

Paul - Saul, the Benjamite from Tarsus - wrote a letter to the Roman Church in @ the year 56 (Jesus died and rose in the year of early 33). He was probably in Corinth during his three-month stay (Acts 20:2, 3; I Cor 16:5-7) at the end of his third mission effort. He had never been in Rome. The first Romans to become Followers of the Way occurred on the Day of Pentecost in the spring of 33 (Acts 2:10)- (Roman Catholics teach the Peter founded the church in Rome but he had not yet left Jerusalem in 50 for he was there at the Jerusalem Conference of Acts 15). Paul was eager to get to them (1:10-13; 15:22-23; Acts 19:21) but first he must go to Jerusalem. The Jerusalem church was in deep financial stress and Sal Paulus was collecting money from the Greek churches to prop up the mother church under James, the brother of Jesus. This was Gentile churches saving the Jewish first church. The Roman church was widely known among Jesus' disciples (1:8). The church began among Jews and was almost completely Jewish in make-up when Paul founded the church in Corinth (). In just the past ten years it was becoming more Gentile. This nature of the Church of Christ in Rome helps to understand what the letter teaches us. He wrote to them of the Gospel he preached, in order to prepare them for his coming visit. (A shorter version of the epistle was circulated in nth early church - the doxology (Rom. 16:25-27) appears in different places in different texts, as does the benediction (Rom. 16:20). This is backed up by the fact that some texts did not contain chapters 15 and 16 at all.)

THE GOSPEL:

Hebrews 2:14-18 - Since, the children share flesh and blood, the Lord himself likewise partook of the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free/deliver those who all of their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. For, it is a surety that he did not come to deliver angels, but the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to become like his brothers in every aspect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself was suffered in testing, he is able to help those who are being tested.

Romans 5:1-11 Therefore, being made right by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. Not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person— though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. Much more, now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from God's wrath. If while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, we are now being saved by his life. More than that, we boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Romans 6:3-11 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in an all new life. If we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For whoever has died is freed from sin. ⁸ But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.