:21-26 is considered the heart of Paul's message, and it introduces the concept of God's righteousness being revealed "apart from the law." This righteousness comes through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe, without distinction between Jew and Gentile. Paul emphasizes that all have sinned and fall short of God's glory, but they are justified by God's grace as a gift through the redemption in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement or propitiation. This righteousness is not tied to obedience to the Mosaic law but is available to all equally.

**5. What is the meaning of "redemption" and "propitiation" in the context of Romans, and how do they relate to Jesus's death?**

In Romans, "redemption" refers to the freedom from slavery—specifically, freedom from the bondage to sin described in the first three chapters. Jesus's death provides this redemption, rescuing people from sin and death. "Propitiation" or "sacrifice of atonement" suggests that Jesus's death satisfies God's wrath, averting it from humanity by providing a sacrifice for sin. Jesus's death removes sin, cleanses sin, but also in a sense, it's a propitiation in that it averts and turns away God's wrath by providing the sacrifice of atonement for sin.

**6. How does the concept of "righteousness" or "justification" operate within the legal metaphor that Paul is utilizing and what does that imply about God?**

The word justification or righteousness throughout Romans often reflects a legal background. God is portrayed as the judge of all the world and humanity. Humanity has sinned against God and therefore stands guilty before God who is the judge of the world. God must provide a way to enter into a right relationship to vindicate those people of their sin, yet still maintain his own righteousness to justify himself. Justification is understood as God declaring someone to be in a right relationship, innocent, or vindicated. The sole basis of this vindication is the work of Christ on the cross and his resurrection. This also demonstrates that God does not lower His standards for humanity, rather he has the standards met through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

**7. Explain Paul's concept of the "already but not yet" and how it relates to the Christian life, using examples from Romans 6.**

Paul's "already but not yet" concept refers to the tension between what is already true of believers by virtue of belonging to Christ and what they have not yet fully experienced. The "already" side refers to what has been accomplished through Jesus Christ, while the "not yet" side refers to the future consummation and fullness of God's kingdom. In Romans 6, Paul states that believers have "died to sin" (already), yet he commands them not to let sin reign in their mortal bodies (not yet), indicating that they still need to put sin to death in practice. This is the tension between the indicatives, declarative facts about a believer, and the imperatives, the required actions as a result of the indicatives.

**8. What problems in the church in Corinth was Paul addressing in 1st Corinthians?**

Paul wrote to address a number of the problems and issues that had been taking place in the city of Corinth. Corinth was known for its wealth but also for its sexual immorality. While the specific issues are only evident when carefully reading the book, we know they were large enough for Paul to deal with these issues by letter following his 18 month stint planting a church there. Additionally, the letter we call "1st Corinthians" is likely the second letter he wrote to them and "2nd Corinthians" is likely the fourth he wrote to them meaning that Paul had to deal with a number of complex issues with them.