



The Book of Romans

McMaster Divinity College
NT/TH 3XR3

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Fall 2020

Introductory WebEx Session Monday, 4–5:50 p.m., September 14

On-Line Videos

In-Class Sessions: Friday, Oct 30, 1:30–5:30 p.m./Saturday, Oct 31, 9 a.m.–5:30 p.m.

Closing WebEx Session Monday, 4–5:50 p.m., December 7

Course Description

The New Testament Book of Romans has had a major impact on Christian theology and Church History; it is arguably among the most influential books in the Bible. It is effective for spiritual formation and at the same time challenging and doctrinal. The English exegesis course for Romans focuses on the content, interpretation, message, and application of the Epistle to the Romans.

Specializations

Biblical Studies (BS)

Students taking the Book of Romans as a Biblical Studies (BS) course will closely study one of the richest and most influential books in the New Testament and has pride of place among the Pauline Epistles. It is an excellent text to learn and practice exegesis because it is beautifully laid out. It is held to contain the clearest and longest expression of Paul's thought, and yet we will place Romans and understand it in its context of situation rather than treat it as a systematic theology.

Church and Culture (CC)

Students taking the Book of Romans as a Church and Culture (CC) course will find much of interest in Paul's continual attention to the tensions and issues between the Jewish Christians and the Gentile Christians in the first century Roman church that was located at the heart of the Roman Empire. He clarifies his relationship to Judaism and models the integration of diverse races and cultures with different religious heritage into a church community.

Christian History and Worldview (CW)

Students taking the Book of Romans for Christian History and Worldview (CW) are encountering a text that has left identifiable fingerprints on church history as a key text in its effect on major people and movement such as the conversion of Augustine and Martin Luther's discovery of salvation by faith. Romans continues to play a central role in evangelical theology, thought and practice.

Pastoral Studies (PS)

Students taking the Book of Romans as a Pastoral Studies (PS) course will be able to equip themselves to teach and preach through a book that can be central to the discipleship of your congregation. Its content is theologically central for matters of faith as well as our understanding of the content of the gospel and it contains incredibly practical challenges and applications for spiritual transformation and living out our faith in a diverse church and culture.

Course Objectives

Specific Objectives – Through reading, lectures, discussion and the completion of assignments the student will:

Knowing

- Grasp the message and structure of Romans as a whole and in terms of its component parts
- Understand Romans in its social, historical, literary and religious Jewish Hellenistic context
- Become familiar with critical views concerning introductory and exegetical questions and identify the features in the text that illuminate the views
- Understand Roman's contribution to Pauline, Biblical and Systematic Theology

Doing

- Highlight the message and themes, exegete significant passages, and understand the major issues in the text and its interpretive problems
- Apply the text to discipleship, community and/or ministry formation and consider strategies for its re-presentation in contemporary contexts
- Through theological reflection, apply the content of Romans to one's own deliberative theology

Being:

- Appreciate Paul's distinctive theology and occasional goal(s)
- Allow the text to motivate, form and transform faith, love, hope, righteousness, and worship
- Become a resource to the church community in biblical understanding

Course Requirements

View Online Videos (attendance)

Students are required to view the scheduled weekly videos online and do the weekly exegetical exercises.

Class Participation (15%)

There will be a couple of venues in which you will be expected to participate in weekly activities and contribute to the course discussion online: (1) you will share content or initiate topics of discussion on the A2L discussion forums or on Padlet (which has a number of ways that you can share) and (2) you will respond or interact with the contribution/content/topics of others. Contribute content once a week and interact with a minimum interaction or response to five others each week (on the average).

Reading (10%)

See the Daily Schedule at the end for the precise dates and pages.

Students are to read the portion of the assigned Romans text and textbook(s) covered in the video to watching the video (see Daily Schedule at the end). Be prepared to interact with the main issues in posting on topics and discussing the posts of other students..

Read Romans three times. Be sure that you read the chapters in Romans at least once before they are

discussed in class.

Each student will submit a simple **reading report by 11:59 p.m., December 11**, indicating the percentage of the reading that has been completed.

Written Assignments

Research or Exegetical Paper (40%)

- Each student will write a research or exegetical paper on an aspect of Romans that reflects their specialization: biblical studies, church and culture, Christian history and worldview or pastoral studies. **It will be due November 6, at 11:59 p.m.** It will be submitted in PDF form to Avenue. Late papers will be docked at the rate of 2% per day for the first 7 days (including weekends) and 5% per day after that.
- Length & style: It should be approximately 4,000 words (about fifteen pages) of text, excluding footnotes and bibliography. For all matters of style and form, consult the McMaster Divinity College Style Guide (see Style)
- Approach: Choose an aspect of Romans that reflects your specialization, and do the appropriate research that effectively interacts with the text and with pertinent factors in your specialization. Utilize a minimum of twelve academic sources.

Profile Project & Presentation (35%)

Each student will complete a project or paper designed to make the research accessible in a specific contemporary context, and present the project in the closing WebEx session.

- The project **will be due December 4 at 11:59 p.m., submitted to A2L** (projects may be submitted in hard copy by arrangement). For all matters of style and form, consult the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses: <http://www.macdiv.ca/students/documents/MacStyleGuide.pdf>.
- Length & style: If written, it should be approximately 3,000 words (about 12 pages) of text, excluding footnotes and bibliography. For all matters of style and form, consult the McMaster Divinity College Style Guide (see Style). If it is a project, it should be somewhat comparable in time and effort to a 12 pg. research paper.
- Each student will submit a written description of their project on A2L including the student's specialization, the specific target audience, and a description of the project, due 11:59 p.m. on October 30.

Ideal: Apply your research paper to your project! Some suggestions include:

- A sermon on a passage in Romans
- A study guide that will assist young adult learners in exploring or understanding all or part of Romans. Include questions, explanations, directions and other material that both enlightens the text in its historical context and helps learners to connect the text with life today.
- A movie presentation, critical review and discussion which encapsulates a theme of Romans with a modern metaphor.
- A parable or allegory that utilizes significant or powerful contemporary imagery, symbols or metaphors that express the message and content of Romans.
- A collection of poetry or songs that explore thought, themes and/or emotions in Romans.
- An experience for a small group that simulates the situation of the recipients and the achievement of the goal(s) of the author.
- A description of the connections between the characters, contexts and themes in your life story and Romans.

Marking of the project will be based on:

- How the message and content utilizes and applies Romans as the primary goal.
- The appropriateness of the project for the identified target group,
- The quality and proficient use of the medium
- The estimated effort expended on the project (it should be nearly equal to the effort of a 12 pg. exegetical paper).

Grading Summary

➤ Participation	15%
➤ Reading	10%
➤ Paper	40%
➤ Project & Presentation	35%

Textbooks and Materials

Textbook

Keener, Craig S. *Romans: A New Covenant Commentary*. NCC 6. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2009.

Recommended

Moo, Douglas. *The Epistle to the Romans*. NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996.

Osborne, Grant R. *Romans* (NTC). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004.

Porter, Stanley E. *The Letter to the Romans: A Linguistic and Literary Commentary*. Sheffield, UK: Sheffield, Phoenix, 2015. Suitable for those with Greek.

Textbook Purchase

The bookstore will be open for in-person shopping by appointment only, starting September 8, 2020. Textbooks can be ordered ahead of time with free delivery by contacting Bernice at books@readon.ca.

Classroom Behavior

Attendance

- Students should be on time to the in-class sessions or be prepared to offer an explanation to the professor.
- Students are expected to stay for the all in-class sessions, unless arranged in advance.
- Students are expected to listen to all on-line videos and do the exegetical exercises on the video which is equivalent to course attendance. “Absences” will result in the reduction of the final grade.

Participation

Please respect the opinions of others without disrespect or ridicule, even if you do not agree with them. However, feel free to respond logically and critically in an orderly manner. Similarly content in all papers should be irenic while it may critique alternate positions.

Students are not expected to be doing work on any other subject except that which is appropriate in the course outline.

Students are not to carry on off-topic conversations in class in person, the phone or on the internet.

We will eat and drink in class—please help with set up and clean up.

Students who fail to respect these guidelines will be dismissed from the class with consequences.

MDC Policies

Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College.

Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty ~ <http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>

Gender Inclusive Language

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.

Style

All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses

Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

Appointments & office hours

Contact me if I can assist you in any way via Avenue or e-mail: westfal@mcmaster.ca

There are no set office hours, but I am available by Skype appointment at [cynthia.westfall](https://www.skype.com/join/cynthia.westfall)

Disclaimer

This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class.

Romans Schedule, 2020

DATE	Chapters in Romans
Sept 14	Webex session 4–5:50 p.m. Video: Introduction to Romans
Sept 21–25	Video: Romans 1
Sept 28–Oct 2	Video: Romans 2
Oct 5–9	Video: Romans 3
Oct 12–16	Video: Romans 4
Oct 19–24	MDC Hybrid in-class sessions
Oct 30 1:30–5:30 Oct 31 9–5:30	Romans in-class sessions Romans 5, 6, 7, 8, 9–11 Project description due Oct 31
Nov 2–7	MDC Hybrid in-class sessions Papers due Nov 6
Nov 9–13	Video: Romans 12–13
Nov 16–20	ETS/SBL
Nov 23–27	Video: Romans 14–15
Nov 30–Dec 4	Video: Romans 16 Projects due Dec 4
Dec 7	WebEx Session 4–5:50 p.m. Presentation of Projects
Dec 11	Reading report due Attendance report due

For Reading in Keener, read on the topics of the videos before watching the video.

Bibliography to be Expanded
Commentaries on Romans

The following is a selection of Roman commentaries.

- Barrett, C.K., *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. BNTC. London: A. & C. Black, 1957.
- Barth, K., *The Epistle to the Romans*. Trans. E.C. Hoskyns. London: Oxford University Press, 1933.
- Beet, J.A., *Commentary on St Paul's Epistle to the Romans*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1890.
- Black, M., *Romans*. NCB. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1973.
- Bruce, F.F., *Romans*. TNTC. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1985.
- Bryan, C. *A Preface to Romans*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
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- Dodd, C.H., *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*. MNTC. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1932.
- Dunn, John D.G., *Romans*. WBC 38AB. Waco, TX: Word, 1988.
- Fitzmyer, J.A. *Romans*. AB 33. New York: Doubleday, 1993.
- Gaventa, B.R. *When in Romans: An Invitation to Linger with the Gospel according to Paul*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016.
- Godet, F.L. *Commentary on Romans*. 1883. Reprint, Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1977.
- Gorman, M.J. *Participating in Christ: Explorations in Paul's Theology and Spirituality*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2019.
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- Johnson, L.T., *Reading Romans: A Literary and Theological Commentary*. New York: Crossroad, 1997.
- Käsemann, E. *Commentary on Romans*. Translated by G.W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980.
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- Kirk, J.R.K. *Jesus Have I Loved, but Paul? A Narrative Approach to the Problem of Pauline Christianity*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012.
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- Luther, M. *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. Translated by J.T. Mueller. London: Oliphants, 1954.
- McKnight, S. *Reading Romans Backwards: A Gospel of Peace in the Midst of Empire*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2019.

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- Morris, L. *The Epistle to the Romans*. Pillar; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988.
- Nygren, A. *Commentary on Romans*. Translated by C.C. Rasmussen. London: SCM Press, 1952.
- O'Neill, J.C. *Paul's Letter to the Romans*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975.
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