

Romans 1:17-21

1. Romans 1:15 – “to preach Gospel” leads into the central statement (1:16-17) of the book
2. Romans 1:16-17 is the main point of the introduction.
3. 1:16 – the Gospel is the saving power. This point ties the whole letter together
4. 1:17 – the “righteousness of God” is the effect the Gospel is focused on providing
5. 1:18-8:39 – God’s righteousness goes to faith
 - a. Righteous by faith (1:18-5:21)
 - b. The righteous by faith...shall live (6-8)
6. 9-11 – God’s righteousness comes from faith, that is from God’s faithfulness

Romans 1:16 -

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”

Romans 1:17 -

“For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.” ”

1343 [e]	1063 [e]	2316 [e]	1722 [e]	846 [e]	601 [e]	1537 [e]	4102 [e]	1519 [e]	4102 [e]
dikaioynē	gar	Theou	en	autō	apokalyptetai	ek	pisteōs	eis	pistin
17 δικαιοσύνη	γὰρ	Θεοῦ	ἐν	αὐτῷ	ἀποκαλύπτεται	, ἐκ	πίστεως	εἰς	πίστιν ;
[the] righteousness	indeed	of God	in	it	is revealed	by	faith	to	faith
N-NFS	Conj	N-GMS	Prep	PPro-DN3S	V-PIM/P-3S	Prep	N-GFS	Prep	N-AFS

2531 [e]	1125 [e]	3588 [e]	1161 [e]	1342 [e]	1537 [e]	4102 [e]	2198 [e]
kathōs	gegraptai	HO	de	dikaio	ek	pisteōs	zēsetai
καθὼς	γέγραπται	, Ὁ	δὲ	δίκαιος	ἐκ	πίστεως	ζήσεται .
as	it has been written	-	moreover	[the] righteous	by	faith	will live
Adv	V-RIM/P-3S	Art-NMS	Conj	Adj-NMS	Prep	N-GFS	V-FIM-3S

“Righteousness of God” This could mean:

- a) “the righteous standing which God gives”
- b) “the righteous character which God is”
- c) “the righteous activity which comes from God”

The phrase "righteousness of God" is used 8x in Romans and only 1x elsewhere (2 Cor. 5:21)

- This is a status before God. This is NOT an internal moral transformation
- This is an acquitting. NOT an infusing of righteousness
- Romans 6 distinguishes JUSTIFICATION from SANCTIFICATION

“ἐκ” could mean “out of” which would make faith the source of salvation.

“Revealed” - to uncover

- Could refer to uncovering to the intellect

- Could refer to uncovering God's plan in human history; eschatologically

The gospel brings this salvation into existence for those who believe.
It does more than just explain it to us. The Gospel reveals the righteousness of God.

See the use of "reveal" in 1:18 and 3:21.

Romans 3:21 – *“But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe.”*

3570 [e]	1161 [e]	5565 [e]	3551 [e]	1343 [e]	2316 [e]	5319 [e]	
Nyni	de	chōris	nomou	dikaiosynē	Theou	pephanerōtai	
21 Nyni	δὲ ,	χωρὶς	νόμου ,	δικαιοσύνη	Θεοῦ	πεφάνέρωται ,	
now	however	apart from	law	[the] righteousness	of God	has been revealed	
Adv	Conj	Prep	N-GMS	N-NFS	N-GMS	V-RIM/P-3S	
							φανερώω phaneroó fa-ne-ro'-o - to render apparent - appear - manifest
3140 [e]	5259 [e]	3588 [e]	3551 [e]	2532 [e]	3588 [e]	4396 [e]	
martyroumenē	hypo	tou	nomou	kai	tōn	prophētōn	
μαρτυρουμένη	ὑπὸ	τοῦ	νόμου	καὶ	τῶν	προφητῶν ;	
being borne witness to	by	the	law	and	the	prophets	
V-PPM/P-NFS	Prep	Art-GMS	N-GMS	Conj	Art-GMP	N-GMP	

“From faith to faith” meaning options:

1. From faith in the Law to faith in the Gospel
2. From faith of the Preacher to the faith of the Hearer
3. From beginning faith to growing, producing faith (from Justification to Sanctification)
4. From God's faithfulness to man's faith
5. From Christ's faithful work to our faith
6. Totality – beginning faith faith and continuing in faith up to the end in faith.
The Christian experience is nothing but faith.
7. Received by faith and has faith as its goal instead of having works as its goal.
Not beginning with Faith and moving to do Good Works.

“as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.” “

- Paul's confidence in the Gospel and how it makes righteous is supported by OT Scripture:
 - Habakkuk 2:4 – **“Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him, but the righteous shall live by his faith.”**
 - Read Habakkuk 1-2

Romans 1:18 -

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.”

601 [e]	1063 [e]	3709 [e]	2316 [e]	575 [e]	3772 [e]	1909 [e]	3956 [e]	763 [e]	2532 [e]
Apokaluptetai	gar	orgē	Theou	ap'	ouranou	epi	pasan	asebeian	kai
18 Ἀποκαλύπτεται	γὰρ	ὀργή	Θεοῦ	ἀπ'	οὐρανοῦ	, ἐπὶ	πᾶσαν	ἀσέβειαν	καὶ
is revealed	indeed	[the] wrath	of God	from	heaven	upon	all	ungodliness	and
V-PIM/P-3S	Conj	N-NFS	N-GMS	Prep	N-GMS	Prep	Adj-AFS	N-AFS	Conj

-----> ἀποκαλύπτω **apokaluptó** = "To take off the cover, Disclose, Reveal"

93 [e]	444 [e]	3588 [e]	3588 [e]	225 [e]	1722 [e]	93 [e]	2722 [e]
adikian	anthrōpōn	tōn	tēn	alētheian	en	adikia	katechontōn
ἀδικίαν	ἀνθρώπων	, τῶν	τὴν	ἀλήθειαν	ἐν	ἀδικία	κατεχόντων
unrighteousness	of men	-	the	truth	by	unrighteousness	suppressing
N-AFS	N-GMP	Art-GMP	Art-AFS	N-AFS	Prep	N-AFS	V-PPA-GMP

“For” connects the following text to 1:15 where Paul says he wants to preach the Gospel in Rome also.

1:18-3:20 = sin, wrath, judgment

- 1:18-32 = Natural revelation revealed to people in general. (some say only Gentiles are in focus)
- 2:1-3:8 = Special Revelation, recorded Scripture (2:12-13; 2:17-19). Focus is on the Jews

Before Paul continues with the discussion of the Gospel he presents the world's need for the gospel. Part of presenting the gospel is presenting the need for the gospel.

Without a knowledge of holiness of God men will live in their darkness without knowledge of their darkness.

1:17 – the righteousness of God is revealed.

1:18 – the wrath of God is revealed

God has revealed his righteousness through acts and words in history.

Yet God's full manifestation of righteousness has not been seen.

When he returns, he will reveal his righteousness and it will have an effect.

Even today we can respond to the righteousness of God already revealed.

Today God reveals righteousness for us to respond to.

This is also true of God's wrath.

God has and is revealing his wrath against sin in history.

He will continue to reveal his wrath until it ultimately and finally is revealed in the end upon his return.

God's judgment in history as time progresses not only includes his active participation, but more so, as described in these verses as "**paradidonaí**" – "to give over" (1:24)

"From Heaven" - απ ουρανου

There is a "wrath" that is built into the creation.

When you live in rebellion to the laws that God has established things naturally punish us.

Here the wrath is described as being directly from heaven.

This speaks of a wrath that is by God's direct intervention.

The object of this divine wrath is:

1. all the godlessness or men – this is discussed in 1:19-27
2. all the wickedness of men – this is developed in 28-32

"Godlessness" – means not having fear or reverence for God.

1. It places man's views and values in contrast with God's plans and purposes.
2. This can not only be passive neglect but must manifest as open rebellion.
3. This is an attitude and an act towards God.

"Wickedness" – is injustice and is expressed in the way men treat each other.

This is an attitude and an act toward mankind.

From the giving of the Law of Moses through Jesus teaching these are the focus of right living:

1. Fear God
2. Kindness to Men

JESUS:

Which is the greatest command? (Matthew 22:36)

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."

This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it:

'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

MOSES:

#1 – Deuteronomy 6:5 – "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might." (Dt. 6:12 – ". . .do not forget the Lord. . .")

#2 – Leviticus 19:18 – "You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord. " (Lev. 19:1-19 –

- respect
- leave them for the poor
- do not steal
- do not lie
- do not defraud

- do not hold back wages
- do not curse the deaf
- do not pervert justice
- judge fairly
- do not spread slander
- do not endanger your neighbor
- do not hate
- rebuke frankly
- do not seek revenge
- do not bear a grudge

THE PROPHETS:

Prophets brought the same message of fearing the Lord and performing social justice. Immorality in life is a result in the corruption and lack of doctrine.

“The truth in unrighteousness hold” - την αληθειαν εν αδικια κατεχοντων

Suppression of the truth shows that they have knowledge of the truth.

This will be explained next in 1:19.

Truth is:

1. Absolute and independent on people's support
2. Will result in action and lifestyle when believed.
3. To suppress the truth will result in false (wrong) actions

Romans 1:19 -

“ For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them.”

1360 [e]	3588 [e]	1110 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]	5318 [e]	1510 [e]	1722 [e]	846 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]	1063 [e]
dioti	to	gnōston	tou	Theou	phaneron	estin	en	autois	ho	theos	gar
19 διότι	τὸ	γνωστὸν	τοῦ	Θεοῦ	, φανερόν	ἐστίν	ἐν	αὐτοῖς	, ὁ	θεὸς	γὰρ
Because	the	known	-	of God	manifest	is	among	them	-	God	indeed
Conj	Art-NNS	Adj-NNS	Art-GMS	N-GMS	Adj-NNS	V-PIA-3S	Prep	PPro-DM3P	Art-NMS	N-NMS	Conj

846 [e]	5319 [e]
autois	ephanerōsen
αὐτοῖς	ἐφανερώσεν .
to them	has revealed [it]
PPro-DM3P	V-AIA-3S

Point:

- 1) men suppress the truth through unrighteous thoughts and unrighteous actions
- 2) people who suffer God's wrath are responsible for the wrath they receive

Four basic arguments for the absolute need for God to exist:

1. Creation

- a. Since there is a universe, it had to have a creator.
 - b. You cannot have a watch without a watch maker
 - c. Paul uses this in Romans 1:19-20
 - d. Plato developed this as the immovable mover.
 - e. Follow the Kalam Cosmological Argument
2. Design– all design implies a creator
 3. Moral law– describes what ought to be seen among men but is not always there.
 - a. It is a standard of behavior that exists because of God.
 4. Being– The human concept of perfection exists, yet it is not seen in creation.
 - a. Since we strive for perfection in all areas but have never seen it then perfection must exist.
 - b. The concept of God encompasses the concept of perfection.

Romans 1:20 -

“For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.”

3588 [e]	1063 [e]	517 [e]	846 [e]	575 [e]	2937 [e]	2889 [e]	3588 [e]	4161 [e]	
ta	gar	aorata	autou	apo	ktiseōs	kosmou	tois	poiēmasin	
20 τὰ	γὰρ	ἀόρατα	αὐτοῦ	ἀπὸ	κτίσεως	κόσμου ,	τοῖς	ποιήμασιν ,	
the	indeed	invisible qualities	of Him	from	[the] creation	of [the] world	by the	things made	
Art-NNP	Conj	Adj-NNP	PPro-GM3S	Prep	N-GFS	N-GMS	Art-DNP	N-DNP	

3539 [e]	2529 [e]	3588 [e]	5037 [e]	126 [e]	846 [e]	1411 [e]	2532 [e]	2305 [e]	1519 [e]
nooumena	kathoratai	hē	te	aidios	autou	dynamis	kai	theiotēs	eis
νοούμενα ,	καθορᾶται ;	ἡ	τε	ἄϊδιος	αὐτοῦ	δύναμις	καὶ	θειότης ;	εἰς
being understood	are clearly seen	the	both	eternal	of him	power	and	divinity	for
V-PPM/P-NNP	V-PIM/P-3S	Art-NFS	Conj	Adj-NFS	PPro-GM3S	N-NFS	Conj	N-NFS	Prep

3588 [e]	1510 [e]	846 [e]	379 [e]	
to	einai	autous	anapologēτους	
τὸ	εἶναι	αὐτοὺς	ἀναπολογήτους .	
-	to be	them	without excuse	
Art-ANS	V-PNA	PPro-AM3P	Adj-AMP	

God's invisible qualities have been revealed through the physical world. This way natural man can understand qualities of the immortal God.

His invisible attributes are summed up in two phrases:

- a) **“his eternal power”** – he is divine, he is beyond our universe, he is the creator, he is the judge, he is the alpha and the omega
- b) **“his divine nature”** – his character of righteousness, holiness, justice, love are all revealed in the creation.

Romans 1:21 -

“ For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.”

1360 [e]	1097 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]	3756 [e]	5613 [e]	2316 [e]	1392 [e]	2228 [e]	2168 [e]	235 [e]
dioti	gnontes	ton	Theon	ouch	hōs	Theon	edoxasan	ē	ēucharistēsan	alla
21	ΔΙΟΤΙ	ΓΝΟΝΤΕΣ	ΤΟΝ	ΘΕΟΝ	, ΟΥΧ	ΩΣ	ΘΕΟΝ	ΕΔΟΞΑΣΑΝ	, Η	ΗΥΧΑΡΙΣΤΗΣΑΝ ; ΑΛΛΑ
For	having known	-	God	not	as	God	they glorified [him]	or	were thankful	but
Conj	V-APA-NMP	Art-AMS	N-AMS	Adv	Adv	N-AMS	V-AIA-3P	Conj	V-AIA-3P	Conj

3154 [e]	1722 [e]	3588 [e]	1261 [e]	846 [e]	2532 [e]	4654 [e]	3588 [e]	801 [e]	846 [e]
emataiōthēsan	en	tois	dialogismois	autōn	kai	eskotisthē	hē	asynetos	autōn
ἐματαιώθησαν	ἐν	τοῖς	διαλογισμοῖς	αὐτῶν	, καὶ	ἐσκοτίσθη	ἡ	ἀσύνετος	αὐτῶν
they became futile	in	the	thinking	of them	and	was darkened	the	foolish	of them
V-AIP-3P	Prep	Art-DMP	N-DMP	PPro-GM3P	Conj	V-AIP-3S	Art-NFS	Adj-NFS	PPro-GM3P

2588 [e]
kardia
καρδία :
heart
N-NFS

“**having known**” in the sense of general revelation

We are not talking about a saving knowledge and other information that is attained by special revelation through the word of God and its understanding the empowerment of the Spirit

Summary:

Section One 1:18-20 – God’s existence, his righteousness and his wrath have and are revealed.

Section Two 1:21-31 – Describes how people suppress and exchange God’s revelation of existence, his righteousness and his wrath (judgment)

Verses	People do:	God does:
1:21-24	People “ <i>exchange</i> ” the truth for idols	God “ <i>hands them over</i> ” to passions of their hearts
1:25-26a	People “ <i>exchange</i> ” the truth for a lie	God “ <i>hands them over</i> ” To dishonorable passions
1:26b-31	People “ <i>exchange</i> ” natural sexual practices for unnatural	God “ <i>hands them over</i> ” To a worthless mind

Section Three 1:32 - Combines 1:18-20 with 21-31 to form the conclusion:

- They know requirements
- They know the penalty
- They continue to sin
- They approve of those who join with them